



BYLAWS OF THE TAMPA-HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

ARTICLE I - NAME AND AUTHORITY

Section 1 – **Name:** The name of this body shall be the *Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library Board* (the “Board”).

Section 2 – **Authority:** The Board is established pursuant to Chapter 84-443, Laws of Florida (“An act relating to Hillsborough County; creating within Hillsborough County, as a department of the County, a Public Library System...”) which became effective October 1, 1984 (the “Special Act”).

ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - **Appointment and Composition:** Pursuant to the Special Act, the membership of the Board shall be appointed by the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners (the “BOCC”) and shall be comprised of twelve (12) residents of Hillsborough County, with three members from each of the four county single-member districts.

Section 2 – **Term:** The Board members shall serve for staggered terms of three (3) years as specified in their respective appointment notices. Board members serve at the pleasure of the BOCC.

Section 3 – **Resignation and Appointment to Fill Vacancies:** A Board member may resign from the Board by written notice to the Library Director. An appointment to fill a vacancy created by death, resignation, or removal of a Board member, shall be for the remaining unexpired term only.

Section 4 – **Attendance:** In order for the public to be properly represented, the BOCC expects regular attendance by those whom they have appointed to the Public Library Board. Attendance rules may be suspended during emergency orders or superseded by Governor’s Order.

Section 5 – **Absenteeism:** A Library Board member not present at a regularly scheduled meeting, committee meeting or special meeting will be considered absent. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on an individual basis. After the occurrence of three absences from regular, committee and/or special Board meetings during a given calendar year of the board, a warning letter will be issued to the member by the Library Board Chair. Following continued absences, the BOCC Boards and Councils Director will be notified and the member may be subject to removal. Determination of whether such member shall be removed from the Library Board will be made by the BOCC by written notice to the member in question. Attendance records are provided to the BOCC at the time of each Library Board member’s reappointment.

Section 6 – **Member Emeritus:** The Library Board may from time to time, by motion and approval of a majority, designate a former Library Board member as Member Emeritus. Member Emeritus is an honorary, non-voting ceremonial title bestowed in recognition of dedicated and meritorious contribution over a period of 12 or more years of continuous service. A Member Emeritus designee serves for life or for a period

determined by the Library Board. The Member Emeritus is a member of the public whose position is not defined by the Special Act 84-443, and their participation in the meeting is limited to public comment.

ARTICLE III – MEETINGS

Section 1 – **Schedule of Regular Board meetings and Notice:** Regular meetings of the Board are held on a date and location to be determined by Library staff. Notice of regular Board meetings is provided to members at least four (4) days prior to the Board meeting and includes the agenda, date, time and location of the meeting. Meeting schedules are posted for public notice in compliance with the requirements of Florida’s Government in the Sunshine Law.

Section 2 – **Special Meetings and Notice:** Special meetings may be called by the Chair or by action of a majority of the Board at any meeting at which a quorum is present. Notice of special meetings of the Board shall be given to Board members at least two (2) days prior to the date of the special meeting (not including day of announcement). Such notice may be given verbally or in writing. Special meetings must be posted for public notice in compliance with the requirements of Florida’s Government in the Sunshine Law.

Section 3 – **Emergency Meetings and Notice:** Emergency meetings of the Board may be called at any time by the Chair, or in the absence of the Chair, by the Vice Chair, or when the circumstances dictate in the absence of the Chair and the Vice Chair, by the Director. Notice to the Board members of emergency meetings shall be reasonable under the circumstances and may be written or verbal. Notice to the public shall be that which is the most appropriate and effective under the circumstances. A Board member’s absence from an emergency meeting shall not count as an absence for purposes of Article II Section 5 above.

Section 4 – **Committee Meetings and Notice:** Committee meetings may be called by the Chair of the Board or by a committee chair through the Director or designee. Notice of committee meetings shall be given in accordance with the requirements for notice for regular meetings set forth in Section 1 of this Article III. Should a need arise to cancel a Board meeting or committee meeting, whether for lack of a quorum or otherwise, the Director or designee shall notify the Chair, and the Chair shall have authority to cancel such a meeting.

Section 5 – **Notice of Absence:** Members who are unable to attend scheduled Board meetings or committee meetings must notify the Director or designee.

Section 6 – **Director Absence:** In the event the Director is unable to attend a scheduled Board meeting, the Director will notify the Chair and appoint a member of Library Administration as the Director’s representative. For purposes of these Bylaws the term “Director” will include any appointed Interim Director.

Section 7 – **Quorum and Hybrid Meetings:** A majority of the appointed membership of the Board, present in person, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business of the Board at all meetings. In the absence of a quorum, board or committee action will be limited to discussion only. Any official action, such as voting, shall be delayed until the next meeting where a quorum is present. Hybrid meetings conducted via remote or virtual meeting technology may be utilized only where an in-person quorum is also present. So long as a physical quorum is present, any members appearing virtually are enabled to render their vote. Any member requesting virtual attendance must pre-arrange it with staff at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting.

Section 8 – **Voting:** Board members shall comply with the voting requirements of Section 286.012 Florida Statutes, as such may be amended from time to time.

Section 9 – **Order of Business for Regular meetings:** The order of business for regular meetings of the Board shall be as follows:

- Call to order
- Roll call
- Approval of the minutes
- Public comment within designated time limits
- Committee reports (as necessary)
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Director’s Report
- Adjournment

Changes in the order of business for a regular Board meeting will be at the discretion of the Chair with approval by the majority of the Board members present.

Section 10 – **Parliamentary Procedure:** *Robert’s Rules of Order*, latest revised edition, shall govern the parliamentary procedure of the Board.

Section 11 – **Minutes:** Written minutes of all meetings shall be recorded and approved Library Board minutes posted for public viewing via the Library web site, <http://www.hcplc.org/hcplc/thpl/board/>.

Section 12 – **Open Meetings:** All Board meetings and committee meetings shall be open to the public in accordance with Chapter 286 Florida Statutes.

ARTICLE IV – DUTIES

Section 1 – Duties Enumerated in the Special Act:

The duties and responsibilities of the Board enumerated in the Special Act are given below:

- a) Serve in a recommending capacity to the Director and to the County Administrator in respect to all matters pertaining to the public library system and library services.
- b) Furnish information to and advise the Director in respect to the appropriate means and methods by which adequate library facilities and services may be provided to all residents of Hillsborough County.
- c) Recommend to the County Administrator the appointment and removal of the Director.
- d) Assist the Library Services Department in the evaluation of its operations.
- e) Recommend to the Director new and innovative methods for library operations and programs.
- f) Make continuing studies of all existing and future needs of the library system in respect to public library facilities and services.
- g) Review the financial position of the library system and make reports and recommendations for a sound, feasible program for financing the costs of said system.

- h) Keep constantly aware of public library standards, trends, regulations, and legislation.
- i) Formulate and recommend to the Director actions to raise the quality of service and utilization of professional and financial assistance from state, national, and other sources.
- j) Review with the Director all book and material selection programs, plans and policies to ensure that all views of the community are represented in the selection process. Further, work with the Director in the preparation and adoption of written policies relative to the selection process within which the library staff must work.
- k) Promote and solicit bequests, donations, and contributions to the Public Library System and develop policies governing acceptance of such donations.
- l) Establish, promote and participate in a planned public relations program for the Public Library System. Interpret to the community, through the personal contacts and involvement of its members, the various services provided.
- m) Recommend to the Director contracts with the State of Florida, or any county or municipality thereof, or any non-profit library association relative to matters connected or associated with the operation of a public library or public library services and such other things as the Board deems proper.
- n) The Board shall, by its policies and/or Bylaws, establish an appellate procedure to hear and determine grievances and other complaints relative to the removal of books or other library materials from the library system. Final resolution of such complaints and requests shall be resolved by the Board pursuant to the philosophy that a library is to represent the views of the various interests of the community.

ARTICLE V – COMMITTEES

Section 1 – **Designation of Committees:** Standing and special committees shall be appointed by the Board Chair and are convened as necessary and appropriate. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Finance & Planning Committee
 - Long Range Planning Subcommittee
- Policies and Bylaws Committee
- Nominating Committee – three (3) members

Section 2 – **Committee Chairs:** The Board Chair shall appoint the chair of each committee except for the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall elect a chair from its membership by a vote of a majority of its membership.

Section 3 – **Role of the Library Board Chair on Committees:** The Chair of the Library Board shall be a member of all standing committees (except Nominating), entitled to vote only in case of a tie. All other committee members, including the committee Chair, shall each be entitled to one vote.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

Section 1 – **Election:** Every year the Board members, by majority vote of those members present and provided there is a quorum, shall elect from among their members a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary who shall take office at the conclusion of the meeting.

Section 2 – **Slate of Nominees:** The slate of nominated officers to be voted upon shall be presented by the Nominating Committee Chair at a regular meeting of the full Board. Nominations from the floor will be sought prior to the elections.

Section 3 – **Term:** No member of the Board shall be permitted to serve more than two (2) consecutive full terms in the same office.

Section 4 – Duties of Officers:

- a) CHAIR—The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board, appoint all committees, call special or emergency meetings of the Board, and generally perform the customary duties of presiding officers of the Board.
- b) VICE CHAIR—The Vice-Chair shall serve in the absence of the Chair and shall carry out the duties of the absent Chair.
- c) SECRETARY—The Secretary or the Chair’s designee shall call the roll at each meeting, monitor attendance to ensure compliance with Section 4 and 5 of Article II above and review Board minutes prior to presentation to the Board for approval.
- d) ACTING CHAIR—In the absence of the Chair and the Vice-chair at any meeting of the Board, an Acting Chair will be designated by the Library staff liaison prior to the meeting. The Acting Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair during such meeting only.

Section 5 – **Officer Vacancies:** A vacancy in any office shall be filled from nominations from the floor at a special election to be held at the next regular or special meeting of the Board immediately following the occurrence of an officer vacancy. An officer elected to fill a vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of the predecessor in office.

ARTICLE VII – BYLAWS REVIEW

Section 1 – **Annual Review:** The Board will annually review the Board’s Bylaws and policies then in force.

Section 2 – **Amendments:** Amendments to the Bylaws may be proposed by any Board member and shall be effective upon adoption by a majority vote of the Board members at any meeting at which a quorum is present. Advance written notice of the proposed amendment(s) is provided to all Board members at least four (4) days (not including the date of notice) prior to the meeting.

Section 3 – **Effective Date:** These Bylaws are effective on the date below, having been approved by a majority of the members of the Board at its regularly scheduled meeting and shall replace in their entirety any Bylaws previously adopted by the Board.

Approved by the Library Board on April 25, 2024.