

Bylaws of the Jaffrey Public Library Board of Trustees

In 1894 the Town of Jaffrey accepted the provisions of the will of the late Susan B. Clay which included funds to construct a public library for the town. It was formally dedicated as the Clay Library on July 4, 1896 and the name was subsequently changed to the Jaffrey Public Library at Town Meeting in March 1900. The Jaffrey Public Library serves as a community resource for lifelong learning where everyone is welcome to gather, discover and succeed in a safe, nurturing environment.

The Jaffrey Public Library is located at 38 Main St., Jaffrey, NH.

Article 1: Name, Establishment and Purpose

1.1 The Board of Trustees of the Jaffrey Public Library exists by virtue of RSA 202-A of the laws of the state of New Hampshire, exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the statute, and ensuring openness in the conduct of the library business under RSA 91-A.

Article 2: Governance

2.1 The affairs of the Jaffrey Public Library (hereinafter JPL) shall be conducted by a Board of Trustees (hereinafter Trustees) composed of five (5) voting residents of the town, elected at Town Meeting to serve staggered terms of three (3) years.

2.2 Whenever a vacancy shall occur among the publicly elected members of the Trustees, the remaining members shall give notice of the fact to the Selectmen and recommend a replacement. The Selectmen shall by appointment fill such vacancy until the next annual Town Meeting.

2.3 The Trustees may recommend to the Selectmen the names of no more than three persons who may serve as alternate voting members on the Board of Trustees when elected members are unable to attend a meeting. The alternates are appointed for a one year term and have voting rights only when filling in for an absent trustee.

2.4 After an election or appointment, a trustee or alternate trustee must take an oath of office before assuming any responsibilities for the position.

2.5 No Trustee shall receive any compensation for any services rendered as a trustee. Trustees may be reimbursed for necessary travel expenses to attend professional meetings or to conduct library business.

2.6a The Trustees shall annually, at their first meeting following Town Meeting, choose from their number a Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer for the term of one year. Vacancies

Revised and approved by the Jaffrey Public Library Board of Trustees on September 21, 2022, Jaffrey, NH

in any of these offices may be filled for the remainder of the year at any Trustee meeting, by a vote of the Trustees.

2.6b The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Trustees. The Chair shall submit an annual report to the Town. The Chair may delegate presiding over the meeting to another member of the Trustees, in the event of a planned absence.

2.6c The Secretary shall keep a true record of the proceedings of the meetings of the Board of Trustees and provide such notices as required by law. These minutes shall be available to the Trustees and community in print format at the library and digitally on the library website. The Secretary may delegate notice duties to the Library Director and recording duties to another member of the Trustees.

2.6d The Treasurer shall keep the financial records, make disbursements, and provide monthly reports for the Trustees and an annual report for the Town and State.

2.6e In the event of unplanned absences of any officer at a meeting, a majority of the voting members of the Trustees may appoint a voting Trustee to fill an officer vacancy for the duration of that meeting.

2.7 Trustees shall observe the Right to Know Law. (RSA 91-A)

Article 3: Conflict of Interest

3.1 Trustees, by virtue of their position, may learn of job openings, bid requests, land purchases, and building and maintenance contracts. In order to avoid even the appearance of impropriety, it is vital that Trustees recuse themselves from all discussions and votes where connections or bias can be questioned because of personal and family employment, memberships or association. The recusal must be acknowledged in the minutes of meetings.

Article 4: Meetings

4.1 Regular meetings shall be held at a time and place to be determined by the Trustees. Except for nonpublic sessions, all meetings shall be open to the public.

4.2 Subject to all provisions of RSA 91-A:2, remote meeting attendance by Trustees is permitted if a quorum is physically present at the location specified in the public meeting notice. In such cases, all votes shall be by roll call vote.

4.3 A meeting may enter into a nonpublic session only for specific purposes as described in RSA 91-A and the session should be confined to the matter set out in the motion. The same procedures apply to nonpublic sessions that apply to public ones.

4.4 Emergency meetings may be called by the Chair, in consultation with the Library Director, when immediate and undelayed action is deemed imperative. The nature of the emergency shall be clearly spelled out in the meeting minutes.

4.5 The Chair, in consultation with the Director, will ensure that a copy of the regular meeting agenda is sent to each Trustee before the meeting. Any other relevant material will be attached.

4.6 A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of three (3) Trustees being present. An affirmative vote of the majority of all members present at the time will approve any action before the Trustees unless otherwise directed by these bylaws.

4.7 In the event of the absence of one or more elected Trustees, an alternate member(s) of the Trustees may be granted voting privilege by the Chair to ensure that a quorum is present. Alternates cannot outnumber elected Trustees.

4.8 The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern in the parliamentary procedures of the Trustees.

Article 5: Powers and Duties

5.1 The Trustees possess the power and authority, and assume the duties and responsibilities, provided under the laws of the State of New Hampshire including without limitation NH RSA 202-A, which are incorporated herein by reference.

5.2a The Trustees shall have the custody and management of the property, expenditures, business and prudential affairs of the JPL and of all property of the Town relating thereto, pursuant to RSA 202-A:6.

5.2b Pursuant to RSA 202-A:4, "Any city or town having a public library shall annually raise and appropriate a sum of money sufficient to provide and maintain adequate public library service therein." Thus, the Trustees rely on the Town of Jaffrey to provide all funds for annual, recurring costs sufficient to provide and maintain adequate public library service, including staff salaries and benefits, building maintenance, general grounds upkeep, new and circulating materials, supplies, and equipment. The Trustees collaborate with the Town of Jaffrey to maintain and develop the JPL building and grounds. The Trustees also rely on the Town of Jaffrey to provide funding for capital improvements from time to time.

5.3 The citizens of Jaffrey voted at Town Meeting in 1999 to authorize "indefinitely, until specific rescission of such authority" the Trustees to accept grants, gifts and other items of value as outlined in RSA 202-A:4-c and RSA 202-A:4-d.

5.4 Pursuant to RSA 202-A:23, the Trustees may accept, receive, invest and administer directly any trust funds and donations when so specified by the donor. The Trustees may also establish additional trust funds from time to time as they deem necessary. To that end, the Trustees may engage the services of a professional financial advisor, set an appropriate investment policy, and set a regular meeting schedule with said advisor.

5.5 Pursuant to RSA 202-A:11, the Trustees shall expend the interest income generated by trust funds held by the Town of Jaffrey (Trustee of the Trust Funds) under RSA 202-A:22 for the support and maintenance of the JPL according to donor intent.

5.6 The Trustees may hire and take legal counsel as deemed necessary.

5.7 The Trustees may establish partnerships with other agencies or organizations and may choose to formalize such partnerships through Memorandums of Understanding or other appropriate documents.

5.8 The Trustees shall make and execute all such policies and regulations for its government, the preservation of property under its charge, and the use and management thereof, as it may from time to time deem necessary or expedient.

5.9 The Trustees shall prepare an annual budget and procure adequate financial support for the JPL.

5.10 A Trustee is expected to be active in the community, having the ability to work with other board members, staff and the public. Above all, Trustees should be open-minded and forward-looking, seeking all opportunities to best serve the interests of the library in its service to the community. A trustee is willing and ready to devote time and effort. Alternates should have the same commitment to library advocacy as regular Trustees.

Article 6: Personnel

6.1 The Trustees shall appoint a qualified librarian as Library Director who shall be the administrative officer of the library on behalf of the Trustees; and to whom the Trustees delegate the authority and responsibility for administration of the library.

6.2 The Trustees shall determine compensation of all library employees, including the Library Director.