



HARLAN COMMUNITY

Library

By-Laws

Updated February 9, 2026

ARTICLE I – NAME

This organization shall be called “The Board of Trustees of the Harlan Community Library” existing by virtue of the provisions of Chapter 16 of the Municipal Code, City of Harlan, Iowa, and exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under said code.

ARTICLE II – MEMBERS

Section 1. The Board of Trustees of the Library, hereinafter referred to as the Board, shall consist of at least five (5), but no more than eight (8) adult Harlan residents and at least one (1), but no more than four (4) adult residents from Shelby County, excluding Harlan. All resident members are to be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the Council. All non-resident member(s) are to be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the County Board of Supervisors.

Section 2. All resident members of the Board shall be bona fide citizens and residents of the City. The non-resident members of the Board shall be bona fide citizen(s) and resident(s) of unincorporated Shelby County. Members shall be over the age of eighteen (18) years.

Section 3. Term of Office. All appointments to the Board shall be for four (4) years, except to fill vacancies. Each term shall commence on July first. Appointments shall be made every year, in such a manner as to stagger the terms. No individual shall serve more than two consecutive terms. Any person who has served two consecutive terms shall not be eligible for reappointment to the board for a period of two years from the expiration of his or her final term.

Section 4. Vacancies. The position of any resident Trustee shall be vacated if such member moves permanently from the City. The position of a non-resident Trustee shall be vacated if such member moves permanently from Shelby County or into Harlan; with the exception: that if a non-resident member moves from Shelby County into Harlan, that member may serve out the rest of his/her term. The position of any Trustee shall be deemed vacated if such member is absent from six (6) consecutive regular meetings of the Board, except in the case of sickness or temporary absence from the City or County. Vacancies in the Board shall be filled in the same manner as an original appointment except that the new Trustee shall fill out the unexpired term for which the appointment is made.

Section 5. Compensation. Trustees shall receive no compensation for their services.

ARTICLE III – OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers shall be a president, a vice president and a secretary elected from among the appointed trustees at the June meeting of the board.

Section 2. Officers shall serve a term of one year from the July meeting at which they are elected.

Section 3. The president shall preside at all meetings of the board, authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the board, serve as an ex-officio voting member of all committees and generally perform all duties associated with that office.

Section 4. The vice president – in the event of the absence or disability of the president or of a vacancy in that office – shall assume and perform the duties and function of the president.

Section 5. The secretary shall keep a true and accurate record of all meetings of the board, shall issue notice of all regular and special meetings and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with that office.

Section 6. The city clerk shall be the disbursing officer of the board and shall sign the checks following the approval of the library director.

Section 7. Payment of library association dues and educational opportunities for board members shall be included in the annual budget for the library.

ARTICLE III – MEETINGS

Section 1. All meetings of the board shall be open to the public except for those sessions which may be closed under the provisions of Chapter 21, Code of Iowa, Official Meetings Open to Public. Members of the public who wish to address the board should request a place on the agenda for the meeting. The request may be directed to the president, the secretary or the library director.

Section 2. The regular meetings shall be held in the library at 5:15pm on the second Monday of each month. However, the August meeting is normally cancelled, unless there is a special need for one.

An agenda for board meetings shall be prepared by the library director in cooperation with the president of the board and sent to each board member at least 5 days prior to each regularly scheduled meeting.

Special meetings may be called at any time by the president or upon the combined request of the other two officers. Notice of the purpose, time and place of any special meeting shall be given to all members of the board of trustees by mail or by personal communication (whether by telephone or otherwise) at least two days prior to the date on which the meeting is to be held.

Under exigent circumstances, the president may obtain authority to act in the name of the board, by unanimous agreement of all members of the board through telephone or other personal contact. In no event shall such authority be sought by the president less than one week prior to a regular board meeting and notice thereof shall be made a part of the agenda, recorded in the minutes and ratified at the next regular board meeting.

Section 3. The board and the library director shall conduct an orientation program for each new board member.

Section 4. The annual meeting, which for the purpose of adopting the annual report, shall be held at the time of the regular September meeting.

Section 5. The order of business for regular meetings shall be as follows:

Call to Order

Approval of Consent Agenda – all items listed under the Consent Agenda will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a request is made prior to the time of the Board votes on the motion.

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Bills for Approval

Conflicts of Interest

Report of Director

Director's Financial Report

Report of Committees

Old Business

New Business

Adjournment

Section 6. A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of five members of the board present in person or via remote participation as allowed by Iowa Code section 21.8.

Section 7. If any trustee has three consecutive unreported absences at board meetings, his or her office shall be rendered vacant.

Section 8. Conduct of Meetings: Proceeding of all meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE IV – LIBRARY DIRECTOR AND STAFF

The board shall appoint a qualified director who shall be the executive and administrative officer of the library on behalf of the board under its review and direction. The director shall recommend to the board the appointment and specify the duties of assistants and employees as may be necessary for the proper management of the Library, and fix their compensation; provided, however, that prior to such employment, the compensation of the librarian, assistants and employees shall have been fixed and approved by a majority of the members of the Board voting in favor thereof. The director shall be held responsible for the proper direction and supervision of the staff, for the care and maintenance of library property, for the adequate and proper selection of books in keeping with the stated policies of the board and for its financial operation within the limitations of budgeted appropriations.

ARTICLE V - COMMITTEES

Section 1. The president shall appoint members annually to the three standing committees. The president may appoint committees of one or more members each for specific purposes as the business of the Board may require.

Section 2. The standing committees of the board are as follows:

BUDGET AND FINANCE

Chair has seat on Library Foundation

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Chair has seat on Library Foundation

PERSONNEL

Conduct annual evaluation of director in November

Hold hearings to review employee grievances

Section 3. No committee will have other than advisory powers unless it is granted specific power to act by suitable action of the Board.

ARTICLE VI – GENERAL

Section 1. An affirmative vote of the majority of all members of the board present at the time shall be necessary to approve any action before the board. The president may vote upon and may move or second any proposal before the board.

Section 2. The by-laws may be amended by the majority vote of all members of the board provided written notice of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to all members at least five days prior to the meeting at which such action is proposed to be taken.

Section 3. Any rule or resolution of the board, whether contained in these by-laws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand but such suspension may be taken only at a meeting at which two-thirds (6) of the members of the board shall be present and two-thirds of those present shall so approve.