

MEMBERSHIP AND TRUSTEES OF THE BOARD

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This policy is based on the provisions of the Illinois Public Library District Act, herein referred to as "Act."

Membership and Offices

The Board of Trustees of the Winnebago Public Library District consists of seven members elected by the voters of the district to serve staggered four-year terms. Trustee elections are held every two years during the consolidated general election in the spring. The board of trustees consists of four officers and three members at large.

To be eligible to serve, a trustee must be a qualified elector and must currently reside within the library district.

Nomination of Candidates; Ballot

- (a) Trustees are nominated by petition, signed by qualified voters residing within the library district, and filed with the board secretary within the timeframe prescribed by the Illinois Election Code. Petitions must not include any reference to political parties or affiliations.
- (b) The secretary of the board shall certify all candidates to the appropriate election authority, which will conduct the election in accordance with the Election Code.
- (c) Ballots for the election of trustees will not include any designation or reference to a political platform or principle.
- (d) A person is not eligible to serve as a trustee unless they are a qualified elector of the district for at least one year at the time of filing nomination papers, declaring write-in candidacy, or being considered for appointment.
- (e) Individuals are disqualified from serving as trustees if, at the time of nomination or appointment, they are in arrears on taxes or indebtedness to the district, or have been convicted of bribery, perjury, or any felony or infamous crime in a court of the United States.

Resignations

Trustee resignations must be submitted in writing, signed and dated by the resigning member, and delivered to the secretary of the board. Email and other informal communication methods are not acceptable for this purpose.

Vacancies

- (a) A vacancy on the board will be declared when a trustee:
 - Declines, fails, or is unable to serve;
 - Ceases to reside in the district;
 - Is convicted of a misdemeanor by failing, neglecting, or refusing to discharge any duty imposed upon him or her by this Act;

- Fails to pay taxes owed to the district.
- (b) Absence without cause from three consecutive regular board meetings will be grounds for declaring a vacancy.
- (c) Vacancies will be filled as soon as possible by appointment by the remaining trustees until the next regular election. If the vacancy occurs with less than 28 months remaining in the term and less than 88 days before the next regularly scheduled election the appointee will serve the remainder of the term.

Compensation of Trustees

Trustees serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

Organization of Board, Qualifications and Oath

- (a) Within 74 days of election or appointment, all new trustees will take their oath of office and participate in an organizational meeting of the board.
- (b) Trustees will be deemed qualified upon certification by the election or appointing authority and upon taking the required oath before a notary or the board secretary.
- (c) Within 60 days of board organization, the secretary will submit a report listing the names, addresses, and terms of all trustees and officers to the county clerk and the Illinois State Library. Any changes in board composition must be reported within 60 days.
- (d) Officers serve terms established by ordinance not to exceed four years. Vacant officer positions will be filled by board election for the remainder of the term.

Failure to Fulfill Duties

Any trustee who fails or neglects to perform duties required under the Act may be found guilty of a petty offense and subject to the appropriate fine.

Board and Officer Responsibilities

President

- a. Collaborates with the director and secretary to prepare board meeting agendas.
- b. Presides over board meetings as discussion leader.
- c. Represents the board at public events and ensures public statements reflect board positions.
- d. Assigns responsibilities to board members as needed.
- e. Acts as a board representative in policy matters.
- f. Signs official documents and appoints liaisons to outside organizations.
- g. Oversees ethical compliance and addresses trustee conduct issues.
- h. Has one vote as a board member and does not hold veto power.

Vice President

- a. Acts in place of the president when absent.
- b. Assumes all presidential duties during prolonged absences, prompting the election of a new vice president if necessary.

Secretary

The secretary keeps and maintains appropriate records and performs the duties of that office, which include the following:

- a. Prepares agendas in collaboration with the president and director.
- b. Records meeting proceedings and issues draft minutes before the next meeting.
- c. Ensures minutes are approved, archived, and published in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.
- d. Maintains all ordinances, resolutions, and official records.
- e. Administers oaths, serves as election official, and ensures timely filing of Statements of Economic Interest.
- f. Sees that the Statement of Economic Interest paperwork is filed with the Winnebago County by its annual due date.
- g. Maintains a board calendar accessible to all trustees and staff.

The Illinois Open Meetings Act requires that all board meeting minutes—including closed (or executive) sessions—be prepared and securely archived. Open session minutes must be made publicly available. In June and December, the secretary must review and report to the board all closed session minutes to determine whether they should remain confidential. (Closed session minutes must be reviewed every six months to determine whether the need for confidentiality exists 5 ILCS 120/2.06(d).)

Treasurer

The treasurer keeps and maintains appropriate records and performs the duties of that office which include the following:

- a. Reviews and authorizes bill payments.
- b. Signs checks as authorized.
- c. Presents monthly financial reports and reconciliations for board approval.
- d. Ensures payroll software is current to maintain federal and state compliance.
- e. Manages investments and tax levy filings.
- f. Files the annual financial report with the state within six months of the fiscal year end.
- g. Assists in budget development and execution of annual audits.
- h. Reviews bank and credit card reconciliations.
- i. Ensures timely payment of payroll taxes.
- j. Maintains appropriate insurance policy coverage.
- k. Provides a surety bond, approved by the board, equal to or at least 10% of the prior year's received funds. Bond costs are covered by the library.

Trustees

Trustees are expected to:

- a. Attend and actively participate in board meetings.
- b. Review meeting materials in advance.
- c. Support board decisions and serve on assigned committees.
- d. Dedicate time outside board meetings for board-related work as necessary.
- e. Participate in approved fundraising and public relations efforts.

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- f. Represent the library at community events.
- g. Stay informed about library trends and legal requirements through professional development (such as ILA, ALA, etc.).
- h. Serve as advocates for library services and ethical leadership.

Ethics Ordinance

The board of trustees complies fully with the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/).

Ethical Responsibilities

- a. Remove yourself from decisions involving conflicts of interest.
- b. Foster respectful, collaborative board relationships; avoid disruptive behavior.
- c. Support board decisions publicly and maintain confidentiality regarding closed sessions.
- d. Refer patron and public inquiries and complaints to the library director.
- e. Avoid involvement in staff matters, referring grievances to the director.
- f. Refrain from unauthorized or ad hoc board meetings; comply with the Open Meetings Act.
- g. Participate fully and responsibly in board activities; resign if unable to fulfill duties.
- h. Uphold intellectual freedom and resist censorship efforts.

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