

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF
TOCCOA-STEPHENS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Approved 9/28/1989 Revised 11/29/2012 Revised 01/26/2023

ARTICLE I

This organization shall be known as the TOCCOA-STEPHENS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY located at Toccoa, Stephens County, Georgia. (Affiliated with Northeast Georgia Regional Library - Headquarters at Clarkesville, GA. - on July 1, 1966).

ARTICLE II

The object of this organization shall be to furnish complete library service to the people of Toccoa and Stephens County, Georgia, youth and adult, under the provisions and regulations set forth by the laws of the State of Georgia governing Public Libraries.

The Toccoa-Stephens County Constitution and Bylaws are a companion document to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Northeast Georgia Regional Library System and are intended to clarify local practices and the relationship of the local library to the regional system. There is to be no conflict between provisions of the Toccoa-Stephens County Public Library Constitution and Bylaws and those of the Northeast Georgia Regional Library System. If inadvertent conflict occurs, the Regional Constitution and Bylaws shall govern.

ARTICLE III

The Toccoa-Stephens County Library is a member of the Northeast Georgia Regional Library System.

ARTICLE IV

Section 1. The Toccoa-Stephens County Board of Trustees is composed of members appointed by tax-supported agencies which provide direct funding for the public library program in Stephens County. Six members are appointed by the County Commissioners of Stephens County. Appointments shall be for terms of three years each. Terms of office shall be staggered. No person may serve continuously for more than two successive terms of office (total of six years of continuous service). The Library Board may recommend a list of suggestions for all appointments to funding agencies whenever a vacancy occurs.

Section 2. Any person appointed to the Stephens County Library Board must be a resident of Stephens County.

Section 3. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as appointments are made. If a vacancy occurs prior to the expiration of a trustee's term, the new appointee shall complete the unexpired term.

Section 4. Board members shall receive no compensation but may be reimbursed for any reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of library business, or if stipulated in the terms of any bequest or gift. Membership dues or fees for individual membership of board members in state, regional and national library associations may be paid from operating funds.

Section 5. The Toccoa-Stephens County Library Board shall appoint at least one and up to four of its members to represent it as members of the Northeast Georgia Regional Library Board. They shall be entrusted with representing and interpreting the interests of the Toccoa-Stephens County Library Board to the Regional Board.

BYLAWS OF THE TOCCOA-STEPHENS COUNTY PUBLIC

LIBRARY

Section I. MEETINGS.

There shall be not less than six (6) meetings of the Board of Trustees in each year. The regular meetings shall be held on a day and hour agreed upon by a majority of the Board. Special meetings may be called by the Chairman of the Board or by three (3) members of the Board at any time upon proper notice to the other members.

Three (3) consecutive absences from regularly scheduled Board meetings by any Board member shall cause that position to be automatically declared vacant. Upon the declaration of vacancy of any Board position it shall be the duty of the

Board to submit recommendations to the appointing governmental funding agency to fill said vacancy. Any person appointed to fill said vacancy shall serve the unexpired term and shall be eligible for appointment to one successive three (3) year term.

The Board of Trustees may upon unanimous vote and upon good cause being shown waive the attendance required one time for any Board member. The Board shall not waive the attendance requirement except in cases of extreme emergency or unusual hardship.

Four (4) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business by the organization.

Five (5) Public Comment:

The Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Board of Trustees welcomes visitors to Board meetings and is willing to hear any person or persons desiring to appear before the Board.

1. Persons wishing to address the Board shall do so during the Public Comment portion of the meeting;
2. Persons may be scheduled in advance for public comment by signing up with the Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Manager no later than close of business the Friday before the regularly scheduled Thursday meeting. Persons wishing to speak must notify the Library Manager verbally or in writing and include the subject matter;
3. If necessary, speakers will be able to sign-up with the Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Manager on a first-come, first-served basis with the sign-up to begin not more than fifteen minutes of the announced start time of the meeting.
4. Each speaker will be allotted three (3) minutes for his or her presentation, not three minutes per topic. Groups addressing the Board on a single topic must choose one spokesperson;

5. After each individual speakers' remarks have concluded, the Chairman may, but shall not be required to, briefly respond, either personally or through another member of the Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Board whom the Chairman shall delegate. If necessary, action on the matter for consideration of the Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Board will be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting following the date of comment.
6. All remarks shall be made to the Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Board as a body and addressed through the Chair. Remarks shall not be made to a particular Board member.
7. Questions from Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Board may be asked for clarification. However, no person shall be permitted to enter into any discussion, either directly or through a member of the Board, without permission of the Chair.
8. No person shall be allowed to make impertinent, derogatory, offensive, or slanderous remarks while addressing the Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Board.
 - a. A person may be barred from further speaking before the Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Board in that meeting if his/her conduct is deemed out of order;
 - b. A person, once barred for improper conduct, shall not be permitted to continue or again address the Toccoa Stephen County Public Library Board in that meeting unless a majority vote of the Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Board allows;
 - c. In the event the speaker thus barred fails to obey the ruling, the Chair may take such action as is deemed appropriate, including the removal of such person from the assembly;
 - d. The Chair may bar a person from addressing the Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Board meetings for up to two consecutive future meetings for improper conduct;
 - e. A person barred by the Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Board for this period may request a hearing, by written request, to the Chair stating the reason(s) for a reversal of the decision.
 - f. The hearing shall be placed on an agenda and heard by the Toccoa Stephens County Public Library Board. A majority vote of the Board shall be required to overturn the previous decision of the Chair to bar the person(s).

SECTION II. DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

The Board of Trustees shall have duties which include, but are not limited to, the following:

Section 1. The Toccoa-Stephens County Library Board of Trustees shall set local policies and practices when there is no Regional Library System policy governing that area of service.

Section 2. The County Library Board of Trustees shall discharge those duties delegated to it by the Northeast Georgia Regional Library Board of Trustees. All formal actions of the County Library Board of Trustees taken in discharging those duties shall be reported to the Regional Board of Trustees for approval and recording at its next meeting.

Section 3. The County Board of Trustees shall annually prepare a budget providing for the expenditures of all funds belonging to or received by this organization. This activity has been delegated by the Regional Board of Trustees.

Section 4. It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to appoint the Library Manager and such other staff members as are recommended by the Library Manager as will be needed in the efficient operation of the library. Staff members shall be employed and dismissed by the Board, upon recommendation of the Library Manager. This activity has been delegated by the Regional Board.

Section 5. The County Board may accept and receive donations either in money, land, or property for the purpose of maintaining or improving the Library. This activity has been delegated by the Regional Board.

SECTION III. OFFICERS.

The Officers shall be a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary, who shall be elected at the January meeting of each year, from their own members. The Library Manager may serve as Secretary of the Board.

The Chairman shall preside at Board Meetings, appoint Committees and perform such other duties as generally pertain to that office.

The Vice-Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman in the latter's absence.

The Secretary shall keep a record of attendance at Board meetings and record the official actions of the Board. He shall also notify the proper appointing powers of vacancies on the Board. He shall notify all Board members of all meetings of the Board.

The Library Manager shall act as Treasurer and shall receive all money for the Board and deposit it in the designated Toccoa bank to the Toccoa-Stephens County Public Library account. He shall pay all bills and shall report at each Board Meeting on the state of the Library funds. He shall notify the supporting agencies in writing if their appropriations are not paid in full up to date. These activities have been delegated by the Regional Board. Records shall be kept at the Library.

SECTION IV. FINANCIAL RECORDS.

All bills or duplicates of bills paid, and canceled checks, shall be filed in the Library as permanent records. A summary financial shall be forwarded to the Regional Board.

All outgoing Library checks shall be made out and signed by the Library Manager and countersigned by the Board of Trustees Chairman or Secretary.

An audit shall be conducted each year at the expense of the Toccoa-Stephens County Library. A copy will be filed with the Director of the Northeast Georgia Regional Library.

SECTION V. DUTIES OF THE LIBRARY MANAGER

The Library Manager shall have charge of the Library and have the care of books and other Library property. He shall direct the staff members in all work pertaining to the efficient operation of the Library. He shall select books and prepare orders for books, library supplies, and other necessary items for the maintenance of the Library. He shall prepare and submit in writing to the Board at regular meetings a report of operations of the Library, including such recommendations as in his opinion will promote its usefulness and efficiency. He shall prepare in writing an annual report showing fully the operations of the Library, present this to the Board, send a copy to the Northeast Georgia Regional Library (for inclusion in the Annual Report to the Division of Public Library Services) and also to each supporting agency.

SECTION VI. ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The order of business of regular meetings shall be as follows:

1. Reading and approval of minutes.
2. Financial Report.
3. Report of the Library Manager
4. Report of the Director
5. Report of the Committees
6. Unfinished and new business

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE. The Parliamentary Procedure for governing the actions of the Board of Trustees in conducting the affairs of this organization shall be in accordance with the provisions of Roberts Rules of Order.

SECTION VII. AMENDMENTS.

The Constitution and By-laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board with a quorum present by a two thirds majority vote of the members present, provided all members have been notified in writing about the proposed amendment two weeks preceding the meeting.