



# **Western Sullivan Public Library**

## **RULES OF GOVERNANCE for the BOARD OF TRUSTEES of WESTERN SULLIVAN PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**ADOPTED: 14 AUGUST 2000**

**REVISED: 9 January 2017; 9 November 2020, June 2021**

**REVIEWED: July 8, 2024, July 14, 2025**

### **PREAMBLE**

The Board of Trustees (hereinafter designated as the “Board”) of the Western Sullivan Public Library, a corporation created under a charter granted under Section 253 of the New York State Education Law by the Board of Regents of the State of New York and dated December 15, 2000, shall be governed by the laws of New York State, the regulations of the Commissioner of Education, and the following bylaws.

### **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The corporate name of this Library shall be Western Sullivan Public Library hereinafter referred to as the Library; branches shall be located in Callicoon, Jeffersonville, and Narrowsburg, Sullivan County, New York.

### **ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

The fundamental objective of the Library shall be to provide free access to books and other media for the residents of the Sullivan West Central School District. The library is dedicated to providing materials, programs and other services to promote the education, knowledge and creativity in the communities it serves, as well as to provide materials and information representing diverse points of view on current and historical issues, carry out all aspects of its operations in accordance with the laws and regulations of the United States of America and the State of New York, and shall not deny or abridge any person’s rights to use the Library because of origin, gender, age, background, or beliefs.

### **ARTICLE III – BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

SECTION 1. The Board, shall be empowered to act for and in behalf of the Library in setting up policies and procedures, regulating any matter not fully covered by its bylaws and policies, enforce all the objectives of the Library, direct the transaction of its business which shall be consistent with current or established policies of the Library and the laws and regulations of the State of New York and the United States of America, and shall have the power to hear and determine all protests or disputes arising from or because of misconception of the terms or conditions of its bylaws or policies.

SECTION 2. The Board shall consist of nine members each of whom shall be elected by the qualified voters of the Sullivan West Central School District.

SECTION 3. Voting members of the Board shall be at least 18 years of age and residents of the Sullivan West Central School District.



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SECTION 4. The term of office for all trustees shall be for five years.

SECTION 5. Vacancies that occur for reasons other than the expiration of a term shall be filled by appointment by the Board. Such an appointed trustee shall serve until the next annual vote at which time an election shall be held for the remainder of the unexpired term. A trustee's change in residence out of the district or resignation shall automatically create a vacancy for library trustee.

SECTION 6. Any trustee who fails to attend three consecutive regular meetings of the Board without notifying the Director or the Board President shall be considered resigned; the Secretary is obliged to inform the Board of the foregoing so that this vacancy may be filled as provided in Section 5 above. The Secretary shall inform the vacated trustee of such action by the Board.

SECTION 7 The Board shall have full power to appropriate funds in order to carry out the work of the Library, and to make all proper provisions and regulations for the management, direction, preservation, and security of the building, its grounds, and its contents; and conduct the affairs of the Library in a manner which it deems to be for the public good.

SECTION 8. No salaried employee of the Library or any volunteer who is involved with the daily operations of the Library shall be eligible for election or appointment as a Library trustee;

### ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

SECTION 1. The officers of the Board shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, Financial Officer, and such others as may be determined by the Board.

SECTION 2. **Terms:** All officers shall be elected for a one-year term by the Board from among its members at its Reorganizational Meeting to serve until the next Reorganizational Meeting. No member of the Board may serve in the same office for more than three consecutive terms.

SECTION 3. **Removal or Replacement:** An officer may be removed from office for just cause and after fair hearing by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board.

SECTION 4 ~~5~~. Should an office become vacant, the President shall be empowered to appoint a trustee with the approval of the Board to that vacant office.

### ARTICLE V – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1. The **President** shall preside over all Board meetings, carry out all its decisions, maintain order, create and appoint all necessary committees and coordinate their activities, act as ex-officio member of all committees, call special meetings when deemed advisable with one week's notice, and, in general, do everything in his/her power to expedite the business of the Library and general welfare of its trustees, staff, and members.

SECTION 2. The **Vice-President**, in the absence or disability of the President or a vacancy in that office, shall act with full power and authority in the absence of the President and shall perform such other duties as the Board of Trustees shall prescribe.



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SECTION 3. The **Secretary** shall carry on all routine correspondence of the Board, read all important correspondence at all meetings as directed by the President, keep accurate minutes of all proceedings of the Board, maintain a roster of names and addresses of the Library trustees, keep a roll of attendance of each meeting, and keep such records and documents of the Library as may accrue.

SECTION 4. The **Financial Officer** shall maintain communication with the Director and Bookkeeper to assure that accurate records are being kept.

### ARTICLE VI: LIBRARY DIRECTOR

The Library Director, appointed by the Board, shall serve as advisor to the Board; be responsible for the administration of the Library and its staff under the general policies approved by the Board; be directly responsible to the Board and through the Board to the community; attend all meetings of the Board but have no vote; submit monthly reports to the Board concerning activities, condition, and affairs of the Library and its staff; prepare such regular reports, papers, and statistics as may be periodically required by the laws and regulations of the State of New York; notify the Board of appointments, dismissals, and specific duties of other staff and be responsible for the proper direction and supervision of such staff; be responsible for the care and maintenance of library property and for an adequate and proper selection of books, other media, and furnishings in keeping with the stated policy of the Board for the efficiency of library service to the public.

### ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. The President shall appoint all standing committees and such others as the business of the Board may require from time to time.

SECTION 2. Each standing committee shall consist of at least one trustee who shall be chairman.

SECTION 3. All committees shall serve at the pleasure of the President and shall be considered discharged upon the termination of their charge or upon the completion of the chairman's term of office.

SECTION 4. Some suggested standing committees may be as follows: building, finance, bylaws and policies, and personnel; and, their duties shall be such as are associated with the name or as shall be assigned to them by action of the Board; the Library Director may serve as consultant to these committees.

SECTION 5. All standing committees shall meet as necessary to carry out their functions; and, each committee chairman shall report the committee's actions to the Board.

SECTION 6. The Executive committee shall consist of the Board officers, shall serve as a planning committee for the Board, and shall act on behalf of the Board in emergencies between regular meetings in a manner consistent with existing Board policies and subject to the review of the Board at the next regular meeting.

### ARTICLE VIII – FINANCE

SECTION 1. The fiscal year for the Library shall be July 1 to June 30.



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SECTION 2. All receipts and disbursements are subject to a monthly review by and approval of the Board. The funds of the Library shall be deposited in a bank or other financial institution to be selected by the Board. All financial obligations of the Library shall be discharged by check and signed by any Board member so designated. Financial institutions and designated signers shall be chosen annually at the Reorg meeting. All receipts and disbursements are subject to a monthly review by and approval of the Board.

SECTION 3. All financial records and accounts may be audited either by an independent accountant or by a committee appointed by the Board. The Board shall determine the appropriate procedure for conducting such an audit.

SECTION 4. The Library shall have the power to accept any grant, gift, or donation of money from any source deemed advisable by the Board. This money will be used to aid the Library to carry out its objectives. Existing and future gifts can be designated for a specific branch of the Library.

### ARTICLE IX – MEETINGS

SECTION 1. **Regular meetings** of the Board shall be held monthly at dates, times, and places to be established by the Board at the Reorganizational Meeting.

SECTION 2. A **special meeting** of the Board may be called at any time either by the President with the consent of three trustees, or by a two-thirds majority of the Board, or by petition to the Board which shall contain at least twenty-five signatures of qualified voters; such a call for a special meeting shall indicate the specific order of business in an agenda and no other may be transacted; and, no less than five days nor more than ten days' notice must be given to all trustees of such a special meeting.

SECTION 3. The **Reorganizational Meeting** of the Board shall be held immediately prior to the regular meeting in July for the purpose of electing officers, swearing in of new members and officers, setting the annual calendar, and making appropriate appointments.

SECTION 4. The **Annual Vote** will be held in April at a date to be determined by the Board. The purpose of the Annual Vote will be election of trustees and a vote on the tax appropriation.

SECTION 5. A **Quorum** is necessary to conduct and transact the business of this Library at a regular or special meeting of the Board. A quorum shall consist of five trustees, at least one of whom must be an officer. A majority of the entire Board, not simply of that present, is required for the Board to take any official action.

SECTION 6. In order to facilitate the orderly conduct of business of all meetings, Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary guide, the edition of which shall be determined by the Board.

SECTION 7. To decide any motion or election at any meeting of the Board, no vote by proxy and/or absentee ballot shall be recognized. A trustee may vote by being physically present or by prearranged video conferencing.

SECTION 8. Remote participation is authorized for regular board meetings, subject to the conditions and restrictions imposed by the Open Meetings Law of the State of New York, and subject to such orders as the Governor or other relevant authorities may issue in case of public emergency.



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SECTION 9. 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. Call to Order
- ii. Open Public Comments
- iii. Approval of prior meeting minutes
- iv. Financial report
- v. Director's report
- vi. New business
- vii. Unfinished Business
- viii. Committee reports
- ix. Friends of the Library report
- x. Dates to Remember
- xi. Correspondence
- xii. Adjournment

### ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1: These rules of governance for the Board may be amended at any regular meeting by two-thirds vote of all trustees provided that a written notice of the proposed amendment be contained in the call for that meeting and such notice be given to all trustees at least one week prior.

SECTION 2: 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.