



**BYLAWS**  
**OF THE**  
**SOUTH COUNTRY LIBRARY**

**22 Station Rd.**

**Bellport, NY 11713**

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**Fully Revised & Approved by Board of Trustees 4/18/24**

Fully Revised & Approved by Board of Trustees 3/21/19

# South Country Library

Bellport, NY 11713

## BYLAWS

### ARTICLE I. NAME AND PURPOSE OF THE ASSOCIATION

- Section 1.** This Association shall be known as the South Country Library.
- Section 2.** The purpose of this Association shall be to establish, operate and maintain a free public library for the benefit and use of all residents of the South Country Central School District.

### ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

All residents of the South Country Central School District of the Town of Brookhaven, County of Suffolk, State of New York, shall be members of the Association.

### ARTICLE III. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Section 1.** The management of the affairs of this Association shall be vested in the Board of Trustees (hereafter referred to as "Board of Trustees" or "Board")
- Section 2a. Number of Trustees and Terms of Office:** The Board of Trustees shall consist of seven members who are registered voters and are residents of the South Country Central School District. The term of office shall be three years. There are no restrictions on the number of terms a Trustee may serve.
- Section 2b.** The newly elected Trustees shall take office at the May Board meeting. They shall take the following oath of office: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the constitution of the United States, the constitution and laws of the State of New York, and the policies and by-laws of the South Country Library according to the best of my ability."
- Section 3a. Eligibility.** Candidates for election to the Board of Trustees shall be residents and registered voters in the South Country Central School District. Candidates must hold a valid South Country Library card for a minimum of one year prior to the date set for the close of nominations. Employees of the South Country Library and members of their immediate families are not eligible for election. Only one member of an immediate family may serve on the Board of Trustees at a time. "Immediate Family" refers to an individual's spouse, children, mother, father, siblings, first cousins, nieces or nephews,

stepchildren, grandchildren, foster children or any in-laws. Former Library employees and their immediate family members are ineligible for election for 3 years from the date of their employment separation.

**Section 3b. Call for Nominations.** The Library Director shall set a date for the public announcement that nominations for candidates for election to the Board of Trustees are being sought. The public announcement shall be made in the Library Newsletter and shall include the number of Trustee positions to be voted upon; the eligibility requirements for the candidacy; the required supporting materials to be submitted; where necessary materials can be obtained and where completed nominations are submitted; and dates for the close of nominations and the election. Applicants must provide their name and Library barcode when obtaining the necessary materials.

**Section 3c. Close of Nominations.** No later than the regular December meeting of the Board of Trustees a date for the close of nomination shall be set at least 21 days following the public announcement of the call for nominations. No nominations shall be accepted after the close of nominations, without exception.

**Section 3d. Nomination Procedure.**

1. Each candidate or incumbent may submit his/her name on an official nomination form with a minimum of 25 supporting signatures of registered voters in the South Country Central School District.
2. Each candidate or incumbent shall provide a short statement (no more than 350 words) with his/her nomination form, such statement to describe his/her qualifications for membership on the Board of Trustees.

**Section 3e.** Candidates for election shall be elected at-large from a field of nominees, with the candidates receiving the largest number of votes being declared elected.

**Section 3f. Election Date and Results.** Trustees shall be elected at the time of the budget vote on a date and time to be determined by the "Common Vote Date" set by the Suffolk Cooperative Library System and approved by the Board of Trustees.

**Section 4. Vacancies.** When an unexpected vacancy occurs on the Board, the Board shall then be comprised of the remaining Trustees until the next regularly scheduled election at which time the vacancy or vacancies shall be filled.

**Section 5. Attendance.** A Trustee who fails to attend three consecutive meetings of the Board of Trustees, unless excused by the Board of Trustees, shall be deemed to have resigned their position and may be removed by a majority vote of the entire Board (4 of 7) at a regular Board meeting.

- Section 6. Removal.** As provided in Education Law 226; subdivision 8, the Board may remove a trustee for misconduct (including violations of the Library's Trustee Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy), incapacity, neglect of duty or refusal to carry into effect the library's educational purpose. The Trustee may be removed by a majority vote of the entire board (4 of 7) at a regular Board meeting. A Library Trustee who has been voted to be removed from the Board is ineligible to run for a position on the Library's Board of Trustees for a period equal to 3 years from the date of their removal.
- Section 7. Collective Authority.** All actions of the Board shall be of the Board as a unit. No Board member shall act on behalf of the Board, on any matter, without prior approval of the Board. No Board member by virtue of his/her office shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the Library nor, as an individual, command the services of any Library employee.
- Section 8.** All Trustees are required to annually sign, and comply, with the Library's Trustee Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy.
- Section 9.** In accordance with NYS Education Law 260-d, all Library Trustees shall be required to complete a minimum of two hours of Trustee education annually. Proof of training must be submitted to the Library Director and Board President.

#### **ARTICLE IV. ELECTION OF SCLS TRUSTEES**

The South Country Library Trustees will cast all five ballots for the same candidate to represent Brookhaven for the Suffolk Cooperative Library System (SCLS) Board.

#### **ARTICLE V. MEETINGS**

- Section 1.** The President of the Board of Trustees shall call no fewer than eleven (11) regular meetings during the course of the year. An annual meeting shall be held in September where annual reports shall be presented by the President of the Board of Trustees, the Director, the Treasurer, and any Committee Chairperson determined by the Board.
- Section 2.** Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the President at any time, and shall be called whenever requested in writing by a majority of the Board. The purpose or purposes of any such special meeting shall be stated in the notice of the meeting and no other business shall be transacted.
- Section 3.** At all meetings of the Trustees, 4 shall constitute a quorum. A majority of the whole Board (including vacancies and/or absent members) is required for

any motion to pass. A Trustee must be physically present in order to have their vote counted.

**Section 4.** All meetings will be open to the public and conducted according to the Open Meetings Law of New York State, except in those circumstances where an executive session is convened at the discretion of the Board pursuant to the provisions of the Open Meetings Law.

**Section 5.** All meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Revised Edition, whenever such rules do not conflict with these Bylaws nor with any statute of the state of New York.

**Section 6. Periods of Public Expression.** The Board may, in its discretion, allow for public expression during meetings of the Board. During any such period of public expression, comments from the audience are welcome, but are limited to five minutes per person.

## **ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS**

**Section 1.** The Officers of the Board of Trustees shall be: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

**Section 2.** The Officers shall be elected at the May Board meeting from a slate presented by the Nominating Committee. They shall serve only one year until the next election of officers.

**Section 3.** The **President** shall preside at all meetings of the Trustees and in addition shall perform such other duties as the Board may assign to him or her.

**Section 4.** The **Vice President** in the absence or inability of the President shall perform the duties of the President.

**Section 5.** The **Secretary** shall keep the minutes and records of all meetings of the Trustees and preserve and file all reports.

**Section 6.** The **Treasurer** shall be the disbursing officer of the Board and shall perform such duties as generally devolve upon the office. The Treasurer shall report the financial statement of the Association to the Board of Trustees at regular meetings. He/she shall be the Chairperson of the Budget and Finance Committee, and shall present to the Board the budget prepared by the Budget and Finance committee.

**Section 7. Officer Vacancies.** A vacancy in any officer's position shall be filled by election by the Board of Trustees, and the elected officer shall take office immediately and serve until the next election of officers.

## ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

### Section 1. Standing Committees.

- A. **Budget and Finance Committee** shall consist of the Treasurer and at least two other members. It shall supervise the finances of the Association, and shall assist the Director in preparing the annual budget and in the preparation of such reports as may be required by the Board of Trustees.
- B. **Building and Grounds Committee** shall oversee the care and upkeep of the Library buildings and grounds.
- C. **Personnel Committee** is concerned with personnel matters of the Library staff.

### Section 2. Special Committees.

- A. **Long Range Planning Committee** meets with the Library Director and Assistant Director to assess topics which have relevance to the future needs of the Library.
- B. **Nominating Committee** shall prepare a slate of nominees for the officers of the Board of Trustees to be voted upon at the May meeting following the Trustee elections in April.

**Section 3. General.** Each May Trustees are given the opportunity to volunteer to serve on the committees of their choice. All committees shall give a report to the Board after each of its meetings. No committee will have other than advisory powers unless, by suitable action of the Board, it is granted specific power to act. The President shall be, ex officio, a member of all committees.

**Section 4. Ad Hoc Committees.** The President may establish ad hoc committees at any time and dissolve them at his/her pleasure.

## **ARTICLE VIII. DIRECTOR**

The Board shall appoint a Director who shall be the executive officer of the policies of the Board and shall have charge of the administration of the Library under the direction and review of the Board. The Director and Assistant Director shall be responsible for the care of the buildings and equipment; for employment and direction of the staff; for the efficiency of the Library's service to the public; and for the operation of the Library under the financial conditions contained in the annual budget. The Director and Assistant Director may attend meetings of Committees of the Board and shall have the right to speak on all matters under discussion at Committee and Board meetings, but shall not have the right to vote thereon.

## **ARTICLE IX. SIGNING OF OBLIGATIONS**

All contracts of the Association, all checks, drafts and other orders for the payment of money out of the funds of the Association, and all promissory notes and other evidence of indebtedness of the Association shall be signed on behalf of the Association by such Officer or Officers, agent or agents, and in such a manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of Trustees.

## **ARTICLE X. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

**Section 1.** The fiscal year of the Association shall be July 1 through June 30.

**Section 2.** A proposed budget for the ensuing year shall be approved by the Board of Trustees at least 45 days prior to the budget vote date. The proposed budget shall be on file at the Library for public inspection during Library hours.

**Section 3.** All financial records of the Association shall be the subject of a yearly independent audit, conducted by an auditor chosen by the Trustees.

## **ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1.** The Bylaws of the Association may be amended or repealed at any Meeting of the Board of Trustees, provided notice of the proposed amendment(s) has been given in the notice of the meeting. A concurring vote of two-thirds of the Board of Trustees (4 of 7) present at the meeting shall be necessary for the adoption of any amendments(s) or for the repeal of the Bylaws. A copy of the proposed amendment(s) shall be posted in the Library at least seven days prior to the meeting at which the amendment shall be considered.

**Section 2.** No amendment(s) shall be considered which shall deprive the Board of Trustees of the control of any properties of the Library.