

Stoughton Public Library Board By-Laws

Article 1 Identification & Introduction

The name of this organization is the Stoughton Public Library, located in Stoughton, Wisconsin, existing by virtue of the provisions of Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin Statutes, and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under statute. (See attachment A)

The provisions most relevant to the municipal library board are found in Section 43.52 (municipal libraries), 43.54 (municipal library board composition) and 43.58 (powers and duties of library boards).

Library boards have greater autonomy than other departments, functioning independently of their governing body. Library systems have the ability to expel or reduce aids or services to libraries not complying with Chapter 43 (see Attachment A). The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction also monitors Chapter 43 compliance and has held that if any municipality adopts a charter ordinance, their library would no longer be eligible for system membership. A “charter ordinance” refers to a local ordinance which attempts to over-ride any portion of Chapter 43. Currently all Wisconsin libraries are system members.

Board members must be aware of and support these key philosophical statements presented at the beginning of State Statute, Chapter 43:

- the importance of free access to knowledge, information, and diversity of ideas for all residents of this state;
 - the critical role played by public, school, special and academic libraries in providing that access;
 - the major educational, cultural, and economic asset that is represented in the collective knowledge and information resources of the state’s libraries;
 - the importance of public libraries to the democratic process; and
 - that the most effective use of library resources in this state can occur only through interlibrary cooperation among all types of libraries and the effective use of technology.
- (Wis. Stats 43.001)

Article II
Board Composition (Chapter 43.54)

- Section 1** The library board will be composed of a minimum of seven members including, one city council representative selected by the mayor; the superintendent of schools or his/her designated replacement; and five members at large from the City of Stoughton appointed by the Mayor with recommendations from the library director and/or the library board. Up to two additional members may be appointed by the mayor or the county executive from among the residents of the City of Stoughton or Dane County to represent the interests of non-resident county patrons who use the library per Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 43.60(3).
- Section 2** The library director is a permanent non-voting member of the board, who will attend meetings and serve in an advisory/resource capacity.
- Section 3** A quorum will be required to pass any motions presented for a vote. A quorum is defined as a majority of the membership of the library board. In order to facilitate payment of bills, a quorum may be three members for this purpose only.
- Section 4** Terms of office (Chapter 43.54(b) “upon their first appointment, the members shall be divided as nearly as practicable into 3 equal groups to serve for 2 – 3 and 4 – year terms, respectively. Thereafter, each regular appointment shall be for a term of 3 years. Vacancies shall be filled for un-expired terms in the same manner as regular appointments are made.” Members may serve no more than four consecutive three-year terms.
- Section 5** No compensation shall be paid to library board members except for:
- Reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing outside the municipality if authorized by the Board.
 - Members may receive per diem, mileage (per city’s rates) and other necessary expenses incurred in performing their duties if so authorized by the library board and the municipal governing body.
- Section 6** Officers: shall consist of a president and a vice-president, elected by the Board and a secretary appointed by the board. Election of the president and vice-president will take place in May of each year, with the term of office commencing with the June meeting. Vacancies in office shall be filled by vote at the next regular meeting after the vacancy occurs. Duties of the officers:
- A. President
- Shall preside at monthly meetings. In the absence of the president, the vice-president shall preside.

- Shall represent the library when appropriate.
- May call or authorize special meetings as deemed necessary.
- Appoints all committees.
- Executes all documents authorized by the board.
- Oversees and coordinates all business of the board.
- The president may vote upon and may move or second a proposal before the board.

B. Vice-president

- Shall preside at monthly meeting in the absence of the president.
- Performs all the duties of the president in the president's absence.

C. Secretary

- Shall provide true and accurate minutes of all meetings of the board and provide copies to the board and to city council members
- Shall prepare (with the president and vice president) meeting agendas and post as required by law.
- Shall handle correspondence as directed by the board.
- Shall perform other duties required of the office as directed by the board.
- Unless otherwise appointed by the board, the library director shall serve as secretary.

Article III Meetings

Section 1 The regular meetings shall be held each month, the date and hour to be set by the board at its annual meeting.

Section 2 The annual meeting, which shall be for the purpose of the election of officers and appointment of committees, shall be held at the time of the regular meeting in May of each year.

Section 3 The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to, the following items:

- call to order
- roll call of members, introduction of visitors
- adoption/amendment of agenda
- disposition of minutes of previous regular meeting and any intervening special or closed meetings
- communications
- financial report
- action on bills
- committee reports
- unfinished business
- new business
- library director's report
- adjournment

Section 4 Special meetings may be called by the secretary at the direction of the president, or at the request of two members, for the transaction of business as stated in the call for the meeting.

Article IV Committees

Section 1 Standing Committee

There shall be four standing committees: Bylaws and Policy, Finance, Personnel, and Facilities. These committees shall have a minimum of three members and shall be appointed by the President at the annual meeting. Each committee shall elect a chair at their first meeting after the annual meeting.

Bylaws and Policy Committee

- a. Reviews Bylaws annually and revise as needed
- b. Reviews and revises existing policies every three years or as needed
- c. Creates new policies

Finance Committee

- a. Reviews and recommends the annual budget
- b. Recommends mid-year budget adjustments, as necessary.

Personnel Committee

- a. Reviews and revises position descriptions
- b. Reviews hours and wages
- c. Reviews Work Rules
- d. Evaluates the Director
- e. Meets annually with City Personnel Director and/or City Personnel Committee to review library salary matrix.

Facilities Committee

- a. Develops plan with director to maximize efficient use of public and staff space
- b. Reviews and revises annually the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
- c. Develops and implements long range goals for maintenance, repair and code compliance of building
- d. Meets with consultants, architects and contractors, as necessary

Section 2 Ad Hoc Committees

Ad Hoc committees for the study of special problems will be appointed by the president, with the approval of the board, to serve until the final report of the work for which they were appointed has been filed. Many of these committees may also include staff representatives. (Examples of ad hoc committees are Long-range Planning and Automation.)

Section 3 All committees shall make a progress report to the library board at each of its meetings.

Section 4 No committee will have other than advisory powers unless, by suitable action of the board, it is granted specific power to act.

Article V Responsibilities

Section 1 Library Board

- Determine the policies of the library and develop the highest possible degree of operating efficiency in the library.
- Select and appoint a competent library director. Set salary levels for all employees.
- Advise in preparation of the budget, approve it and make sure that adequate funds are provided to finance the approved budget.
- Through the library director, supervise and maintain buildings and grounds, as well as regularly review various physical and building needs to see that they meet the requirements of the total library program.
- Study and support legislation that will bring about the greatest good to the greatest number of library users.
- Cooperate with other public officials and boards and maintain vital public relations.
- Be familiar with Chapter 43 of the Wisconsin State Statutes as it pertains to statutory requirements.

Section 2 Board Members

- Members shall attend the monthly meetings and special meetings as necessary.
- Members shall serve on at least one committee.
- If unable to attend, members shall notify the Director/Board President at least 48 hours in advance of a meeting, except in dire, unavoidable circumstances which prevent notification.”
- If an attendance problem occurs it will be brought before the Board for resolution.
- Take all library policies/board bylaws seriously and abide by City of Stoughton Code of Ethics (Attachment B).
- Qualities: The qualities that make an individual an effective library trustee are similar to those that make effective board members in other business, civic, and cultural undertakings. These can be summarized as
 - awareness of the community;
 - willingness to devote time and talents;
 - ability to think clearly, question objectively, and plan creatively; and
 - skill in communicating and cooperating.

In addition to those attributes, the effective library trustee also displays:

- awareness and appreciation of the library’s past, present, and future role in the community;
- willingness to become more knowledgeable about library services and standards of operation;

- ability to represent the library in public forums, to act as an advocate for the library, and to reflect the concerns of the public at library board meetings; and
- skill in developing library policies.

The group of individuals who possess these qualities and who come together to comprise the library's board of trustees should collectively represent:

- a diversity of interests;
- a balance of age, race, sex, and socioeconomic levels; and
- a variety of occupational and personal backgrounds.

This body will then effectively serve its community through its commitment to and enthusiasm for a vigorous public library capable of providing access to information, education, and enhanced leisure to the broadest possible spectrum of users.

Section 3 Library Director

The library 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 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 meetings but shall have no vote.

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ATTACHMENT A:

Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 43 Libraries

For a current copy of WI Chapter 43, **please visit www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/stats.html**.

ATTACHMENT B:

City of Stoughton Municipal Code, Chapter 2.2 Code of Ethics. You may view an electronic copy of the Code of Ethics at the City of Stoughton Web site.

www.ci.stoughton.wi.us