

BY-LAWS OF THE THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY

In accordance with the Michigan Library Laws, the Library Board of the Three Oaks Township Public Library shall consist of six members, each to be elected for a term of four years at a General Election.

Officers of the Board shall be President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. The Director shall act as Secretary. Officers shall be elected at the December Meeting for a term of two years. Nominations for the vacancies on the Board should be filed by the next regular meeting and voted on by the Board and submitted to the Three Oaks Township Board for approval. Duties of the officers shall be such as by custom and law and the rules of this Board in accordance with their titles. Minutes shall be taken at meetings, and transcribed, by a non-board member or staff member.

The Library Board shall meet at 6:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month unless otherwise posted.

Special meetings may be called by any member if a quorum can be present.

A quorum for transaction of business shall consist of four board members.

ORDER OF BUSINESS	Call to Order
	Attendance
	Review and Approval of Consent Agenda
	Public Comment
	Unfinished Business
	Director's Report
	Trustee Education
	New Business
	Adjournment

Special committees, consisting of less than four board members, for study of special problems are to be appointed by the President of the Board, with the approval of Board Members, to serve until the final report of the work for which they were appointed has been filed.

The Director shall attend all Board meetings. The Director shall instruct the employees in all procedures.

All records should be kept in the Library; but if for any reason the must be removed, a notice should be left in the Library stating what books, ledgers, or papers have been removed, where they are, and a signed communication giving permission for the President of the Board to obtain the records and return them to the Library.

These By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board with a quorum present, by majority vote of the members present.

Article I Philosophy and Mission Statement

Section 1 Library Bill of Rights

The American Library association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed for removal because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background or views.
6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948.
Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980,
inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996,
by the ALA Council.

Section 2 Mission statement of the Three Oaks Township Public Library

The Library Board states the mission of the Three Oaks Township Public Library is to expand the educational horizons for the children and enhance library services in all formats to meet the needs of the entire community.

To acquire and make available to all residents books, periodicals, pamphlets and other services that will satisfy their need to become well informed; to decide important questions; to discipline the emotions; to cultivate the imagination and to refine the tastes; and to enjoy leisure by means of reading and other media services.

To strive to aid and encourage the young in their pursuit of knowledge and in gaining rewarding experiences through books and other media.

To provide the community with materials in many fields to meet their need for facts and authoritative opinion, whether in their capacity as individuals, as professional or business people, or as responsible citizens of the community.

Amended 2026-06-09;
Amended 2024-07-26; Amended 2023-05-09; Amended 2023-03-14; Amended 2022-03-08, Amended 2021-01-12,
Amended 2020-12-08, Amended 2020-01-14, Amended 2018-07-10, Amended 2017-12-12, Amended 2016-12-13
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To maintain a program of service that locates information, guides reading, organizes and interprets materials for people of various backgrounds.

To be aware of new methods, new technology and improvements for better service to the community.

To serve as an archival depository for historical documents and items pertinent to the community.

Article II Library Board

The Library Board is the policy determining body of the Library. A board member is responsible for library objectives, policies, and for obtaining sufficient funds to meet library needs. His or her primary responsibility is to help the Library get the best possible service for the patrons of the Library.

The Board should keep in mind that Michigan residents have a constitutional right of access to library services. Article 8, Section 9, of the State Constitution, states in part:

“The legislature shall provide by law for the establishment and support of public libraries which shall be available to all residents of the state under regulations adopted by the governing bodies thereof...”

This provision identifies the Library Board’s authority to adopt regulations. When exercising this power, the Board should be aware that there is an inherent requirement that the regulations be reasonable.

Section 1 Membership

In accordance with Act 164 of 1877, Section 397.211 (See Attachment) of the Michigan Library Law Handbook, “(4) A permanent Library Board shall be established for a city, village, or township described in subsection (1) or (2) as follows: @ In a township holding elections for township officers every four years, 6 directors shall be elected for 4-year terms at the primary and general elections.”

Section 2 Responsibilities

Attend all Library Board Meetings. If the member fails to attend meetings, the Board cannot function effectively. If a board member cannot attend all the meetings, with rare exceptions for illness or emergencies, the member should resign from the Board and make room for someone who can attend.

Four (4) members physically present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum, and no business shall be conducted in the absence of a quorum unless the requirements outlined below in “Remote participation Procedures” are met.

Remote Participation Procedures

In accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act PA 228 of 2020 from January 21, 2021, to December 31, 2021, members may only meet remotely under the following circumstances requiring accommodation of absent members due to:

Amended 2026-06-09;
Amended 2024-07-26; Amended 2023-05-09; Amended 2023-03-14; Amended 2022-03-08, Amended 2021-01-12,
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- Military duty;
- A medical condition; the OMA is amended to define a “medical condition” as an illness, injury, disability or other health-related condition;
- A statewide or local state of emergency or state of disaster declared pursuant to law or charter by the governor or local official or local governing body (and meeting held in person would risk the personal health or safety of members of the public or the public body).

After December 31, 2021, only members of public bodies who are absent due to military duty may participate remotely in public meetings.

All electronic meetings must be “conducted in a manner that permits two-way communication so that members of the public body can hear and be heard by other members of the public body, and so that public participants can hear members of the public body and can be heard by members of the public body and other participants during the public comment period.”

The notice of an electronic meeting must be posted at least 18 hours in advance of the meeting on the library’s website and must include a statement as to why the public body is meeting electronically and how members of the public may participate in the electronic meeting.

Each library board member attending the meeting remotely must state at the outset of the meeting, to be included in the meeting minutes, that the member is in fact attending the meeting remotely. If the member is attending the meeting remotely for a purpose other than for military duty, the member’s announcement must further identify specifically the member’s physical location by stating the county, city, township, or village and state from which he or she is attending the meeting remotely.

Participate at the meetings. It is important that board members actively participate at the meetings.

Board members shall conduct themselves in an orderly manner (“*Robert’s Rules*” are a useful resource).

Be a team player. Board members should avoid unnecessary arguing. Board members should deal with each other with mutual respect and good will.

Support Board decisions. Good board members do not criticize or attack decisions after they have been made. It is expected that board members will discuss and debate the matters before making a decision.

Be an advocate of the Library. Board members should seek opportunities to promote the Library. Often this will take the form of working to obtain funds for the Library.

Respect and support the role of the Library Director. The Board should respect the management function of the Library Director. While the Board establishes policy and makes major decisions, it does not assume the role of the Library Director. To ensure the best library service, the Director must be allowed to manage the library without inappropriate board interference. To work properly there should be a high level of mutual trust and support between the Board and the Director.

Section 3 Officers

Officers of the Board shall be chosen at the December meeting of the Board and shall be as follows: President, Vice-President and Treasurer. Officers shall be elected for a 2-year terms.

1. The President
 - A. Shall preside at all meetings.
 - B. Shall appoint all committees.
 - C. Shall authorize calls for special meetings.
2. The Vice-President
 - A. Shall preside in the absence of the President.
3. The Treasurer
 - A. Shall sign vouchers with another board member.

Section 4 Board Meetings

Library Board Meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act (Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976).

1. All meetings of the public body are to be open to the public and held at a place available to the general public.
2. All decisions are to be made at meetings open to the public.
3. Whenever a quorum of its members is present, all deliberations except as exempted by this Act, shall take place at a meeting open to the public.
4. Any members of the public that wish to attend may do so.
5. The public has the right to address the public body. Members of the public may only address the Library Board or make comments during the Public Comment section of the agenda, at which time the Chair shall ask persons wishing to speak to raise their hands to be recognized. The Chair shall recognize one person to speak at a time. Each person wishing to speak shall provide their name and residence at the time of their public comment. Each speaker shall be limited to five (5) minutes per meeting. Each speaker may speak only one time during each meeting and may not “split” their five-minute time period. No speaker may assign their time to another person. Public Comments are to be addressed to the Library Board, not to other members of the audience. In lieu of speaking, a person may submit any written comments to the Library Board. Written materials submitted to the Library Board are considered public documents. If the speaker includes specific questions to the Library Board the Library Board has no obligation to respond. The Library Board may determine, in its sole discretion, how Public Comments will be summarized in the meeting minutes. Members of the public should not expect the minutes to include verbatim transcripts or details of any individual comments.
6. The only members of the public that may be excluded are those guilty of breach of peace actually committed at the meeting.
7. Judicial proceedings are exempt from the Act with some exception.
8. When deliberating upon the merits of the case, the following public bodies are exempt:
Worker’s Compensation Appeal Board, Employment Security Appeals Board, Teacher Tenure

Commission, Labor Arbitration Panels and Medical Malpractice Arbitration Panels.

9. A committee of a public body can adopt a non-policymaking resolution of tribute or memorial at a session that falls outside the definition of a meeting.
10. Social or chance gatherings or conferences that are not designed to avoid the Act are exempt.

The regular meeting of the Three Oaks Township Public Library Board shall be held the second Tuesday of every month at the library at 6:30 p.m. All Board Meetings are open to the public. Special Meetings can be called 18 hours prior. Emergency meetings can be called with no notice provided a 2/3 majority deems that the issue is vital to the Library.

Section 5 Power and Duties

The powers and duties of the Three Oaks Township Public Library Board are enumerated in Act 164 of 1877, Section 397.205 of the Michigan Compiled Laws (see attached sheet). Also refer to Section 1, Membership of this Article.

Section 6 Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board with a majority present.

Section 7 Collection Development Policy

See Collection Development Policy

Article III Director

The Director shall:

Be responsible for all recruitment and presenting prospective staff to the board, classification and administration of personnel.

Be responsible for following and implementing all of the Board's policies.

Develop administrative principles and procedures that implement and make effective the policies of the Three Oaks Township Public Library.

Appraise and inform the Board of the effectiveness of the Library's policies.

Supervise all personnel, projects, programs and business practices of the Library.

Be responsible for preparing and presenting a recommended Projected Budget.

Plan and conduct a library publicity program throughout the year using all types of techniques.

Cooperate with all community groups and organizations when they wish assistance in their projects and programs.

Article IV Circulation

The basic purpose of the Three Oaks Township Public Library Circulation Policy is four fold:

1. To make materials widely available.
2. To provide maximum use of the materials in the collection.
3. To facilitate requests for materials.
4. To provide for the retrieval of overdue materials.

Article V Library Cards

Section 1 Requirements

One of the following is required to obtain a Library Card:

Valid Michigan Driver's License	Current Tax Receipt	School ID
Automobile Registration	Current Phone Bill	Michigan ID
Current Utility Bill	Lease Agreement	Insurance ID
Property Deed	Checkbook with name and address	

Patrons must be able to prove their identity and provide proof of residency within the Library's service area.

Any resident, property owners or renter in the Village of Three Oaks, Three Oaks Township, Chikaming, and Weesaw Township may obtain a library card.

Any teacher employed by the River Valley School District is entitled to a library card.

A parent or guardian must sign the library card application for all children under the age of 18.

Three Oaks Township Public Library has reciprocal privileges with Galien, New Buffalo, Buchanan, Eau Claire, St. Joseph Maud Palenske Library, and Watervliet libraries. Three Oaks Library participates in the MLibrary Card program and the Visiting Patron program. Acceptance of a Three Oaks Library Card at any location is up to the lending library. Possession of a Three Oaks Library Card does not guarantee borrowing privileges at any other library.

Section 2 Non-Resident Library Cards

Non-residents may purchase a Library Card for a \$50.00 annual fee.

Article VI Loan Periods

Section 1 Books Collection

1. Books are loaned for three weeks.
2. Reference materials are for in-house use only.
3. Inter-library loans are due on the date indicated on the book label.
4. All items may be renewed one time before the due date.
5. Electronic items borrowed from hoopla, Overdrive/Libby, and Kanopy will disappear from the electronic device when the borrowing term expires.

Section 2 Periodicals Collection

1. Magazines are loaned for two weeks.
2. Newspapers are for in-house use only.

Section 3 Audio Book Collection

1. Audio books are loaned for three weeks.

Section 4 DVD Collection

1. DVDs are loaned out for two weeks. There is a limit of five DVD titles per household and only one season of one TV show at one time.

Section 5 Library of Things Collection

1. Hot Spots are loaned for two weeks with a \$25 cash deposit and no consecutive renewals.
2. Laptops are loaned for two weeks with a \$40 cash deposit and no consecutive renewals.
3. DVD players are loaned for two weeks and no consecutive renewals.
4. All other Library of Things items are loaned for three weeks with no deposit.

Section 6 Inter-Library Loan Items

1. Patrons from Three Oaks Township Public Library may borrow items from other libraries via the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) state-wide program.
2. All items availability and lending period is determined by the lending library.
3. The patron is responsible for any late fees accrued on the items and/or any costs payable to the lending library due to the patron's loss of the items.

Section 5 Extended Loans

Patrons may be granted extended loan periods for a special need or to cover times when they will be out of town. The Director will determine which books or materials it will lend for extended loans.

Section 6 Limits on Materials

Limits as to the number of books allowed in any given subject area are determined by the library staff. As a general rule, five books on any non-fiction subject is the limit.

Section 7 Patron Claim Book Returned

When a patron claims he or she has returned a material, but the Library has not a record of its return and the staff cannot locate the item, the staff shall explain to the patron that records show that the item has not been returned. The staff will keep looking for it and ask the patron to do the same. The staff shall note on the computer that the book is claimed to be returned so any future contacts will be made with that knowledge.

Section 8 Lost and Damaged Material

If a patron has damaged or lost a material the librarian shall notify the patron of the repair cost or replacement cost of the material. DVDs and Audios that have been damaged will be replacement

only.

Article VII Policies Regarding DVD Check-out

The Library recommends that patrons preview DVDs to ensure suitability for family viewing. Ratings are provided as a convenience, but not as a matter of Library Policy.

Article VIII Patron Responsibilities

Section 1 Patron Code of Conduct

On the premises of the Three Oaks Township Public Library, the violation of any federal or state statutes or local ordinances will be regarded as a violation of Library rules.

Anyone on library property will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate for a public institution. The following activities are unacceptable at the Library.

No person shall:

- Commit an assault and battery upon any person.
- No person shall smoke or vape in the Library or on Library property.
- Damage or deface property in the Library or on Library property.
- Loiter or engage in loud and boisterous conduct.
- Be under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal substances, and/or be in possession of alcohol and/or illegal substances or paraphernalia, distributing, or selling alcohol and/or illegal substances.
- Utter profane, obscene or injurious language.
- Enter without shoes or shirt.
- Willfully annoy another person.
- Improperly remove library property from the premises.
- Engage in illegal activities on Library property.
- Disturb other patrons or staff with the use of a cell phone. The Library asks patrons to put their cell phones on silent/vibrate in the Library.
- Or any activity which is construed by Staff as disruptive to the normal operation of the Library.

The Staff may expel offender(s) without warning at the discretion of the Staff, in situation of serious, threatening, or willfully malicious behavior. Those who are unwilling to leave or do not leave within a reasonable amount of time when instructed to do so will be subject to the law. Flagrant or repeat offenders may be barred from library privileges at the discretion of the Director.

Article IX Children and Vulnerable Adults in the Library

See Children and Vulnerable Adults in the Library Policy

Article X Request for Patron Information

The Three Oaks Township Public Library Board of Directors believes that patron records are

privileged and confidential information and complies with the Library Privacy Act as last amended.

Article XI Material Fines

Books, audio books, and periodicals - \$.15 per day, per item, up to \$50.00, at the discretion of the Library Director.

DVDs - \$1.50 per day, per item, up to \$50.00, at the discretion of the Library Director.

Article XII Library Borrowing Privileges Suspended

When a patron owes \$10.00 or more in outstanding fines.

When a patron owes for lost or damaged materials.

When a patron records a false or incorrect address.

Article XIII Statement on Service to Schools

Since any workable relationship between schools and public libraries is dependent upon communication and joint cooperation, every opportunity to create good will between these two important educational institutions is important. All staff members are expected to be aware of the Library's service to the schools and encourage maximum utilization.

Article XIV Use by Groups

In accordance with the Michigan Public Accommodations Act refer to Community Room and Library Space Policy and the Library Facilities Rental Policy.

Article XV Programming

The purpose and philosophy of programming is to promote the Three Oaks Township Public Library, its materials and its services. Author and artist are exempt and may sell their work. Although a professional or businessperson may be invited to speak, the information should always be generic in nature. Generally, there is no charge for library programs, unless there is a fee for the purchase of materials or unless the program is in cooperation with another community agency that is fee-supported.

Article XVI Library Public Posting and Showcase Policies

See Library Public Posting Policy and Showcase Policy

Article XVII Reference Services

In the course of reference duty, a librarian may be asked to quote from medical, legal, census or tax-related sources. It is the policy of the Three Oaks Township Public Library to do just that, quote directly from the source without interpretation, judgmental or evaluative comments.

Article XVIII Gifts and Bequests

All monetary donations, gifts and memorials given to the Library will be used for future plans. The Library encourages and welcomes gifts, endowment funds and bequests. The Library accepts donations of books, DVDs, and other materials with the understanding that if they are not added to the collection they may be sold in the Three Oaks Library Friends' Book Sale Room or disposed of as the Director sees fit. The same criteria of selection which are applied to purchased materials are applied to gifts. The Library Board and/or Director may accept or reject any donation of items for any reason. A receipt may be issued at the time of the donation if requested by the donor but the donor is responsible for assigning and documenting monetary value for tax purposes. The Library does not accept donations of outdated technology, encyclopedias, or text books, books more than five years old, or magazines more than five years old. All items donated must be in excellent, clean condition and free of damage, stains, and odors. A Book Donation Guidelines paper will be available at the library's check out desk.

Article XIX Appraisal

The appraising of a gift to the Library for income tax purposes is the responsibility of the donor since it is the donor who required an appraisal, not the Library. The Library will provide a generic donation receipt upon request.

Article XX Public Use of Library Equipment

Section 1 Telephones

Telephones in the Library are for use of the library staff and are not to be used by the general public for personal or business use. Only in special situation shall the library staff give permission to use the telephone.

Section 2 Copier

The copier is available to any member of the community who wishes to copy materials at a rate of \$.10 per page for black and white 8 1/2" x 11" and 8 1/2" x 14" paper; \$.25 per page for black and white 11" x 17"; and \$.25 per page for any size color copy. Special exceptions are students copying reference material for school related assignments. Violations of copyright are the responsibility of the individuals requesting the copies. Copies are available to the staff and board members free.

Section 3 Computers

See Patron Access Computer Use and Internet Access Policy.

Section 4 Wi-Fi

Free Wi-Fi is available to the public.

Article XXI Supplies and Fees

Amended 2026-06-09;
Amended 2024-07-26; Amended 2023-05-09; Amended 2023-03-14; Amended 2022-03-08, Amended 2021-01-12,
Amended 2020-12-08, Amended 2020-01-14, Amended 2018-07-10, Amended 2017-12-12, Amended 2016-12-13
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The Library MAY have headphones and flash drives available for a fee.

Article XXII User Fees

Lost Library Card	\$2.00
Copying & Printing	\$.10 per page for black and white 8 ½" x 11" and 8 ½" x 14" paper; \$.25 per page for black and white 11" x 17"; and \$.25 per page for any size color copy.
Fax (to send)	\$1.50 per page
Fax (to receive)	\$1.50 per page
Laminating	\$1.50 per full page (8 ½ x 11"), \$1.00 per each smaller page.
Lost Materials	Replacement Cost of item
Damaged Books	Repair or Replacement Cost of item
Computer Printing	\$.10 per page

Article XXIII FOIA Policy

See Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Policy

Article XXIV Fires

If anyone should notice the smell of smoke or has any reason to believe there is a fire, report to the Director or person in charge. Any announcement or information given by the Director or person in charge must be factual and made in a calm voice. If a fire occurs, call 911 and evacuate the building. The Director or person in charge will direct staff and patrons to the nearest exits that are available.

Article XXV Health Emergencies

The staff should exercise caution when administering first aid of even a minor nature because of the potential danger of lawsuit. However, the sick or injured patrons should be made comfortable and protected from needless disturbance until medical help arrives.

911 should be called immediately. The Director or person in charge should be notified immediately and an accident report must be completed as soon as possible. Get the name of the injured party for follow-up at a later date.

If a member of the staff is injured on library property, an incident report must be filed and turned in to the Director.

Article XXVI Bomb Threat

Keep the caller on line as long as possible. Ask the caller to repeat the message, ask for the location and time of possible detonation. Pay attention to the background noises of the caller. Immediately after the caller hangs up, call 911 and clear the building. All floors should be clear of patrons and staff.

Article XXVII Snow Storms

The Library will consider River Valley School District's recommendations for closing due to inclement weather. Closing of the Library will be at the discretion of the Library Director or person in charge.

Article XXVIII Tornadoes

A WARNING is issued when a tornado, severe thunderstorm, hail or flood has actually been sighted in the area or indicated on radar. The warning gives the location and size of the tornado and the course the storm is following. It would be best to crouch under a table on the side of the room from which the tornado is approaching or where staff may direct you.