

BYLAWS of the BOARD of TRUSTEES of the GROTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Last Revised: October 14, 2025

ARTICLE I. NAME AND AUTHORIZATION

The legal name of this organization is the Board of Trustees of the Groton Public Library. The Board exists by virtue of the authority granted under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, Sections 10-13 and 21, the Groton Town Charter, and Town Bylaws.

ARTICLE II. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board shall be composed of six (6) members, two (2) of whom shall be elected each year at the Annual Town Elections, as provided for in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 78, Section 10, and Groton's Town Charter. Trustees serve without compensation for a term of three (3) years.

1. Resignation

Any Trustee may resign by written notice filed with the Town Clerk and the Chair as provided for in Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 41, § 109 and Groton's Town Charter. Upon receipt of the notice, the Chair shall notify the remaining members of the Board.

2. Vacancy

A vacancy on the Board shall be publicly noticed, and all applicants interviewed in public session. The Trustees shall select a preferred candidate by majority vote. The candidate shall then be presented to a joint meeting of the Library Trustees with the Select Board and appointed until the next Town Election by a joint majority vote of both Boards, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 41, § 11 and Groton's Town Charter.

3. Assumption of Office

For purposes of determining quorum and voting eligibility, only 'trustees then in office' shall be counted. A Trustee-Elect becomes a trustee in office only after (a) taking the oath of office and (b) the official commencement of their elected or appointed term, whichever occurs later. Until both conditions are satisfied, a Trustee-Elect shall not vote and shall not be counted toward the quorum.

Trustee-Elects who have not yet met these requirements are not considered vacant positions.

4. Attendance

Any Trustee who misses four (4) consecutive regularly scheduled Board meetings may receive a letter from the Chair, expressing the Board's concern about attendance and requesting a communication regarding the Trustee's continued commitment to the role. Copies of these letters shall be included in the Board's minutes. In the event of illness or other extenuating circumstances, exceptions to this provision may be made by a formal vote of the Board.

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ARTICLE III. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board shall have those responsibilities as provided by M.G.L. ch. 78, § 11, and Groton's Town Charter and Bylaws as regards the custody and management of the Library and of all property owned by the Town pertaining to the Library. The Board shall be responsible for all monies appropriated by the Town for the Library and all money or property received by the Town by gift or bequest for the Library. The Board shall approve the Library Director's request for expenditures from the various library resources.

1. Director

The Board shall appoint a qualified Library Director who shall serve as the executive and administrative officer of the Library, acting on behalf of the Board and under its review and direction. Delegated responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to: implementation of policies approved by the Board, selection and supervision of personnel, selection of books and other materials, maintenance of library collections and facilities, expenditure of funds within the approved budget, direction of library operations, and the provision of services to the public. The Library Director shall attend all Board meetings. The Board shall execute a written employment contract with the Library Director outlining the basic conditions of employment as provided for in M.G.L. ch. 78, § 34.

2. Policy

The Board shall establish written policies governing library activities and services, including a policy for the selection of library materials and the use of library materials and facilities which is in accord with the current standards of the American Library Association as provided for by the M.G.L. ch. 78, § 33.

3. Planning

The Board shall engage in an ongoing planning process which assesses the needs of the Library and the role of the Library in the community; and ensure that the Library meets those needs.

The Board shall oversee the development of the annual budget with the Director, formally adopt the final budget document, participate in its presentation to Town Boards and Officials, and actively advocate for its adoption by the municipality.

Through the Library Director, the Board shall monitor the maintenance of buildings and grounds, and regularly review facility needs to ensure they meet the requirements of the total library program.

4. Advocacy

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The Board shall speak and act as an advocate for the Library in the community and participate in an active public relations program.

The Board shall study and support legislation that will benefit the Library, and the larger library community of which it is a part.

ARTICLE IV. Officers

The Officers of the Board shall be Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary.

1. Duties of Officers

The Chair shall conduct all meetings, appoint all committees after discussion with the Trustees, serve as the official representative of the Board, prepare the monthly agenda in collaboration with the Director, and fulfill all legal functions on behalf of the Board.

The Vice-Chair, in the absence of the Chair, shall perform the duties of the Chair.

The Secretary shall ensure all meetings are posted as required by law, keep an accurate record of all Board meetings, and be responsible for correspondence as directed by the Board.

2. Term of Officers

Officers shall be elected for a one-year term from among the Trustees at the regular meeting which immediately follows the Annual Town Elections. In the event of a vacancy in any Officer position during the year, that vacancy shall be filled by a majority vote of the Trustees then in office.

ARTICLE V. Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held at the Library on the second Tuesday of each month beginning at 7:00 p.m. Trustees shall notify the Chair in advance if they are unable to attend a meeting.

1. Quorum

A quorum shall be a majority of the Trustees then in office. Vacant positions shall not be included in the calculation of the quorum.

For rules defining when a Trustee-Elect is considered 'in office' for quorum purposes, see Article II, Assumption of Office.

2. Special Meetings

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Special meetings may be called by the Chair, or at the request of two (2) members.

3. Open Meetings

All meetings of the Board shall be subject to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. ch. 39, § 23A–23C. All meetings are open to the public unless held in executive session in accordance with the law. A notice of all meetings shall be filed with the Town Clerk at least 48 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) in advance of the meeting date and time. A copy of the notice shall be posted on the Town’s public calendar and in the Town Hall. All approved meeting minutes shall be available for public inspection at the Library and on the Library’s website.

4. Agenda

There shall be a prepared agenda that includes: a call to order; approval of the minutes of previous meetings; a report from the Library Director; reports from other Library Staff; reports from committees; action items; and other business.

ARTICLE VI. Committees

1. Standing Committees

The Chair appoints the following Standing Committees:

- a) Budget and Finance
- b) Building and Equipment
- c) Policy, Personnel, and Planning

The Chair shall be eligible to serve as an ex officio member of all committees.

The duties of Standing Committees, in conjunction with the Library Director, are as follows:

a) **Budget and Finance**

This Committee shall prepare an annual budget, represent the Board at Finance Committee meetings during which the library budget is discussed, monitor the Library’s financial performance against the budget, and propose appropriate actions in response to variations in the financial needs of the Library.

b) **Building and Equipment**

This Committee shall prepare and continually update a five-year plan for the repair, maintenance, and enhancement of the library building and grounds, and oversee the implementation of any new equipment. The plan should reflect the needs of the upcoming

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year and the five-year schedule of necessary or desired building, grounds, and significant equipment or property improvements.

c) **Policy, Personnel, and Planning**

This Committee shall annually review the bylaws, policies, and strategic plans, and shall facilitate the review of the Library Director's employment contract for the Board's approval every three years or as needed. The Committee may also work with the Library Director on staffing and service needs analysis, with recommendations shared with the Budget and Finance Committee and the full Board.

2. **Special Committees**

Special committees for the study and investigation of special needs or for the performance of specially assigned tasks may be appointed by the Chair. Such committees shall function as ad hoc committees and shall consider only that purpose for which they were appointed. They shall disband once their work is complete.

3. **Reports**

All committees shall make a progress report to the Library Board at each of its meetings.

ARTICLE VII. Collective Authority of the Board

The Board makes all decisions as a collective body. No individual member may make decisions or, except for the Chair, act or speak for the Board unless specifically authorized to do so by a vote of the Board.

ARTICLE VIII. Parliamentary Rules

Except as provided for by these bylaws, the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern.

ARTICLE IX. Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board with a quorum present, by a two-thirds vote of the Trustees present and voting, providing that written notice of the proposed amendment was provided to all Trustees at the previous regular meeting.

ARTICLE X. Inconsistent Provisions

To the extent that any provision of these Bylaws is inconsistent with any provision of the Massachusetts General Laws or Groton's Town Charter or Bylaws, the Massachusetts General Laws or Groton's Town Charter or Bylaws, as the case may be, shall govern.