

Board of Trustees
Whitman County Rural Library District
By-Laws

Article I: Identification

The name of the organization is Whitman County Rural Library District with headquarters in Colfax, Washington.

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of the Whitman County Rural Library District Board is to represent the library both to the people and to the governing officials. It is the trustee's obligation to see that adequate funds are obtained for good library service, to promote the best possible use of all library resources in the area, to improve existing libraries, and extend library service to those not previously served. The basic philosophy of the Library Board of Trustees shall conform to the tenets set forth in the Library Bill of Rights. (Appendix A - Policy Manual)

Article III: Board of Directors

Section 1. Number and Qualification

The governing body of the library is composed of five members as appointed by the County Commissioners.

Section 2. Term of Office

A trustee's office shall be five years. No trustee shall serve more than two full consecutive terms. A former Board member can be reappointed after a lapse of one year. If a member is appointed to serve an unexpired term of office, it does not count as a full term, leaving the option of two more terms for the member.

Section 3. Disqualification, Vacancies

A trustee's position shall be declared vacant if:

1. A trustee moves from Whitman County.
2. When any trustee fails to attend at least three consecutive meetings of the Board.
3. It shall be the duty of the Library Director, under the direction of the Board of Trustees, to advertise the opening, interview qualified applicants, and recommend the best candidate(s) to the Whitman County Board of Commissioners for appointment.

Section 4. Officers

Officers of the Board shall be chairman, vice-chairman and secretary. Officers shall be elected at the regular annual meeting in November of the previous year. An officer may succeed himself/herself. Vacancies in the office shall be filled by vote at the next regular meeting of the Board after the vacancy occurs.

The duties of the officers are as follows:

1. The chairman shall preside at meetings and perform such other duties as custom and law devolve upon the chairman.
2. The vice-chairman shall assume the duties of the chairman in the event of the absence or disability of the chairman.
3. The secretary shall assume duties appropriate to the office as needed.
4. The Director or designee shall serve as executive secretary to keep true and accurate records of all proceedings of the Board meetings. The Director has no vote on the Board.

Section 5. Indemnity Agreement

The Board of Trustees shall abide by the American Library Trustee Association indemnification statement, as follows:

“It should be considered mandatory that every library have an adequate level of insurance coverage. If any claim or action not covered by insurance or State Statute is instituted against a trustee of the Library System arising out of an act or omission by a trustee, acting in good faith for a purpose considered to be in the best interest of the System; or if any claim or action not covered by insurance or State Statute is instituted against a trustee, allegedly arising out of an act or omission occurring within the scope of their duties as such a trustee; the System shall at the request of the trustee:

1. Appear and defend against the claim or action; and
2. Pay or indemnify the trustee for a judgment and court costs, based on such a claim or action; and
3. Pay or indemnify the trustee for a compromise or settlement of such a claim or action, providing the settlement is approved by the Board of Trustees.”

Decision as to whether the System shall retain its own attorney or reimburse the trustee expenses to their own legal counsel rest with the Board of Trustees and shall be determined by the nature of the claim or action.

The term trustee shall include any former trustee of the System.

Article IV: Meetings

Section 1. Time

The Library Board shall meet on the third Tuesday of each month in the afternoon at the Whitman County Library or at the place designated at the preceding meeting.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the chairman or upon written request of three members, 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 is called shall be given each member of the Board of Trustees three days in advance of the meeting.

Section 3. Executive Sessions

The Board may go into an executive session during any meeting but they must announce the purpose of the executive session and the amount of time they expect it to take as in RCW 42.30.110 (see Appendix E). If the session lasts longer than the stated time, the Board must announce the additional time required to any members of the public in attendance.

Section 4. Quorum

A quorum for transaction of business shall consist of a simple majority.

Section 5. Open Public Meetings

The Board will follow the rules laid down in RCW 42.30 concerning the Open Public Meetings Act (see Appendix E)

Section 6. Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order, latest revised edition, shall govern the parliamentary procedure of the meetings.

Article V: Committees

Section 1. Ad Hoc Committee

Ad Hoc committees for the study of special problems shall be appointed by the chairman, with the approval of the Board, to serve until the final report of the work for which they were appointed has been filed.

Article VI: Duties of the Board of Trustees

Adhere to practice and procedures as spelled out in the Washington State Public Library trustee manual

1. Employ a qualified Library Director – maintain an on-going performance appraisal process for the Director, see Appendix X.
2. Identify and adopt written policies to govern the operation and programs of the library.
3. Ensure that the library has a long-range planning process with implementation goals and evaluation.
4. Ensure that the library has an active marketing program. Participate when appropriate.

5. Secure adequate funds and investments to carry out the library's program – assist in the preparation and presentation of the annual budget.
6. Be familiar with local, state and federal library laws, as well as any pending legislation.
7. Participate at all Board meetings and see that accurate records are kept on file. Comply with Freedom of Information regulations.
8. Attend trustee meetings and workshops.
9. Appoint liaison to attend Friends of the Library meetings.
10. Network with community members to advocate for the library and seek their input for services.

Article VII: Director

The Director shall be considered the executive officer of the Board and shall have sole charge of the administration of the library under the direction and review of the Board. The Director shall be held responsible for the care of the buildings and equipment, for the employment and direction of the staff, for the efficiency 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 Director shall attend all Board meetings.

If the Director fails in the performance of above duties the Board has the authority to ask for the resignation of said person or terminate his/her appointment, effective date of termination shall be set by the Board.

Article VIII: Mileage and Expenses

Board members may be reimbursed for mileage to attend library meetings.

Article IX: Amendments

These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board with a quorum present, by majority vote of the members present.