

# Groton Public Library By-Laws

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Groton Public Library is to cultivate a safe, vibrant community hub where all individuals can access a diverse range of information sources, from books to digital media, fostering knowledge, intellectual curiosity, personal growth, and independent lifelong learning. GPL is committed to nurturing literacy in all its forms by promoting the joy of reading, critical thinking, and the exploration of ideas that lead to transformative journeys of self-discovery.

## Preamble

The Board of Trustees (hereinafter designated as the "Board") of The Groton Public Library, a corporation created under a charter granted under Section 253 of the New York State Education Law by the Board of Regents (or Secretary of State) of the State of New York, dated May 17, 1946, shall be governed by the laws of New York State, the regulations of the Commissioner of Education and by the following by-laws.

## Bylaws

### 1. NAME OF ORGANIZATION

- a. The name of the organization shall be the Groton Public Library.

### 2. PURPOSE

- a. The purpose of the organization is to provide superior library service to the residents, adults and children, of the communities of Groton Central School District.

### 3. FISCAL

- a. The fiscal year of the library shall be July 1st through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

### 4. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- a. The library shall be governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board shall consist of not less than five and not more than seven members, elected for terms of 5 years each. Trustees are elected by the qualified voters of the Groton Central School District. Newly elected members will take office on July 1<sup>st</sup> after the election.
- b. Eligibility for office shall be limited to qualified voters of the Groton Central School District. Candidates for the office of Trustee of the Groton Public Library shall be nominated by petition. The nominating petition shall be signed by at least twenty-five (25) qualified voters of the Groton Central School District.
- c. Absence from three consecutive meetings shall constitute automatic dismissal from the Board unless the Board defers this dismissal by majority vote. The President shall inform the absent Board Member in writing that he/she is no longer on the Board. If dismissal is deferred by Board action the President shall inform the absent Board Member in writing the conditions of this deferral.
- d. No member shall serve for more than three consecutive elected five-year terms.
- e. Any vacancy shall be filled by special election by the remaining members of the Board until the beginning of the next fiscal year. At the next annual meeting a public vote shall be held to elect a Trustee to fulfill the remainder of the vacant term.
- f. Each Trustee shall have one vote, irrespective of office held.
- g. A Trustee must be present at a meeting to have his/her vote counted.
- h. Trustees are required to complete a minimum of two (2) hours of trustee education annually. Trustees are also required to complete the annual Sexual Harassment Prevention Training. It must be an interactive training.
- i. 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.

## 5. OFFICERS

- a. The officers of the Board shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Financial Officer, and Building and Grounds Officer elected annually by the Board at the July Board meeting and commencing at this meeting which is the start of the new fiscal year. These officers shall serve for a period of one year or until their successors have been duly elected.
- b. The duties of such officers shall be as follows:
  - i. The **President** shall preside at all meetings of the Board, authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the Board, serve as an ex-officio voting member of all committees, and generally perform all duties associated with that office.
  - ii. The **Vice President**, in the event of the absence or disability of the President or of a vacancy in that office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the President.
  - iii. The **Secretary** shall keep a true and accurate record of all meetings of the Board, shall issue notice of all regular and special meetings, and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with that office.
  - iv. The **Financial Officer** shall be the financial overseeing officer of the Board and shall perform such duties as generally devolve upon the office. In the absence or inability of the Financial Officer, his/her duties shall be performed by such other members of the Board as the Board may designate.
  - v. The **Building and Grounds Officer** shall perform such duties for overseeing the upkeep, maintenance, renovation, and building of the physical library building and grounds. In the absence or inability of the Building and Grounds Officer, his/her duties shall be performed by such other members of the Board as the Board may designate.

## 6. LIBRARY EXECUTIVE

The person appointed by the Trustees as the Library Executive shall be charged with the administration of the Library and is the executor of the organization per the by-laws. The Library Executive shall be accountable to the Trustees and shall be responsible for the following:

- Being present at monthly Board meetings
- Preparing and presenting monthly reports and meeting documents as requested by Trustees
- In conjunction with the Board of Trustees Finance Officer, maintaining financial records in an efficient manner; presenting periodic reports to the Trustees and to the Groton School District Finance Office; preparing the draft of the annual library budget to be presented to the Trustees; and assisting the Trustees with presentation of the adopted budget request for appropriation
- Holding regular meetings with the library staff and/or volunteers for disseminating communications from the Trustees, and training about and execution of the library policies
- Preparing annual performance appraisals for the library staff and volunteers
- Developing all library collections in consultation with other appropriate library staff, including selection, ordering, processing, weeding, and inventory of the collections according to the Library's policy guidelines
- Recommending changes in or additions to library policies as needed
- Performing preparatory work to assist the Trustees with regular library planning
- With the Board of Trustees Buildings and Ground officer, ensuring that the physical

structure of the Library is in proper upkeep as directed by the Trustees or any appointed committees thereof

- With the Board of Trustees Buildings and Ground officer, notifying appropriate contractor and/or designated Trustee regarding emergency building situations
- Informing the Board of Trustees immediately of all Freedom of Information Act requests
- Performing any other duties assigned by the Trustees within the scope of the civil service job description

## 7. COMMITTEES

- a. Committees for specific purposes may be appointed by the President. Such committees shall serve until the completion of the work for which they were appointed.
- b. All committees shall make a progress report to the Board at each of its meetings.
- c. No committee will have other than advisory powers unless, by suitable action of the Board, it is granted specific power to act.
- d. The President shall be, ex officio, a member of all committees.

## 8. MEETINGS

- a. Meetings shall be held on the second Thursday of each month, at 6:00 pm at the library.
- b. A special meeting of the Board may be called at any time by the President or upon the request of three members for a specific purpose, provided that notice thereof be given to all Trustees at least twenty-four hours in advance of the special meeting. No business may be transacted at such special meetings except the stated business.
- c. The Annual Meeting shall be held on the fourth Tuesday in April of each year at 7:00 pm in the library. The business transacted at this meeting shall include the election of new trustees and approval of the next fiscal year budget by the qualified voters of the Groton Central School District.
- d. The operating and financial reports for the previous year shall be presented at the regular meeting in September.
- e. The preliminary budget for the subsequent fiscal year, required for submission to the voters, shall be presented at the regular meeting in March.
- f. The final budget for the subsequent fiscal year shall be presented for approval at the regular meeting in April.
- g. A simple majority of the existing Board shall constitute a quorum for the conducting of all business. If a quorum is not present at a regular meeting, the attending members may set a date for another meeting to be held within one week, and the presiding officer shall notify the absent members of this specially called meeting.
- h. The Groton Public Library may, at its discretion, provide for remote participation in Board Meetings by board members, as allowed by applicable state law and any regulations in force. Notice to the public and information that remote connections will be used will be posted in advance. Members of the public who connect remotely will have their microphones muted except during the public comment period or at the request of a trustee.
- i. The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to, the following items which shall be covered in the sequence shown unless circumstances make an altered order more efficient:
  - i. Roll call of members
  - ii. Approval of Agenda
  - iii. Approval of minutes of previous regular meeting and any intervening special

- meetings
- iv. Special Actions
- v. Executive Session
- vi. Financial report and action on warrants
- vii. Building and Grounds Officer report
- viii. Library Executive's report
- ix. Committee reports
- x. Unfinished business
- xi. New business
- xii. Period for Public Expression
- xiii. Adjournment

9. AMENDMENTS

- a. Amendments to these By-Laws may be proposed at any regular meeting and shall be voted upon at the next regular meeting. Written notice of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be sent to all absent members at least ten days prior to the voting session. A simple majority of the Board shall be sufficient for adoption of an amendment.
- b. Any rule or resolution of the Board, whether contained in these By-Laws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand, but such suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which two-thirds of the members of the Board shall be present and two-thirds of those present shall so approve.

10. PROCEDURE

- a. All procedures not specified herein shall be in accord with Robert's Rules of Order.

**Approved by The Groton Public Library Board of Trustees**

**Dated: 4/9/2013**

**Updated: 7/9/13**

**Updated: 8/16/16**

**Reviewed and approved: 10/10/2024**