

BY-LAWS

SOMERSET COUNTY LIBRARY COMMISSION

Article I

Name

- Section 1** This organization shall be called the Somerset County Library Commission, hereinafter “Commission”, by virtue of the provisions of the State of New Jersey Revised Statutes Title 40 Chapter 33-1 et. seq., and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under said statute. The Commission shall consist of seven (7) members, appointed by the Somerset County Board of County Commissioners, hereinafter “County Commissioners” or “County Commission”.

Article II

Objectives

- Section 1** The commission shall adopt the annual budget of the Somerset County Library System (SCLSNJ) to be presented to the County Commissioners for the ensuing fiscal year and shall urge its adoption with such arguments as it shall deem expedient. The Commission shall also appoint a County Library Administrator, approve and adopt library policies, establish wage and salary guidelines and work to assure adequate staffing, funding and maintenance of SCLSNJ facilities. The Commission shall negotiate all union contracts and approve all legal agreements entered into by SCLS. Commission members will work with the County Library Administrator, the library staff and residents of the communities served to develop Strategic Plans for the system that will be used to set priorities and plan service programs.

Article III

Officers and Members

- Section 1** The officers shall be a Chair and a Vice Chair who shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Commission.
- Section 2** Officers shall serve a term of one year from the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- Section 3** A vacancy in office shall be filled by election of a successor for the unexpired term of the vacant office. Such election shall take place at the first regular meeting after the vacancy occurs.
- Section 4** The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Commission, authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the Commission, serve as an ex officio voting member of all committees, and generally perform all duties associated with that office.

- Section 5** In the event of the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair, if present, or a temporary Chair selected by the members present shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the Chair.
- Section 6** The County Library Administrator shall serve as Secretary to the Commission. The Secretary or designee shall keep a true and accurate record of all proceedings of Commission meetings; shall call the roll and record votes; shall issue notices of all regular meetings; shall have custody of the minutes and other records of the Commission and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with that office. Minutes of the annual meeting or the prior monthly meeting shall be sent to Commission members, and the County Commissioners liaison. Notices of regular meetings shall be sent to Commission members at least four days in advance of the meeting and shall include the Administrator's report for the previous month, the agenda to be discussed at the proposed meeting and such reports as may be necessary for consideration related to the agenda. The Secretary shall notify the Somerset County Commissioners should a vacancy occur.
- Section 7** No individual officer or member of the Commission has authority to issue orders in the name of the Commission unless especially empowered to do so by a majority of the Commission so voting at a regular or authorized special meeting of the Commission where a quorum is present.
- Section 8** No member of the Commission shall be employed or volunteer at any SCLSNJ Library nor concurrently serve as an elected official of an SCLSNJ member community, as a member of a Branch Library Advisory Board or as an officer of any of the SCLSNJ Friends of the Library organizations.

Article IV Meetings

- Section 1** Regular meetings of the Commission shall be held each month, except in the months of July and August, subject to and in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A 10:4-6 et. seq.) In addition to commissioners, the County Library Administrator, and department directors and members of the management team (as needed) shall attend. Encouraged to attend are the Somerset County Commission liaison, the Bridgewater Township liaison and members of the public.
- Section 2** The Annual Meeting shall be held in January of each year and the reorganization and election of officers shall take place at that meeting.
- Section 3** The time and place for regular meetings shall be established each year at the Annual Meeting.

Section 4 The order of business for regular meetings shall include, but not be limited to the following items which shall be covered in the sequence shown so far as circumstances will permit:

- (a) Call to order
- (b) Open Public Meetings Act statement
- (c) Pledge of Allegiance
- (d) Welcome visitors & advise when they can address the Commission
- (e) Public comments on non-agenda items, up to five (5) minutes per speaker
- (f) Approval of Minutes of prior meeting(s)
- (g) Approval of Claims List
- (h) Review/acceptance of Financial Statement
- (i) Closed Session (if necessary)
- (j) Director's Report
- (k) Business (Unfinished then New)
- (l) Public comments on agenda items, up to five (5) minutes per speaker
- (m) Other Business
- (n) Correspondence
- (o) Announcements
- (p) Next Scheduled Meeting
- (q) Adjournment

Section 5 Special meetings may be called by the Chair, or at the request of four members. Notice of such meetings shall be provided in conformity with provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Section 6 A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of four (4) members of the Commission except when the number of appointed Commissioners is less than seven (7) in which case a simple majority will constitute a quorum. Participation by Commissioners via telephone shall count as being present at the meeting for purposes of a quorum. Commissioners present via telephone shall be permitted to vote on Commission business.

Section 7 Proceedings of all meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, and in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Article V

Library Operations and Staff

Section 1 The Commission shall appoint a qualified County Library Administrator who shall be the Executive and Administrative officer of SCLS and who shall, under these By-Laws and the Commission's declared policies and rules, have general charge of the library.

Section 2 In the absence (other than temporary) of the County Library Administrator, the Commission shall designate either the Director of Public Service or the Director of

Operations as “Acting Director”, and who shall, for the interim, have the powers, duties and responsibilities assigned to the County Library Administrator in these By-Laws.

- Section 3** In the temporary absence of the County Library Administrator, the Director of Public Services and/or the Director of Operations shall attend to the details of the management of the Library subject to such instructions as may have been issued by the County Library Administrator to cover the interim.

Article VI Committees

- Section 1** The Chair shall appoint committees of one or more members each for such purposes as the business of the Commission may require.
- Section 2** All Committees shall act at the direction of the Commission. Unless specifically empowered by suitable action of the Commission, all Committees shall be advisory to the Commission.
- Section 3** The Library Commission’s Personnel Committee will be responsible for preparing the County Library Administrator’s annual performance evaluation and will participate in hiring any staff at the level of Director [i.e., Public Service Director, Director of Operations, Marketing Director, Human Resources Director, Finance Director].

Article VII General

- Section 1** An affirmative vote of the majority of members of the Commission (provided there is a quorum) shall be necessary for the adoption or passage of any resolution, order or motion. The Chair may vote upon, move, or second a proposal before the Commission.
- Section 2** If any appointed Commissioner shall fail to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings without good cause during any twelve (12) month period, notice of such absenteeism shall be provided to the Board of County Commissioners and the Chair shall request the resignation of said Commissioner.
- Section 3** Any rule or resolution of the Commission, whether contained in these By-Laws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand, but such suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which two-thirds (5) of the members of the Commission shall be present and two-thirds of those present shall so approve.
- Section 4** The By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of all members of the Commission provided written notice of proposed amendments shall have been sent to all members at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which such action is proposed to be taken.

Approved by the Library Commission June 2, 2004

Amended February 3, 2010

Amended September 2, 2015

Amended February 6, 2018

Amended April 7, 2021