

**BY-LAWS**  
of the  
Town of Chester Public Library

**PREAMBLE**

The name of this organization is and it shall be known as the "Town of Chester Public Library" (here after the Library). The Board of Trustees of the Town of Chester Public Library (here after the Board) hereby enacts the following by-laws.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Library is to assemble, preserve, and provide multi-media materials that will meet the day-to-day educational, informational, cultural, and recreational interests and needs of the community in compliance with local, state, and federal laws.

**Article I General**

Section I Members	<p>The Board of Trustees shall consist of 7-11 members initially appointed by the Town of Chester Town Board. The term of office shall be three years. The terms shall be staggered to provide continuity.</p> <p>Eligibility for office shall be limited to adults residing within the geographical limits of the library district.</p>
Section II Term of Office	No trustee shall serve consecutively for more than two full terms.
Section III Unexpired Terms	<p>Unexpired terms on the Board of Trustees shall be filled by a special election by the remaining members of the Board of Trustees for the remainder of the term of that particular position.</p> <p>Upon completion of the unexpired term, a full term membership appointment will be made by a majority vote of the Town of Chester Town Board.</p>
Section IV Dismissal	<p>If a Board of Trustees member shall fail to attend three consecutive meetings without a satisfactory excuse, the Board of Trustees member is deemed to have resigned and the vacancy shall be filled by the Board of Trustees in a manner consistent with Section III above with the approval of the Town of Chester Town Board.</p> <p>The Board may remove a Trustee for misconduct, incapacity, neglect of duty or refusal to carry into effect the Library's educational purpose as provided in Education Law 226; subdivision B.</p>
Section V Orientation	Newly appointed Board of Trustees members shall be provided with appropriate orientation and shall be given a copy of the By-Laws and a copy of the Handbook for Library Trustees in New York State which outlines the basic information for operations and responsibilities for organizations providing library services in New York State.

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Section VI Votes	<p>Each Trustee shall have one vote irrespective of office held.</p> <p>A Trustee must be present at a meeting to have his/her vote counted.</p> <p>A simple majority of the whole Board (including vacancies is required for any motion to pass.</p>
Section VII Board Actions	<p>All actions of the Board shall be of the Board as a unit. No Board member shall act on behalf of the Board, on any matter, without prior approval of the Board. No Board member by virtue of his/her office shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the library nor, as an individual, command the services of any library employee.</p>

**ARTICLE II OFFICERS**

Section I Officers	<p>The officers of the Board of Trustees shall be a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, and a Financial Officer. Each officer shall be elected by the Board members for a one-year term. No office shall be held more than two consecutive years (2 years). If the office cannot be filled the person in office may continue with his/her duties for up to one (1) year or until the office can be filled.</p>
Section II Elections	<p>Officers shall be elected at the Board of Trustees last regular meeting of the calendar year by a majority vote of the Board.</p>

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<p>Section III Duties of Officers</p>	<p>The President shall preside at meetings of the Board, appoint committees, authorize special meetings, and generally perform the duties of a presiding officer. The President and other officers shall attend the annual meeting of the Southern Adirondack Library System.</p> <p>The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President in case of the absence or disability of the President and shall succeed to the position of President upon the resignation or death of the President. In the event that both the President and Vice President are absent from a meeting, any member may call the meeting to order and the members present (there being a quorum) shall select a President pro-tem.</p> <p>The Secretary shall have charge of the records of the Board and shall keep minutes of the meetings. A copy of the minutes shall be kept in the library, available for public study, in compliance with the Freedom of Information Law of the State of New York, Public Officers Law, Section 87.</p> <p>The Financial Officer shall attend to fiscal matters of the library. While Town funds will be handled directly by the Town, the Financial Officer will track all requests for funds and the allocation of Town-approved funds. The Financial Officer shall keep accurate records of all library-related funds received and disbursed including Town of Chester allocations, the Endowment Fund and any direct funds received by the Library. A financial report will be made by the Financial Officer to the Board of Trustees quarterly and at other times as the Board shall require.</p>
<p>Section IV Officer Vacancy</p>	<p>Any vacancies among the officers shall be filled by an election at a regular meeting, and a majority vote of the Board of Trustees shall be necessary for election</p>

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Article III – Committees

Section I Committees	The Board of Trustees shall be involved in library functions such as establishing policy, planning for the future, ensuring availability of required funding, providing for necessary personnel, publicizing the library, etc. If required, committees shall be established to meet future needs in these areas and/or any others that may arise.
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Article IV - Meetings

Section I Regular Meeting	Meetings shall be held on a monthly basis, at dates and times to be established by the Board of Trustees at the beginning of the calendar year, and shall be open to the public in compliance with Education Law 260-a, and with the provisions of the Open Meetings Law of the State of New York, Public Officers Law, Sections 100-111. Public notice of the time and place of the meeting scheduled, at least two weeks prior thereto, shall be given to the public and news media at least one week before such meeting.
Section II Special Meeting	Special meetings shall be held at the call of the President or any three Trustees. They shall be open to the public in compliance with Education Law 260-a, and with the provisions of the Open Meetings Law of the State of New York, Public Officers Law, Sections 100-111.
Section III Quorum	A majority of the entire Board (including vacancies) shall constitute a quorum.
Section IV Fiscal Year	The fiscal year of the Library shall be the calendar year.
Section V Order of Business	The order of business shall be as follows: i. Roll Call ii. Review of minutes of previous meeting iii. Finance report iv. Report of the Director of the Library v. Report of standing committees vi. Report of special committees vii. Nominations and elections viii. Correspondence and communications ix. Unfinished business x. New business xi. Adjournment

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Article V - Director of the Library

Section I Director	The Board of Trustees shall appoint a qualified Library Director who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the library.
Section II Responsibilities	The Director shall be responsible for the proper performance of duties as spelled out in the job description provided by the Board of Trustees.
Section III Meeting Attendance	It shall be the duty of the Director to attend all meetings of the Board of Trustees. The Director shall have the right to speak on all matters under discussion at Board of Trustees meetings but shall not have the right to vote.

Article VI - Amendments

Section I Amendments	<p>These By-Laws may be repealed, amended, or added to only after the substance of such action has been presented in writing at a regular or special meeting, and written notice thereof has been given to Trustees.</p> <p>Voting will take place at the next regular or special meeting by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>The By-Laws of the Town of Chester Public Library are not intended to supersede any state laws (statutes) or regulations of the Commissioner of Education.</p>
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Appendix:  
Change History

Article I

Section I

The Board of Trustees shall consist of seven members initially appointed by the Town of Chester Town Board. Adopted as an amendment November 21, 2017.).

The term of office shall be three years. Adopted as amendment Nov. 20, 2024.

The Board of Trustees shall consist of seven to eleven members initially appointed by the Town of Chester Town Board. Adopted as an amendment March 24, 2026.

Article I

Section II

Limit of two full terms for Trustees adopted as an amendment  
December 18, 2001

Article II

Section I Officers

Amended November 15, 2016

Article II

Section III Duties of Officers

Amended April 22, 2008

Article I

Section I Members

Amended November 21, 2017

November 15, 2018 – Revised content of the Town of Chester Public Library By-Laws to more closely align with the Best Practices documented in the “Handbook For Library Trustees Of New York State, 2018 Edition.

Modifications made to the By-Laws that consist of more than minor editorial changes are listed below.

Article I

Section I Members

Eligibility for office shall be limited to adults residing within the geographical limits of the library district.

Section III Unexpired Terms

...special election by the remaining members of the Board of Trustees for the remainder of the term of that particular position.

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**Section IV Dismissal**

...in a manner consistent with Section IV above

The Board may remove a Trustee for misconduct, incapacity, neglect of duty or refusal to carry into effect the Library's educational purpose as provided in Education Law 226; subdivision B.

**Section VI Votes**

Each Trustee shall have one vote irrespective of office held.

A Trustee must be present at a meeting to have his/her vote counted.

A simple majority of the whole Board (including vacancies is required for any motion to pass.

**Section VII Board Actions**

All actions of the Board shall be of the Board as a unit. No Board member shall act on behalf of the Board, on any matter, without prior approval of the Board. No Board member by virtue of his/her office shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the library nor, as an individual, command the services of any library employee.

**Article II**

**Section II**

...calendar [year]

**Article IV**

**Section IV**

The fiscal year of the Library shall be the calendar year.

**ARTICLE II OFFICERS**

**Section III Duties of Officers**

June 4, 2019

Position Title of the Board of Trustees Treasurer was changed to be Financial Officer to conform to the Handbook for Library Trustees Of New York State, 2018 Edition description.

June 17, 2019

Remove: "In addition, the Financial Officer shall collect and disburse all funds received directly by the library as a result of contributions, fines, etc." as this task is handled by Library staff.

Nov. 20, 2024

Remove: "Financial Officer shall review use of all funds contributed by the Friends of the Library to ensure they are used in accordance with library policy."

Remove Friends of the Library from the next sentence.

Change Treasurer to Financial Officer in last sentence.

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