

## **Board of Trustees Orientation Packet**

- Board of Trustees member responsibilities
- Confidentiality statement
- Lawrence Public Library timeline
- By-laws of the Board of Trustees
- Online resources

## **Qualifications of Board of Trustee Members**

Acceptance of a position on the Board of Trustees constitutes a public trust; therefore, care should be taken in appointment or election of trustees. Board members should represent a diversity of interests, have experience or knowledge in a variety of fields, and represent a cross-section of the community in the areas of age and socio-economic levels.

### **A good trustee will have the following qualities:**

- commitment to the health and safety of LPL staff members
- dedicated to serve as dynamic advocates for staff growth and well-being
- understanding of the community and of its needs and resources
- knowledge of the community's leaders and organizations
- interest in the library, its service, and its capacity for growth and improvement
- knowledge of the board's legal responsibility and authority
- ability to devote time and effort to board meetings and activities
- ability to work cooperatively with other board members
- willingness to represent the library at meetings and public functions
- commitment to the principle that access to library materials and information should be unrestricted by policies or practices regarding the type, subject, or nature of the information
- commitment to the confidentiality of all information used by the library's patrons
- knowledge of public library laws and federal, state, and local laws and regulations which concern libraries
- enthusiasm for carrying out new programs, including securing new funding sources for the library
- imagination, dedication, and vision

### **As a group, the library board will strive to have:**

- rapport with the entire community
- political acumen and influence
- basic business and financial skills
- understanding of legal requirements
- diversity in age, race, gender, and occupation
- varied personal backgrounds

Trustees of the library board must have compatibility of office; that is, they must not already hold an elected office in the relevant municipality.

**Officers:**

The Board of Trustees will annually elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer.

- Chair, with assistance of the library director, draws up an agenda for BOT meetings. Chair presides at BOT meetings, ensuring coverage of selected topics. Chair leads the annual evaluation of the Library Director. Chair annually updates BOT Orientation Packet and shares with members.
- Vice Chair of the board assists the Chair as needed and serves in the role of chair when the board chair is absent. Vice Chair serves as the Board of Trustees Liaison to the LPL Friends and Foundation Board.
- Treasurer will, each month, review and sign all contracts and checks, provided by the LPL Accountant.
- Secretarial duties of recording, preserving, sharing, and signing approved proceedings of each BOT meeting are undertaken by an appointed LPL staff member.

*Qualifications courtesy of the [Kansas Public Library Trustee Manual, 2026](#)*

## **Lawrence Public Library Board of Trustees Ethics and Confidentiality Statement**

Lawrence Public Library Trustees are accountable for the resources of the library and to see that the library provides the best possible service to its community. Every Trustee makes a personal commitment to contribute the time and energy to carry out his/her duties and responsibilities effectively and with absolute truth, honor, and integrity.

- Trustees shall respect the opinions of their colleagues and not be critical or disrespectful when they disagree or oppose a viewpoint different than their own.
- Trustees shall comply with all the laws, rules and regulations that apply to them and to their library.
- Trustees, in fulfilling their responsibilities, shall not be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure or fear of criticism.
- Trustees shall not engage in discrimination of any kind and shall uphold library patrons' rights to privacy in the use of library resources.
- Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the library, acknowledging and supporting the formal position of the Board even if they disagree.
- Trustees must respect the confidential nature of library business and not disclose such information to anyone. Trustees must also be aware of and in compliance with Freedom of Information laws
- Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained as a result of their position or access to privileged library information, for either themselves or others.
- A Trustee shall immediately disqualify him/herself whenever the appearance of or a conflict of interest exists.
- Trustees shall not use their position to gain unwarranted privileges or advantages for themselves or others from the library or from those who do business with the library.
- Trustees shall not interfere with the management responsibilities of the director or the supervision of library staff.
- Trustees shall support the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.

***Approved by the [United for Libraries Board](#), January 2012***

## Lawrence Public Library Historical Timeline

**1854** – Lawrence is founded in September. By October, a subscription library is planned in connection with the Kansas Atheneum. Membership is \$1 per year or a lifetime membership for \$25.

**1855** – Library is enhanced by a flatboat load of books donated by Mr. Amos Lawrence, namesake of the town. Bylaws of library states that two books could be borrowed at a time for two weeks. Overdue charges are \$.25 a week.

**1863** – The library is destroyed in William Quantrill's raid of Lawrence.

**1865** – J. S. Boughton restarts a circulating library at 735 Massachusetts Street. Books were loaned for a fee of \$.10 per week or a yearly ticket could be purchased for \$5.

**1866** – Library association organized. Purchases the lease of the building, the fixtures and the books from Mr. Boughton.

**1867** – Helen Griswold hired as first permanent librarian. Operating budget is augmented by donations and lectures by such noteworthies as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Horace Greeley.

**1871** – Library collection totals 1500 volumes, 40 newspapers and magazines subscriptions and one donated chess set. City council votes to place library under the city's jurisdiction.

**1902** – Library holdings now total over 6000 items, including an excellent collection in German. Building is insufficient for entire holdings. Peter Emery leads a successful effort to obtain a grant from Mr. Andrew Carnegie to build an exclusive structure for the library, pending voter approval of criteria. City must agree to guarantee that the library will be a free public library and provide yearly maintenance. A grant of \$27,500 is awarded.

**1903** – Voters overwhelmingly approve library proposal.

**1904** – Two lots on the corner of 9th & Vermont Streets donated by Mrs. C. P. Grovener for site of library. Building is completed and opened to the public on December 26th in the midst of a winter storm.

**1919** – Miss Lillian Constant appointed librarian.

**1936** – Registrations show that 40% of Lawrence has a library card. The building reaches its capacity for new materials.

**1937** – Addition to building is approved which doubles stack space, provides staff office and work areas and a separate newspaper/periodical room. Children's room is remodeled, also. Registration increases to 60% of the city's population.

**1942** – In cooperation with the Lawrence Parent – Teacher Association, a children's summer reading program is initiated. The library also participates in the national "Victory Books for Soldiers and Sailors" drive. Over 800 books are collected for distribution to the armed services.

**1947** – Miss Constant retires as librarian. She has served as head librarian for 28 years.

**1951** – Circulation totals over 100,000 per year. New public relations methods include a radio program and adult and children's books list in both local newspapers. Paperbacks are added to the collection.

**1953** – A record collection is begun with LP and 45rpm records. Collection is primarily classical works.

**1955** – Circulation hits a high of 141,329 items. Young adult collection is expanded.

**1957** – Improvements to the library include adding air conditioning, a second entrance and parking spaces at the rear of the building.

**1960** – Douglas County Committee for Library Services is formed with the intention of expanding library services into the rural areas of the county, with Lawrence and Baldwin City to be the main bases. County Commissioners do not support the idea. Plan is placed on countywide election ballot but is soundly defeated.

**1963** – Wayne Mayo hired as the head librarian. He will serve until his death in 1994.

**1965** – Home delivery for patrons who are unable to come to the library due to age or physical disability is initiated. Interlibrary loan is made available to Lawrence patrons.

**1966** – The nucleus of the Northeast Kansas Library System (NEKLS) is formed. 30 libraries in the designated NE Kansas area join, with the main office in Lawrence.

**1968** – 8mm films are added to the collection.

**1970** – Due to space considerations and needed building improvements, a bond issue is placed on a city – wide ballot for a new library building and is approved by the voters.

**1972** – New library is opened in August, at the corner of 7th and Vermont streets. Carnegie Association of Lawrence Library is formed as the initial Friends of the Lawrence Public Library group.

**1973** – Sunday hours are added to the library schedule. Statistics show a circulation increase of 25% since the opening of the new library.

**1978** – Several physical changes are made to the building, such as replacing window panels and lighting fixtures, in response to energy costs.

**1983** – Friends of the Library purchases first computer for public use.

**1984** – After much discussion, videotape movies are added to the collection.

**1988** – Books on audiotope are newest addition to collection.

**1991** – Library expands to the lower level. An additional reference desk is added as the periodicals, fiction, local history and genealogy material are moved to the new area. Security system is installed in lobby.

**1994** – Unexpected death of longtime director, Wayne Mayo. He had been library director for 31 years. Bruce Flanders is hired as new director. Though hired from the Kansas State Library where he had been the computer consultant, Bruce had worked at LPL while in high school and college.

**1996** – LPL initiates new computerized card catalog and circulation system.

**2004** – Lawrence Public Library celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**2006** – LPL circulates over 1,000,000 items this year.

**2010** – Voters approve an \$18 million bond to expand and renovate the library building at 7<sup>th</sup> and Vermont Streets.

**2011** – Library Foundation successfully completes its “New Stories” capital campaign, raising \$1.2 million for the new building.

**2012** – Brad Allen hired as library director.

**2013** – LPL wins grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to build a \$1.1 million humanities programming endowment for the library.

**2013** - Library moves to temporary quarters at the former Border’s Bookstore at 7<sup>th</sup> and New Hampshire Streets while new library is built.

**2014** – Newly expanded and renovated library re-opens on July 26. Approximately 12,000 people visited on opening day.

**2020** – LPL Friends & Foundation officially merge.



## **Bylaws of the Lawrence Public Library Board of Trustees**

*Adopted by the Lawrence Public Library Board of Trustees, 10/20/1997. Revised 11/17/2003; 07/18/2005; 10/13/2015; 08/20/2018; 08/17/2020; 08/21/2023; 9/16/2024. Next review date: 09/2027.*

### **Article I – Name and Authorization**

This organization shall be called The Board of Trustees of the Lawrence Public Library (the “Board”), existing by the provisions of K.S.A. 12-1222, with powers and duties as provided in K.S.A. 12-1215 and K.S.A. 12-1225 of the Laws of the State of Kansas, and Lawrence Charter Ordinance #16 and any revisions thereof.

### **Article II – Meetings**

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held monthly at such time and place as designated by a majority of the entire Board. An agenda shall be prepared by the Library Director and distributed, along with minutes of the previous meeting, to Board members not less than three days in advance of each meeting.

Special meetings may be called by the Chair or upon written request of a majority of the members of the Board. Written notice, stating the time and place of any special meeting and the purpose for which it was called, shall, unless waived, be given to each member of the Board at least two days in advance of such meeting, and no business other than that stated in the notice shall be transacted at such meeting (K.S.A. 12-1224 and K.S.A. 12-1243).

All meetings of the Board shall be subject to and in conformity with the Kansas Open Meeting Act (K.S.A. 75-4317 et seq.).

The order of business at regular Board meetings shall be:

1. Call to order
2. Consent agenda
  - a. Approve Library Board meeting minutes
  - b. Approve Treasurer’s report
  - c. Approve bills



- d. Receive statistical report
3. Library Director's report
4. Library Friends and Foundation Director's report
5. Report of committees, if any
6. New business
7. Ongoing business
8. Public Comment
9. Adjournment

This order of business may be changed at any meeting with the consent of the Board.

The Board will accept public comment at each monthly regular Board meeting, which is an opportunity for individuals to speak directly to the Board on matters pertaining to the Library. Speakers are given an opportunity of three minutes to speak. Order is first come, first served. Public comment will last no more than 30 minutes per Board meeting. The Board has the discretion to extend public comment if necessary. Individuals are encouraged to email the Board if they are unable to speak during public comment.

The unexcused absence of a member of the Board from two (2) consecutive meetings shall be cause for the Chair to prepare and transmit to such member a letter of reprimand. Three such absences shall be construed as a resignation from the Board.

### **Article III – The Board**

There shall be seven (7) Board members, appointed by the Mayor, with the approval of the City Commission (K.S.A. 12-1222). In addition to the appointed members of the Board, the Mayor shall be ex officio a member of the library board with the same powers as appointed members. Terms of Board members shall be staggered. Members will be appointed for a term of four (4) years. Upon the April 30th expiration of each term, successors shall be appointed in a like manner to fill the vacancies created, and each member will serve a term of four (4) years. Board members shall be eligible for not more than two (2) successive terms. A person appointed to serve an unexpired term remains eligible for two consecutive four-year terms upon completion of the unexpired term.

A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of five (5) members of the Board. Lacking a quorum, bills for the month may be approved with the consent of the members present, plus telephone or electronic consent from enough other members not present to constitute a quorum. If there is no monthly board meeting, a simple majority may approve the bills via electronic communication.

Vacancies on the Board occasioned by removal from the municipality, resignation or otherwise shall be filled by appointment for the unexpired term in accordance with K.S.A. 12-1222.

#### **Article IV – Officers and Duties**

Board officers shall be elected by the majority vote of Board members present at the annual April meeting. Board officers shall be as follows: Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer. Officers shall serve a term of one year from May 1 to April 30 or until their successors are duly elected or appointed. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

The Chair shall preside at all meetings, appoint all committees, and authorize calls for special meetings.

The Vice-Chair presides at meetings in the absence of the Chair. In the event the office of Chair becomes vacant, the Vice-Chair succeeds to that office for the duration of the unexpired term.

The Secretary/Treasurer is responsible for seeing that a complete and accurate record of minutes of all Board meetings is kept. The minutes shall be distributed in writing at the next meeting, corrected if necessary, and approved. The Secretary/Treasurer shall sign the minutes of each meeting after they are approved.

The minutes shall include:

1. The purpose of the meeting (whether regular or special), the time, the place, and those attending.
2. A complete record of actions taken by the Board. All motions shall be recorded exactly as stated and show whether adopted or rejected.
3. A record of adjournment.

The Secretary/Treasurer shall keep a note of when members arrive and leave during the meeting in order to prove the existence of a quorum during the entire meeting.

The Secretary/Treasurer shall have charge of all funds collected for the maintenance of the Library and shall pay out said funds on orders of the Board. Checks shall be signed by the Chair and the Secretary/Treasurer, or by such other designated Board members in the absence of either of the above officers. At least one original signature shall appear on all checks. Whenever these Bylaws require a signature, an electronic signature satisfies that requirement if the Board has approved the payment and the document has not been modified since the signature was affixed. An electronic signature is defined as a signature created, transmitted, received, or stored by electronic means. The Secretary/Treasurer shall see that an accurate record is kept of

all monies received and disbursed. Monthly financial reports shall be made to the Board. In addition, an annual report shall be presented to the Board. An audit by a Licensed Municipal Accountant shall be made each year. The treasurer must be bonded in an amount fixed by the Board and approved by the governing body of the municipality (K.S.A. 12-1226).

### **Article V – System Representative**

The board shall appoint a representative to the Northeast Kansas Library System Board at the annual April meeting. The representative shall be responsible for attending the annual System Assembly, and shall act as a liaison between the System and the Board.

### **Article VI – Committees**

Standing and special committees, as appropriate, made up of Board and non-Board members, may be appointed by the Chair with the approval of the Board, for the study and investigation of special problems, or in connection with any of the Board's powers and duties set forth in K.S.A. 12-1223 or 12-1225.

### **Article VII – Board Responsibility**

The Board has the responsibility of making and directing the policy of the Library, in accordance at all times with the Laws of the State of Kansas. Its responsibilities include promotion of library interests, securing adequate funds to carry on the work satisfactorily, and the administration and control of library funds, property, and equipment.

### **Article VIII – Trustee, Library Director, and Staff Relationships**

The Board shall select a Library Director who shall be the administrative officer under the direction and review of the Board. Such person, once selected and having served an introductory period of 12 months, shall be continued in employment. Such employment may be terminated by a majority vote of the full membership of the Board. The Library Director may request a statement of any charges and an open meeting in any dismissal action.

The Library Director shall be responsible for the employment and direction of the staff, for the operation of the Library under the financial conditions set forth in the annual budget, and for such responsibilities as are delegated to the Library Director by the Board. The Library Director shall attend all regular and special Board meetings.

### **Article IX – Amendment of Bylaws**

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the entire Board at any regular meeting of the Board, provided that such proposed amendment shall first be submitted in writing at a previous regular meeting of the Board and sent to those not present.

### **Article X – Parliamentary Procedure**

Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised) shall govern the proceedings of the Board, except when those rules may be in conflict with these bylaws. The rules of order, rather than such rules as may be prescribed by statute, may be suspended at any time by the consent of a majority of the members present at any meeting.

### **Article XI – Political Activity**

The Lawrence Public Library obtains its funding in large part from the City of Lawrence, Kansas, see Charter Ordinance No. 16 of the City of Lawrence, Kansas. Members of the Lawrence Public Library Board of Trustees must be sensitive to the possibility that their political activity may jeopardize this funding. Accordingly, the Trustees should abide by the following Political Activity Policy.

Although a Board member may, in his or her individual capacity, publicly endorse candidates for public office or ballot measures, no board member should use the name of the Lawrence Public Library in conjunction with such an endorsement, nor otherwise intentionally imply that the Lawrence Public Library supports a given candidate for public office or ballot measure.

No Board member should become a candidate for city elective office or hold city elective office without first resigning from the Board. A Board member is considered to be a candidate for city elective office once he or she meets all statutory requirements to qualify as a candidate.

## Additional Online Resources

- [Lawrence Public Library](#)
  - [About the Library](#)
  - [Mission & Vision](#)
  - [Hours & Location](#)
  - [Library Map](#)
  - [Library History](#)
  - [Board of Trustees](#)
- [LPL Friends & Foundation](#)
- [LPL Annual Report](#)
- [Current LPL Budget](#)
- [Current LPL Audit](#)
- [Kansas Library Association](#)
- [Northeast Kansas Library Association](#)
- [Kansas Statutes Annotated](#)
  - [City, county, and township libraries; board, appointment; terms; eligibility; vacancies; expenses](#)
  - [Powers and duties of board](#)
- [Kansas Public Library Trustees Manual](#)
- [Kansas Public Library Handbook](#)
- [Leadership Roles for Library Trustees](#)

*“Library trustees are powerful advocates for libraries. Through the coordination, hard work, and determination of trustees, new libraries have been built, budgets have been restored and increased, and new respect has been generated for the powerful role libraries play in communities.”*

**American Library Association**



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