

# Bellingham Public Library Policy

**Title:** 1.201 BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES BYLAWS

**Code:** 1 Administration Services  
**Chapter:** 1.200 Library Board of Trustees

**Type of Policy:** Departmental  
**Date Developed:** 11 January 1966  
**Date Revised:** 9 July 1985, 20 June 1989, 16 January 1996, 15 July 2008, 19 November 2013  
**Revised by:** Library Board of Trustees, Pam Kiesner  
**Developed by:** Claudia McCain  
**Approved By:** Library Board of Trustees

**Cancels:** Section 111, Subsection 1 Bylaws  
**See Also:**

**Library policy:**

[1.202 Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees Code of Ethics](#)  
[1.203 Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees Job Description](#)

**Codes and Laws:**

[RCW 27.12.210 Library Trustees -- Organization -- Bylaws -- Powers and duties](#)  
[RCW 27.12.190 Library Trustees -- Appointment, election, removal, compensation](#)  
[RCW 42.30 Open Public Meetings Act](#)  
[RCW 42.56 Public Records Act](#)  
[Bellingham Municipal Code 3.08.010 Citizenship and Elector Requirements](#)  
[Bellingham City Charter 7.02 Library Boards](#)

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## Scope

These bylaws apply to the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees as they transact their business.

## Policy/Conditions

### **Article I – Identification**

The name of the organization is the Bellingham Public Library, located in Bellingham, Washington. The name of this Board is the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees. Both organizations exist by the provisions of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW 27.12) and of the City Charter of Bellingham (7.02).

### **Article II – Purpose**

The purpose of the Board of Trustees is to provide governance to the Library so it can fulfill its mission: Connecting Our Community with Each Other and the World: READ . LEARN . MEET . DISCOVER. The Board plays an active role in understanding library needs of the community. The Board represents and advocates for the community to the Library Administration. In turn, the Board builds support for the Library by promoting library services to the community.

## **Article III – Board membership**

**Section 1: Number and Qualifications:** The Board of Trustees is composed of five members as appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council. Each member must be a citizen of the United States, a resident of the State of Washington for at least three years and of the City of Bellingham for at least two years previous to their appointment as a Board member. (Municipal Code 3.08.010).

**Section 2: Term of Office:** The term of office of trustees shall be five years. No trustee will serve more than two full consecutive terms. A former trustee can be reappointed to a third term after a lapse of one year. If a member is appointed to serve an unexpired term of office and serves more than half of the five year term, it shall be considered a full term of office. Trustees serve without recompense.

**Section 3: Disqualifications and Vacancies:** Trustees may be removed from the Board by the City Council for just cause. Trustees may be removed if: the Trustee moves out of the City of Bellingham, resigns, is absent from three successive meetings without good cause, or violates the Board bylaws or Code of Ethics. When vacancies are voluntary, the Chairperson is responsible for declaring the position vacant and notifying the Mayor. The Chairperson, by direction of the Board, may suggest names of qualified persons to the Mayor to fill the vacancy. When the Board has concerns about the performance of a Board member which may violate the Board bylaws or Code of Ethics, the Board may notify the City Council for assistance in deciding whether the Trustee should be removed from the Board.

## **Article IV – Board Officers**

**Section 1: Officers:** Officers serve for one year or until successors are installed. Elections will take place annually. An Officer may be re-elected to the same office during their term of service. Vacancies in office will be filled by vote at the next regular meeting of the Board after the vacancy occurs.

**Section 2: Chairperson:** The duties of the Chairperson are: to preside at all meetings of the Board, authorize a call for a special meeting, appoint all committees, execute authorized documents, serve as an ex officio member of all committees, and perform all other usual Chair duties. The Chairperson is a full voting member of the Board of Trustees.

**Section 3: Vice Chairperson:** The Vice Chairperson will assume the duties of the Chairperson in the event of the absence or disability of the Chairperson.

## **Article V – Committees**

**Section 1: Standing and Ad hoc Committees:** will be formed as needed. The Board will determine a committee's function, term of service, membership and communication duties when a committee is formed. The Board Chairperson will disband ad hoc committees when their purpose is served.

## **Article VI – Meetings**

**Section 1: Conform to the Laws of Washington:** The Library Board will conduct its meetings to conform to the Open Public Meetings Act (RCW 42.30) and the Public Records Act (RCW 42.56).

**Section 2: Regular Meetings:** The Library Board meets on the third Tuesday of each month, time to be designated, at the Bellingham Public Library or at a place and time designated for the meeting and so advertised at least 48 hours before the meeting.

**Section 3: Special Meetings:** Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the Chairperson or upon request of two members or the Director, for the transaction of business as stated in the meeting request. Notice stating the time and place of any special meeting and the purpose for which it was called will be given to each member of the Board of Trustees and advertised to the public at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

**Section 4: Quorum:** A quorum for transaction of business shall consist of three or more members of the Board, which is a simple majority.

**Section 5: Attendance by Telephone or Other Electronic Communication:** In rare circumstances and with pre-approval by the Chairperson of the Board, a Board member may participate by telephone or other means of telecommunication or electronic communication. Members appearing remotely shall be counted towards the quorum required to transact business and may fully participate in the meeting, e.g. make motions, second motions, and vote, as though they were present in person. A person appearing remotely shall state on the record that no other individuals are able to hear closed Executive Session discussions.

**Section 6: Order of Business:** at regular meetings may include, but not be limited to the following items, some of which may be included as Consent Agenda items:

- Call to Order
- Adoption/Amendment to Agenda
- Public Comment
- Minutes
- Financial Report
- Approval of Claims
- Library Statistics
- Reports and comments: Board members, City Council Liaison, Library Director
- Communications
- Library Issues and Events
- Policy Review
- Trustee Education
- Summary and discussion of future agenda items
- Adjournment

**Section 7: Parliamentary Procedure:** Roberts Rules of Order (latest revised edition) governs the parliamentary procedures of the Board. All decisions and actions will be made by a majority vote of the Board following a motion and a second. The manner in which votes are taken is at the discretion of the Chairperson and may be voice, hand or written ballots.

## **Article VII – Library Director**

The Library Director is the executive officer of the Board and has sole charge of the administration of the library under the direction and review of the Board. The Library Director is responsible for the care of the buildings and equipment, for the employment and direction of the staff, for the effectiveness of the library's service to the public, and for the operation of the library under the financial conditions set forth in the annual budget. The Library Director or his/her designee will attend all Board meetings except those executive sessions pertaining to his/her job performance or salary.

## **Article VIII – Amendments**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Board with a quorum present, by majority vote of the members present, providing the amendment was stated at the preceding meeting or published in the agenda for that meeting.