



## BYLAWS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### ARTICLE I. NAME

This organization shall be known as the Cleveland Bradley County Public Library Board of Trustees (the Board).

### ARTICLE II. LEGAL AUTHORITY

The Board of Trustees is governed by the provisions of TCA 10-3-104 exercising the powers and assuming the duties granted under said statute. The Library Board's duties are also in accordance with the Library Services Agreement with the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Department of State.

### ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

1. The Board of Trustees shall consist of seven (7) members. As stated in TCA 10-3-103 (b), the number appointed by each governing body is determined according to the ratio of the population in each participating city and in those areas of the county that lie outside the cities, based on the most recent federal census. Based on the 2020 census, members shall be appointed in the following manner: The City of Cleveland Council will appoint three (3) Members and the Bradley County Commission will appoint four (4) Members. According to TCA 10-3-103, not more than one (1) Official each from the City of Cleveland Council and the Bradley County Commission may serve on this Board.
2. Terms are for three (3) years beginning on July 1 of each year. No Member shall serve on the Board for more than two (2) consecutive terms. After two terms of service, the trustee must rotate off the Board for at least three (3) years, after that, the former board member could rotate back onto the Board if reappointed (TCA 10-3-103).
3. Terms shall be staggered, with no more than three (3) Members leaving the Board in the same year. In a given three-year time span, two (2) member's terms will expire two of the three years, and in the third year, three (3) member's terms will expire. This should occur, cyclically, every three years.
4. The Board shall be representative of the cultural and economic diversity of the community and shall have no more than five (5) Members of the same gender.
5. Members shall be residents of Bradley County and shall serve without salary.
6. The Nomination Committee, made up of Officers of the Board, will meet annually in April to discuss applicants and proposed applicants. The Nominating Committee will present recommendations to the full Board in May each year. The Board Chair will make appointment recommendations to the City of Cleveland Council/ City Mayor and/or the Bradley County Commission/ County Mayor. The same process will be followed when a vacancy occurs during a member's term of office.
7. New Board Members will receive a Library orientation and will meet with the Library Director.

## **ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE**

1. Regular meetings of the Board shall be held no less than six (6) times per year at a time and place to be determined by the Chair.
2. Notice of each regular meeting will be made to all Board Members at least one week prior to the meeting.
3. All Board meetings will be held in compliance with Tennessee's Open Meetings Law (TCA 8- 44)
4. A quorum will consist of a majority of Library Board Members. A quorum is required for the transaction of official business.
5. Special meetings may be called by the Chair, or in the Chair's absence, by any officer of the Board. A special meeting may also be called upon written request of a majority of members. Telephone or e-mail notice shall be given to all Board Members with at least forty-eight (48) hours' notice.
6. Under limited circumstances, Members unable to be physically at a Board meeting may view and participate in the meeting via remote communication devices but not vote, provided that a physical quorum is present at the meeting location.
7. A Member failing to attend at least fifty (50) percent of the meetings in any fiscal year will be asked to resign. After resignation, the appointing body shall appoint a new Member to fill the unexpired term. Additionally, a Member shall comply with any attendance requirements of that Member's appointing body.

## **ARTICLE V. OFFICERS**

Officers of the Board shall include: the Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer. Officers will be elected at the first meeting of each fiscal year and will serve for a one (1) year term from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>. The Nomination Committee, made up of Officers of the Board, will recommend a slate of officers to be presented at the July meeting. The officers will assume duty upon election. The Library Director will serve as the Secretary of the Library Board. Officers will perform the usual duties prescribed for their offices according to *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

## **ARTICLE VI. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The order of business at regular meetings and agenda will be set by the Chair. Any request to be added to the Board Meeting agenda by a Board Member or community member must be received by the Library Director and Board Chair at least one week (7 days) before the meeting. An item can be added to the agenda during the meeting if approved by an affirmative vote of the majority of all Members of the Board present at the time (with quorum).

## **ARTICLE VII. PUBLIC COMMENT AT MEETINGS**

Members of the public are welcome and encouraged to attend meetings of the Library Board of Trustees and share input regarding library business according to TCA 8-44-112.

1. All board meetings are open to the public with notices posted on the information board and on the library's website a minimum of 48 hours before the meeting.

2. Members of the public wishing to speak must be recognized by the Chair and will have five (5) minutes to address the Board. If action is needed based on public comment, it will be added to the agenda as new business for the next scheduled meeting or referred to a committee.

## **ARTICLE VIII. COMMITTEES**

Committees of the Board shall be advisory to the full Board and shall perform those duties requested by the Chair or Board. A committee may exercise specific authority that has been delegated to it.

Committees may be composed of people who are not members of the Board, although a member of the Board shall chair all committees.

### **STANDING COMMITTEES**

Standing Committees shall be appointed by the Chair at the first meeting of the fiscal year.

Committees can present a report at the regular Board meeting. Committee Chairs shall serve one (1) year.

Committees of the Board may include but are not limited to the following:

- Buildings and Grounds
- Finance Committee
- Human Resources & Operations (Personnel, Programs, Policies)
- Technology & Public Relations
- Nomination Committee (Board Officers, see III.6)

### **AD HOC COMMITTEES**

The Chair or Board may create ad hoc committees to serve specific purposes with appointments to such committees made by the Chair. Such committees shall continue until their purpose has been realized or until it is dissolved by the Chair or Board. These committees may include staff and public representatives, as well as outside experts.

## **ARTICLE IX. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

1. Board Members may not in their private capacity negotiate, bid for, or enter contracts with the Cleveland Bradley County Public Library in which they have a direct or indirect financial interest.
2. A Board Member must withdraw from Board discussion, deliberation, and votes on any matter in which the Board Member, an immediate family member, or an organization with which the Board Member is associated has a substantial financial interest.
3. A Board Member may not receive anything of value reasonably expected to influence his/her vote or other official action.

## **ARTICLE X. GENERAL**

1. An affirmative vote of the majority of all Members of the Board present at the time (with quorum) shall be necessary to approve any action before the Board. The Chair may vote upon and may move or second a proposal before the Board.
2. These bylaws are adopted under Tennessee Code Annotated 10-3-104 and may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board when a quorum is present, provided the amendment was stated in the notice for the meeting. Amendments must be passed by three-quarters of all Board members.

These bylaws replace all prior bylaws governing the Cleveland Bradley County Public Library Board of Trustees.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Board of Trustees Chair

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Library Director

*These bylaws were adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Cleveland Bradley County Public Library on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January 2008. Updated November 27, 2012, September 26, 2017, February 12, 2025.*

## **Cleveland Bradley County Library Board Code of Ethics**

As a member of the Cleveland Bradley County Library Board of Trustees, I support the mission of a public library in a free society. More specifically, I shall:

- Work to ensure that the public has equal access to information, both as a Constitutional right and as the best way to sustain a democratic way of life.
- Support the maintenance of a complete and balanced library collection.
- Resist all efforts by groups or individuals to censor library materials.
- Work toward meeting the individual library and information needs of all customers.
- Maintain an independent judgment free of personal benefits, special interests, and partisan political groups.
- Protect the right to privacy of library customers by keeping confidential any information about materials consulted or borrowed.
- Keep all library policies free of racism, sexism, and other bigotries.

As a Cleveland Bradley County Library Trustee, I recognize that a positive working relationship with the Library Director and the staff is crucial to the well-being of the library and the delivery of good library service. I shall:

- Work with the Library Director and other appropriate officials to see that the library receives adequate funding.
- Recognize and support the need for professional development of the staff.
- Be aware of - not administer - the implementation of plans and policies and participate in the evaluation of the general effectiveness of the Cleveland Bradley County Library.
- Respect the professional expertise of the library staff and acknowledge that the internal operation of the libraries is the responsibility of the Library Director.
- Listen to all concerns of the public, refer all complaints to the Library Director; and act on such complaints at a public meeting only after the Director has reviewed them.
- As a library board member, I agree that my responsibilities are limited to making policy, planning and goal setting, adopting budgets, authorizing payments, serving on board work committees, evaluating the director(s), and encouraging effective service programs. More specifically, I realize that my responsibilities are to:

- Attend board meetings regularly and, when attendance is impossible, notify the Director or Board Chair.
- Understand that, if I attend less than 50% of regular board meetings, I may be asked to submit my resignation.
- Expect thorough and appropriate program and financial reports from the Director.
- Read the distributed materials before each meeting.
- Lend expertise and leadership to the board for achieving the goals of the library.
- Participate in discussions and votes.
- Serve on committees as needed.
- Keep abreast of important developments in library trends and practices.
- Become familiar with national, state, and local laws, and with rules and regulations regarding libraries.
- Follow legal, professional, and ethical practices in making decisions.
- Scrupulously avoid personal conflicts of interest and do not condone them in others.
- Adhere strictly to the open meetings law.
- Not say anything in a board meeting that could be construed to violate anyone's civil rights.
- Recognize that authority rests with the whole board assembled in public meetings; therefore, I shall make no personal statements or promises nor take any private action that may compromise the board.
- Support the actions taken by a majority of the board and differentiate personal opinions from board decisions.
- Collaborate with other boards, policymakers, and agencies to the best of my ability to improve the county libraries and their services.
- Actively participate in regional and state activities.
- Support regional, state, and national library development programs that enhance local library development.
- Support and promote the public library as an indispensable part of a livable community.