



Northeast Ohio  
Regional  
Library System

# **The Northeast Ohio Regional Library System**

## **BYLAWS**

**Adopted by the Board of Trustees  
on March 14, 2017**

## **Article I. Name**

The name of the organization will be the NORTHEAST OHIO REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM, hereinafter referred to as “NEO-RLS.”

NEO-RLS exists by virtue of the provisions of Chapter 3375 of the *Ohio Revised Code* and Chapter 3375 of the *Ohio Administrative Code*, exercising the powers and authority and assuming the responsibilities delegated to it under the provisions of said chapters.

## **Article II. Organization**

- A. NEO-RLS is a membership consortium of academic, public, school, special, institutional and other libraries and information centers located in the NEO-RLS geographic area.
- B. NEO-RLS is organized as a “Regional Library System” as defined and governed by Sections 3375.90. Seq. of the *Ohio Revised Code*.
- C. The NEO-RLS geographic area includes the following counties: Ashland, Ashtabula, Carroll, Columbiana, Coshocton, Cuyahoga, Erie, Geauga, Harrison, Holmes, Knox, Lake, Lorain, Mahoning, Medina, Portage, Richland, Stark, Summit, Trumbull, Tuscarawas and Wayne.
- D. The NEO-RLS geographic service area does not overlap any other chartered regional library system, as per the *Ohio Administrative Code* 3375-2-07 (B) 2.

## **Article III. Official Fiscal Year**

- A. The NEO-RLS fiscal year extends from July 1 through June 30.
- B. All costs, statistics and timetables for development will be developed within the fiscal year.

## **Article IV. Mission and Purpose**

- A. Purpose: NEO-RLS is a multi-type library consortium, assisting libraries to better meet the needs of their customers by creating opportunities to accomplish services and programs beyond individual capabilities and resources. NEO-RLS facilitates the work of libraries through services, professional development and responsible fiscal management.
- B. Mission: To empower the Northeast Ohio library community through high-quality staff development and dynamic collaborative opportunities.
- C. Vision: To be the catalyst for maximizing library potential.

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## **Article V. Membership Types and Responsibilities**

- A. **Geographic Member:** Every School, Academic, Special and Public Library located in NEO-RLS' 22-county geographic area.
- B. **Dues Paying Member:** Gold, Silver and Bronze. See further description in the Administrative Policy Manual.
- C. **Student Member:** Any student currently enrolled in a library and information science program will receive Gold Member benefits at no cost.

## **Article VI. Membership and Service Fees**

- A. Membership and service fees are set and reviewed by the Board of Trustees annually.
- B. The Board of Trustees is authorized to assess late fees or penalties for late payment.

## **Article VII. Membership Council**

One (1) representative from each library in the NEO-RLS region will collectively constitute the Membership Council. The Director or equivalent shall designate her or his representative. Duly appointed Membership Council representatives are sometimes hereinafter referred to as "Voting Representatives." All representatives of the Membership Council will have individual voting powers, including voting for Board members. For libraries lacking an official designee, the Director or equivalent will be considered such.

- A. Membership Meetings
  - 1. An event will be held at least annually to inform the membership about the business of the organization.
  - 2. Special Membership Council meetings may be called by the Board of Trustees or upon written request of ten (10) or more Voting Representatives of the Membership Council. Notification of Special Membership meetings will be made at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance. Business at Special Membership meetings will be confined to the purpose stated in the notice of the meeting.

## **Article VIII. NEO-RLS Board of Trustees**

- A. In accordance with the *Ohio Revised Code*, Section 3375.90 (C) and the *Ohio Administrative Code* 3375-2-07 (B) 5, which states that "a regional library system shall be governed by a board of trustees consisting of at least seven (7) and no more than fifteen (15) persons," the NEO-RLS Board of Trustees will consist of fifteen (15) persons to be selected from NEO-RLS libraries.

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The NEO-RLS Board of Trustees is sometimes hereinafter referred to as “the Board.” NEO-RLS Board of Trustees operates under the authority granted pursuant to the *Ohio Revised Code*, Section 3375.91, and such other and additional authority as may be granted by statute, rule or decision to Boards of Trustees of Regional Library Systems organized under *Ohio Revised Code*, 3375.90 ET. Seq., from time to time.

B. The Board of Trustees are bound by the Ohio Code of Ethics as outlined in the Administrative Policy Manual.

C. Terms of Office

1. For election process details see the Administrative Policy Manual.
2. All terms of office on the NEO-RLS Board of Trustees shall be three (3) year terms.
3. NEO-RLS Board of Trustee members may serve up to three full, consecutive, three (3) year terms. Partial terms will not count toward term limits.

D. Board Composition

When possible, the NEO-RLS Board of Trustees will be comprised of the following fifteen (15) members, effective July 1, 2014:

Two (2) At-Large members, elected by the voting representatives of the entire membership.

One (1) Geographic Member Representative.

One (1) Special Library Representative.

One (1) Academic Library Representative.

One (1) School Library Representative.

Nine (9) Public Library members, representative of the Zones below, will be elected by the voting representatives in that category

Three (3) Members from Zone 1

Three (3) Members from Zone 2

Three (3) Members from Zone 3

Public Library Zones will be identified by Total Annual Revenue, as reported in the most recent State Of Ohio Library Statistics.

**ZONE 1**

\$2,500,001 – up

**ZONE 2**

\$800,001 - \$2,500,000

**ZONE 3**

Up to \$800,000

D. No more than one representative per library may serve on the Board at one time.

E. If a vacancy occurs on the Board, the President will fill the unexpired term through appointment. If possible, the appointee should be a representative from the same zone

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or category as the original member. If that is not possible, the President may appoint a representative from any type of library.

- F. If a member is no longer employed in any NEO-RLS library, they may not serve on the board. The President will appoint a new representative. See VIII, E.
- G. A minimum of six (6) meetings of the NEO-RLS Board will be held each fiscal year. Each Trustee will attend all Board meetings or, if unable to attend, notify the Board President and Executive Director. A Board member's fourth unexcused absence during a fiscal year may be considered voluntary separation from the Board. They will receive written notice of their separation from the President of the Board.
- H. Special meetings of the NEO-RLS Board may be called at the direction of the President, or at the request of three (3) board members for the transaction of business as stated in the call for the meeting with one (1) weeks' notice required.
- I. A quorum for the transaction of business will consist of a simple majority of the NEO-RLS Board.
- J. The agenda will include public comments to be limited to five minutes per speaker. The Board of Trustees' President may grant extended time.
- K. Once elected, Board Members may complete their term even if their library moves to another zone or category.
- L. Board Member Responsibilities: Further Authority  
The responsibilities and further authority of the NEO-RLS Board of Trustees will include the following:
  - 1. To elect a Vice President/President-elect and Secretary of the Board at the organizational meeting held in July of each year.
  - 2. To approve and ratify all NEO-RLS expenditures, transfers, contracts and investments according to the Administrative Policy Manual.
  - 3. To assist in developing and approving the annual NEO-RLS budget and any grant applications submitted by NEO-RLS.
  - 4. To appoint, annually evaluate and, if necessary, dismiss the Executive Director and Fiscal Officer.
  - 5. To approve the employment contracts and fix the compensation each year of the Executive Director and Fiscal Officer. These contracts will span the organizational meeting of the new fiscal year through the organizational meeting of the following fiscal year.

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6. To fix the compensation for all NEO-RLS staff based upon the recommendation of the Executive Director.
7. To devise and approve guidelines, policies and other practices at the recommendation of the Membership Council, Board Committees and the Executive Director.
8. To annually review, amend and/or adjust bylaws, membership fee structures and long-range plans.
9. To review and give final approval to all programs, projects and services developed by NEO-RLS.
10. To serve on committees, necessary for the evaluation of existing services and operations or the development of new services.
11. To advocate for and expand involvement in NEO-RLS.

M. Board of Trustees: Officers

A Vice President/President-Elect and a Secretary will be elected annually from the Board of Trustees at the organizational meeting in July. Board Officers will serve one-year terms.

a. Duties of the President

- a. To develop the agendas for Board meetings and Membership meetings with the Executive Director.
- b. To convene and preside at Board meetings and Membership meetings.
- c. To serve as an official at all Membership meetings.
- d. To fill Trustee vacancies.
- e. To appoint members to standing committees; to create and fill ad hoc Committees.
- f. To serve as ex officio on all committees.

b. Duties of the Vice President/President-Elect

- i. To preside at Board and Membership meetings in the absence of the Board President.
- ii. To succeed the President. A new Vice President/President-Elect will be elected from the Board each year.

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- iii. To serve as the chair of the Board's Finance Committee.
- c. Duties of the Secretary
  - i. To record and oversee and certify the recording and distribution of minutes of all meetings of the Board and Membership Council.
  - ii. In the absence of the President and Vice President/President-Elect, to preside at Board and Membership meetings.
  - iii. To monitor the Bylaws annually for conformity with law and practice.
- d. Succession of Leadership
  - a. If the Board President is unable to finish the term of office, the Vice President/President-Elect will serve the remainder of the term.
  - b. If a vacancy in the office of Vice President/President-Elect occurs, a special election will be held to determine a new Vice President/President-Elect.
  - c. Normally, the Vice President/President-Elect will succeed the President and a new Vice President/President-Elect will be elected from the Board each year.

## K. Board Committees

1. A minimum of five members must make up each of the Standing Committees of the NEO-RLS Board:

**Finance** - The Finance Committee serves as a resource to the Executive Director and Fiscal Officer in the areas of financial and budgetary matters. It is the Executive Director and Fiscal Officer's responsibility to monitor the budget and alert the Committee and board to potential problems. The Committee will ensure that NEO-RLS' goals are met through the best possible application of the available funds.

**Personnel** – Because it deals with issues of legality and confidentiality, only Board members can serve on the Personnel Committee. The primary responsibility of the Personnel Committee is to conduct an annual review of the existing personnel policies and make recommendations for changes, additions, or deletions. These will be brought before the Board for action. When necessary, proposed changes will be reviewed by legal counsel. If possible, any changes and written rationale should be sent to the Trustees prior to the meeting at which they will be discussed. Working with the Executive Director, the Committee will review all job descriptions as needed. The Committee will review the recommendations of the Executive Director concerning salaries, salary ranges,

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pay rates or benefits for the next fiscal year in conjunction with the Finance Committee. The Committee will solicit input annually from all Board members concerning the performance of the Executive Director and the Fiscal Officer. This will then be reviewed by the committee. Should any personnel issues arise to the grievance level, the Committee will review them and make recommendations and consult legal counsel when necessary.

**Policy/Bylaws** – The Board Policy Manual will include all policies pertaining to the general operation of NEO-RLS. The NEO-RLS By-Laws/Policy Committee will familiarize themselves with the By-Laws and review them for their current implementation. Sections will be referred to staff, Board, and committees to recommend needed changes. The By-Laws may be amended by two-thirds vote of the NEO-RLS Board, after notifying all Membership Council representatives of the complete proposed alteration or amendment(s) at least 30 days in advance. Current policies will be distributed to all board members in July. When possible, the Executive Director will inform the Committee of areas that need addressed so a well-developed policy can be established and adopted to deal with the identified issues. The Committee will review and make changes to the policy manual with input from the NEO-RLS staff.

**Nominating** - Annually the Nominating Committee will meet after new Board of Trustee members have been elected in order to develop a slate of nominees for the next year. Every attempt will be made to identify qualified, potential candidates for the positions of Vice President / President Elect and Secretary. A slate of at least one candidate will be presented following nominations from the floor at the Board Meeting. The election of officers will be conducted at the organizational meeting in July, following the swearing in of new Board Members. In selecting possible candidates, the Committee is encouraged to seek out individuals who have not served as officers recently. Careful attention should be given to ensuring representation of all types of libraries.

2. Advisory Committees serve as resources to the board. Advisory Committees may vary from year-to-year and may include: Continuing Education, Technology/Website, Youth Services/Young Adult, Legislation, Strategic Planning, Audit, and PR/Marketing.
3. Ad Hoc Committees may be appointed by the President to address a specific purpose. Ad Hoc Committees serve for a limited period of time.

#### L. Application for NEO-RLS Staff Position by Board Member (Guidelines)

Any NEO-RLS Board Member who wants to apply for a NEO-RLS staff position must first resign his or her position on the NEO-RLS Board of Trustees.

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## **Article IX. Staff**

The NEO-RLS Board of Trustees will appoint the Executive Director/Deputy Fiscal Officer and Fiscal Officer and confirm staff in accordance with the *Ohio Revised Code*, Section 3375.91.

## **Article X. Parliamentary Authority**

Meetings of the Board of Trustees will use parliamentary procedures as outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, current edition, when consistent with the NEO-RLS Bylaws or with the *Ohio Revised Code*.

## **Article XI. Dissolution of Organization**

The NEO-RLS Board of Trustees may dissolve this organization in accordance with the *Ohio Revised Code*, Section 3375.93.

## **Article XII. Adoption and Amendments**

These Bylaws will be adopted by unanimous approval of the representatives appointed by the governing bodies, as defined in the *Ohio Revised Code*, Section 3375.90 (A), of the member libraries. These Bylaws may be altered or amended upon recommendation of the NEO-RLS Board of Trustees. Notice of any such recommendation will be given to the Membership Council at least thirty (30) days in advance.

**Adopted by the NEO-RLS Board of Trustees following a thirty day review period on March 14, 2017.**

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# APPENDIX

## PUBLIC LIBRARY ZONES

**(Based on 2015 Ohio Public Library Statistics  
as reported to the State Library of Ohio)**

### **ZONE 1; \$2,500,001 – up**

AKRON-SUMMIT CNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
AVON LAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
CLEVELAND HEIGHTS-UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS PL  
CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY  
CUYAHOGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
CUYAHOGA FALLS LIBRARY  
ELYRIA PUBLIC LIBRARY  
EUCLID PUBLIC LIBRARY  
GEAUGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
HUDSON LIBRARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
LAKEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY  
LORAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MANSFIELD-RICHLAND COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MEDINA COUNTY DISTRICT LIBRARY  
MENTOR PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MORLEY LIBRARY  
MT VERNON & KNOX COUNTY, PUBLIC LIBRARY OF  
ROCKY RIVER PUBLIC LIBRARY  
SANDUSKY LIBRARY  
SHAKER HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
STARK COUNTY DISTRICT LIBRARY  
STOW-MUNROE FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
TUSCARAWAS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
TWINSBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY  
WADSWORTH PUBLIC LIBRARY

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WARREN-TRUMBULL COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
WAYNE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
WESTLAKE PORTER PUBLIC LIBRARY  
WILLOUGHBY-EASTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
YOUNGSTOWN AND MAHONING COUNTY, PL OF

**ZONE 2; \$800,001 - \$2,500,000**

AMHERST PUBLIC LIBRARY  
ASHLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY  
ASHTABULA COUNTY DISTRICT LIBRARY  
BARBERTON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BURTON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
CANAL FULTON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
COLUMBIANA PUBLIC LIBRARY  
CONNEAUT PUBLIC LIBRARY  
COSHOCOTON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
DOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY  
EAST CLEVELAND PUBLIC LIBRARY  
GIRARD FREE LIBRARY  
GRAFTON/MIDVIEW PUBLIC LIBRARY  
HOLMES COUNTY DISTRICT PUBLIC LIBRARY  
HUBBARD PUBLIC LIBRARY  
HURON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
KENT FREE LIBRARY  
LOUISVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MASSILLON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MCKINLEY MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
NORTH CANTON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
OBERLIN PUBLIC LIBRARY  
ORRVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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PERRY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
PORTAGE COUNTY DISTRICT LIBRARY  
PUSKARICH PUBLIC LIBRARY  
REED MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
RITTER PUBLIC LIBRARY  
RODMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY  
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY  
WICKLIFFE PUBLIC LIBRARY

**ZONE 3; Up to \$800,000**

ANDOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOWERSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BRISTOL PUBLIC LIBRARY  
CARNEGIE PUBLIC LIBRARY - East Liverpool  
CARROLL COUNTY DISTRICT LIBRARY  
CENTERBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY  
CLAYMONT SCHOOL DISTRICT PUBLIC LIBRARY  
EAST PALESTINE MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY  
FAIRPORT HARBOR PUBLIC LIBRARY  
GNADENHUTTEN PUBLIC LIBRARY  
GRAND VALLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
HARBOR-TOPKY MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
HENDERSON MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
HERRICK MEMORIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY  
KINGSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
KINSMAN FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
KIRTLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY  
LEETONIA COMMUNITY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
LEPPER LIBRARY  
LOUDONVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
MARVIN MEMORIAL LIBRARY

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MILAN-BERLIN LIBRARY DISTRICT  
MINERVA PUBLIC LIBRARY  
NEWCOMERSTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY  
NEWTON FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
PENINSULA LIBRARY & HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
ROCK CREEK PUBLIC LIBRARY  
WELLSVILLE CARNEGIE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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