

By-Laws of the Board of Trustees for the North Valley Public Library

Updated by the Library Board on 6/18/2025, 4/15/2026.

Article I - North Valley Public Library

This organization shall be called, "The Board of Trustees of the North Valley Public Library," existing by virtue of the provision 22-1-706 of Montana Code Annotated and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the said statute.

Article II - Membership and Election

Section 1. Candidates, Election, Terms.

The members of the Board of Trustees shall be those persons elected to the Board, or appointed by the Board due to a vacancy, in accordance with 22-1-706 Montana Annotated Code. The election of members must be held in conjunction with annual school elections. All members must be elected by electors of the Public Library District, which includes the electors of the Stevensville and Lone Rock School Districts. A candidate for the office of the Public Library District must be a resident of the Library District and file with the Ravalli County Office of Elections Administrator not sooner than 135 days or later than 75 days prior to the election day. If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions to be elected, the Election Administrator may cancel the election in accordance with MCA 13-1-304. If an election is not held, the county governing body of Ravalli County shall declare elected by acclamation each candidate who filed a nomination petition for a position. In the event that there are no candidates filing a nomination petition for an office, the county governing board of Ravalli County shall appoint a member to fill the term. A person appointed pursuant to this subsection has the same term and obligations as a person elected to that office. The Board of Trustees shall consist of five (5) trustees and serve without compensation. Trustees shall hold office for four (4) years from the date of their election or until their successors are appointed. The term of office of an elected board member begins on the date that the Board member is elected and qualified. A vacancy in the office of a member must be advertised and filled by appointment by the remaining members of the Board. The term of the appointed member expires upon the election and qualification of an elected successor or upon the election of a member to fill the unexpired term of the vacant office. The election must be held at the next school election. There are no term limits for Trustees.

Section 2. Vacancies.

A vacancy shall be declared by the Board.

(a) when any nominee has failed to qualify for office

or

(b) within thirty days when any Trustee may

- (1) die
- (2) resign as a Trustee
- (3) no longer be a resident of the District
- (4) refuse to serve as a Trustee
- (5) without an excuse acceptable to the Board, fail to attend two (2) consecutive board meetings.

Article III - Officers

Section 1. Officers.

The officers of the Library District shall be a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, and a Secretary.

Section 2. Chairperson.

The Chairperson shall be elected from the Trustees and shall preside at all meetings of the board, authorize calls for any special meetings, approve all committees, execute all documents authorized by the Board, and generally perform all duties associated with that office.

Section 3. Vice Chairperson.

The Vice Chairperson shall be elected from the elected or appointed Trustees and in the event of the absence or disability of the Chairperson, or of a vacancy in that office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the Chairperson.

Section 4. Secretary.

The Secretary for the Board shall be elected from the elected or appointed Trustees. The Secretary shall insure that a true and accurate record of all meetings are presented to the Trustees for final approval. The Secretary insures that within 30 days the approved minutes are made available to the public, and effective July 2015, approved minutes are sent to the Ravalli County Clerk for electronic storage. (MCA 2017 7-1-204)

Section 5. Officer election.

The elected officers of the Board shall be elected annually by the Board at its regular meeting held in the month of May or as soon after as convenient. The term of office for all elected officers shall be one year. Any officer elected or appointed by the Board may be removed as an officer by the Board, whenever, in its judgement, the best interests of the Library could thus be served.

Article IV – Meetings

Section 1. Open Meetings.

The Board of Trustees follows Open Meeting Act as required by the Montana Constitution and Montana Statutes. Regular meetings are usually held on a uniform day each month, the day and

hour to be set by the Board and Director and on the agenda. To afford the public reasonable opportunity for citizen participation the agenda/notice is sent to Ravalli County to post on their calendar. The Ravalli County Commissioners' Assistant is sent the agenda 3 working days before the meeting. The agenda/notice is posted at the entrance of the Library at least 48 hours prior to the meeting, and on the library website. To ensure further notice and assist in public participation, the board agenda is sent to town hall to be posted, and notice of the monthly meetings is submitted to the local *Bitterroot Star* newspaper. The Board does not meet in December. When special meetings are required or the board meeting on a different date, the public is informed at least 48 hours in advance on the agenda.

Section 2. Agenda.

The business for the regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to, the following items. The order of business is dependent on guests to be respectful of their time.

Call to Order

Public Comment

Introduction of Guests & guests reports, discussion.

Approval of Minutes. (Draft minutes are public documents and may be distributed. These drafts should be marked "Unapproved Draft Minutes - Subject to Revision Prior to Final Approval."

This allows the draft to be reviewed by the public with the understanding - based on the disclaimer - that the final version will be available when approved.)

Approval of Finances

Ongoing & Unfinished Business

New Business

Board/Director Announcements & Comments

Adjournment

Section 3. Closed Sessions.

The Board may meet in closed sessions in two circumstances as per MCA 2-3-203

If the presiding officer determines that the demands of individual privacy clearly exceed the merits of public disclosure. The right of individual privacy may be waived by the individual about whom the discussion pertains, and, in that event, the meeting must be open." The individual whose rights of privacy will be considered during the possible closed session shall be notified in writing of the meeting. Personnel matters, library directors' evaluation, possible closed session in accordance with 2-3,203 subsection 3."

To discuss a strategy to be followed with respect to litigation. This exception does not apply if the litigation involves only public bodies or associations as parties. Before closing a meeting for litigation purposes, the Library may consult legal counsel on the appropriateness of this action.

The possibility of a closed session shall be noted on the agenda item appearing on the public notice published as per/pursuant 2-3-203.

No formal action shall take place during any closed session. Closed session meeting minutes shall be completed in accordance with Montana law 2-3-212. Votes are always in open session.

Section 4. Special Meetings.

Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson for the transaction of business as stated in the call for the meeting. Written notice of the special meeting will be given to Board members at least 3 working days prior to the day of the meeting and posted as outlined in Article IV Section 1.

Section 5 Quorum.

A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of three (3) members of the Board present in person or electronically, but a smaller number may make a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Section 6. Conduct of Meetings.

Conduct of the meetings shall be governed by informal Robert's Rules of Order.

Article V. Levy and Budget

The board will annually consider a permissive medical levy for health care premium increases. The Library Director shall prepare an annual budget for the ensuing fiscal year with the Board's input. The board of trustees shall annually approve a final budget and resolution and present it to Ravalli County (MCA 22-1-708). The following notices and timeline will be adhered to:

On the last Thursday in July the Director will submit to the Bitterroot Star newspaper a legal notice of a public hearing for permissive medical levy to be published on the first two Wednesdays in August.

The levy hearing will take place on the third Wednesday in August before the regular board meeting at which the levy will be voted upon by the board and a resolution passed. The Director will submit the resolution to the County at the conclusion of the meeting.

On the Last Thursday in August the Director will submit to the Bitterroot Star newspaper a legal notice of a public hearing on the annual budget to be published on the first two Wednesday in September.

The budget hearing will take place on the third Wednesday in September before the regular board meeting at which the budget will be voted upon by the board and a resolution passed. The Director will submit the resolution to Ravalli County before September 30.

Article VI - Library Director and Staff

The Board shall appoint and set the compensation of a qualified Library Director who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the Library on behalf of the Board and under its review and direction. The Director shall be held responsible for the proper direction and supervision of the staff, for the care of and maintenance of the library property, for an adequate and proper selection of materials in keeping with the stated policy of the board, the efficiency of library service to the public, and for its financial operation within the limitations of the budgeted appropriation. The Director shall have the authority to fill all budgeted positions and shall report the appointments to the Board at its next regular meeting.

Article VII – Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees.

The Chairperson may appoint standing committees which serve as advisory bodies to the Board of Trustees.

Section 2. Specific Committees.

The chairperson may appoint committees of one or more members each for specific purposes as the business of the Board may require from time to time. The committee shall be considered to be discharged upon the completion of the purpose for which it was appointed and after the final report is made to the board.

Section 3. Committee Reports.

All committees shall make a progress report to the Library Board at each of its meetings. Reports shall be made either verbally or, when requested by the Chair, in writing.

Section 4. Action of Committees.

No committee will have other than advisory powers unless, by suitable action of the Board, it is granted specific power to act.

Article VIII – Amendments

These by-laws may be amended by a simple majority vote of all members of the Board at any meeting that has a quorum, provided written notice of the proposed amendment shall have been provided to all the members at least two days prior to the meeting at which such action is provided to be taken.

The board will review and update its bylaws as necessary every three years in compliance with Montana Public Library Standards.

Article IX – General

Section 1. Votes.

An affirmative vote of the majority of all the Board Trustees present at the time shall be necessary to approve any action taken before the Board. The chairperson may vote upon or move a proposal before the Board. A second shall be required for the Board to adopt a motion.

Section 2. Postponement of Agenda Items

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 a suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which at least three members of the Board shall be present and three of those present shall so approve.