



451 Delaware Avenue • Delmar NY 12054 • 518-439-9314 • [www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org](http://www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org)

February 2023

Dear prospective trustee,

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Bethlehem Public Library board member.

To assist you in making an informed decision, we have provided this information packet for your review. Feel free to contact me, another trustee, or the library director if you have additional questions. You may contact any of us by calling the library at (518) 439-9314 or emailing us at [trustees@bethlehempubliclibrary.org](mailto:trustees@bethlehempubliclibrary.org).

The board welcomes your involvement. It is through concerned citizens like you that we draw our support.

Sincerely,

Mark Kissinger  
President, Board of Trustees

**Position Description  
Bethlehem Public Library Trustee**

**Library trustees are subject to education law,  
Board of Regents rules, and the State Commissioner of Education.**

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Determines and adopts written policies to govern the operation and services of the library.
2. Attends all regular and special meetings of the Board; participates in committees and activities as necessary; attends appropriate library functions.
3. Represents the interests and needs of the community.
4. Lends expertise and experience to the organization.
5. Sets an annual budget and approves expenditure of funds; monitors budget and expenses throughout the fiscal year.
6. Maintains an awareness of library issues and trends and their implications for library users.
7. Acts as liaison with the public, interpreting policy and informing local government, media and public of library services and needs.
8. Hires, sets salary for, and supervises a qualified library director to implement board decisions and carry out day-to-day operations.
9. Establishes short- and long-term goals for the library.
10. Understands pertinent local and state law; actively supports library legislation in the state and nation.
11. Ensures library compliance with state and federal law.
12. Ensures board compliance with open meeting law.
13. Reviews and signs necessary contracts.

**TIME COMMITMENT**

The Board of Trustees generally meets at the library on the second Monday evening of the month; meetings are about two hours' duration. Special meetings or committee meetings may be called as necessary at times convenient to members; these meetings must comply with open meeting law.

## **Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees**

- Trustees, in the capacity of trust upon them, shall observe ethical standards with absolute truth, integrity and honor.
- Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the situation.
- It is incumbent upon any trustee to disqualify himself/herself immediately whenever the appearance or a conflict of interest exists.
- Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the institution, acknowledging the formal position of the board even if they personally disagree.
- Trustees must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information.
- Trustees must be prepared to support to the fullest the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.
- Trustees who accept library board responsibilities are expected to perform all functions of library trustees.

*Adopted by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1985.*

*Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, July 1985*

*Amended by the Board of Directors of the American Library Trustee Association, July 1988.*

*Approval of the amendment by the Board of Directors of the Public Library Association, January 1989.*

***Association for Library Trustees and Advocates (ALTA)***

*A division of the American Library Association.*

TO: Trustee candidates, Bethlehem Public Library  
FROM: Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, library director  
DATE: February 2023  
RE: Petitions, deadlines and campaign expenses

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#### DATES TO REMEMBER

- April 17, 2023 petitions due at District Office by 5pm
  - April 17, 2023 1<sup>st</sup> campaign expense statement (submit w/ petition)
  - April 18, 2023 lottery to determine position on the ballot (9am)
  - May 11, 2023 2<sup>nd</sup> campaign expense statement
  - May 16, 2023 election and budget vote
  - June 5, 2023 3<sup>rd</sup> campaign expense statement
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Petitions nominating candidates for Bethlehem Public Library's Board of Trustees must be filed with the District Clerk on or before 5pm on April 17, 2023, which is 30 days prior to the election on May 16, 2023. Your petition must bear the signature of not less than **94** qualified voters residing in the Bethlehem Central School District.

Two seats will be on the ballot this year, with a full term of 5 years. Vacancies on the Bethlehem Public Library board are not seat-specific.

Ballot position for all qualified candidates is determined by lottery. The lottery will be held at 9am on April 18 at Education Services Center, Bethlehem Central High School, 700 Delaware Ave., Delmar New York 12054. This may take place via Zoom. If you are unable to attend, the District Clerk will draw for you.

Enclosed is information on Chapter 359 of the Laws of 1978 and amendment Chapter 151 of the Laws of 1981 regarding filing of campaign expenses by candidates. Please keep a record of your campaign expenses; you will be required to file a sworn statement concerning them.

Chapter 170 of the 1979 Legislation provides for the prohibition of electioneering within 100 feet of the polling place. A copy of Chapter 170 is enclosed.

#### Voter qualifications:

- 18 years of age or older
- citizen of the United States
- resident of the district for at least 30 days
- satisfies the provisions of Section 5-106 of the Election Law which excludes most convicted felons and those adjudged mentally incompetent by a court

The election and budget vote will take place on Tuesday **May 16, 2023**, 7am-9pm at Bethlehem Central High School. If you have any questions, please contact me at (518) 439-9314 ext. 3022.

**PETITION NOMINATING BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY CANDIDATE**

To: District Clerk:

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_, 2023

We, the undersigned, legally qualified voters of Bethlehem Central School District of the Towns of Bethlehem and New Scotland, County of Albany, New York, hereby petition, pursuant to the provisions of Section 2018 of the Education Law of the State of New York, for the nomination of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ who resides at \_\_\_\_\_  
for the office of LIBRARY TRUSTEE of said District, to commence on July 1, 2023, for presentation and consideration at the annual election of the District to be held on May 16, 2023.

Vacancies upon the Bethlehem Public Library Board shall not be considered separate specific offices.

No.	SIGNATURE OF PETITIONER	PETITIONER'S PLACE OF RESIDENCE
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13.	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____

This petition must contain at least **94** valid signatures and it must be filed with the District Clerk, Bethlehem Central High School, 700 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, New York 12054 by 5pm on April 17, 2023, which is 30 days (including Saturdays, Sundays and holidays) prior to the Annual Election on May 16, 2023.

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No.	SIGNATURE OF PETITIONER	PETITIONER'S PLACE OF RESIDENCE
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CHAPTER 359 - LAWS OF 1978  
AMENDMENT CHAPTER 151 - LAWS OF 1981

Chapter 359 of the Laws of 1978 required all candidates for election to a board of education to file sworn statements of campaign expenses. This law required candidates to file a statement with the Commissioner of Education and the Clerk of the School District. An Act (Chapter 151-Laws of 1981) amended the 1978 law to read as follows:

**Any candidate for election, if he expended nothing or his only expenditures were for personal expenses which when taken together with the total expenditures incurred by others on his behalf and with his approval do not exceed five hundred dollars, shall not be required to file any statements with the commissioner of education; however such candidate shall file with the clerk of the school district a sworn statement to the effect that his election expenditures did not exceed five hundred dollars.**

The following questions and answers are intended to be of assistance:

**Q: Is filing required of all candidates?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Must a candidate who is appointed to a vacant board seat file?**

A: No, filing is necessary only when an election is involved.

**Q: With whom must the candidate file?**

A: The clerk of the school district. If expenditures exceed \$500, then also with the Commissioner of Education.

**Q: Is there a specific format for filing?**

A: No, the format is left to the discretion of the candidate. However, it must indicate that election expenditures did not exceed \$500. A sample of a letter is included for the candidate's convenience.

**Q: What information must be included when expenses exceed \$500?**

A: The filing must set forth all moneys or other valuable things which the candidate has paid, given, expended or promised or which have been incurred for or on his/her behalf with his/her approval by any person, firm; association or corporation for the purpose of aiding in his/her nomination or election or to defeat any other candidate in the election.

**Q: Must a candidate file if the candidate incurs little or no personal expenditures and/or if expenditures incurred by others with the candidate's approval are minimal?**

A: Every candidate must file. An itemization is necessary if expenditures exceed \$500. When the candidate's only expenditures were for personal expenses which, when taken together with the total expenditures incurred by others on his behalf and with his approval are under \$500, a sworn statement must be filed with the clerk of the district only, indicating that the candidate's election expenditures did not exceed \$500.

**Q: What are personal expenses for the purpose of this law?**

A: Expenses directly and personally incurred and paid by the candidate including traveling expenses, and expenses incidental thereto, expenses for writing, printing and preparing for transmission letters, circulars, or other publications not issued at regular intervals, setting forth his/her position or views on public or other questions, and expenses for stationery, postage, telephone, telegraph and other public message services.

**Q: What filing is required if expenditures are made by a person or persons on behalf of a candidate without his approval?**

A: The person or persons making such expenditures without the candidate's approval must file a sworn statement with the clerk and commissioner stating that the candidate did not approve such expenditures. Such expenditures are limited to \$25 and shall not be included in determining the total expenditures of \$500 mentioned above.

**Q: When must statements be filed?**

A: A first statement must be filed on the 10th day (which may be a Saturday) preceding the election. A second statement must be filed within 20 days succeeding the election. A statement will be deemed properly filed when it is deposited in any established post office within the time indicated above, duly stamped, registered and directed to the clerk of the school district in which the filer is a candidate, and if necessary to the Commissioner of Education.

**Q: Where should statements be mailed in order to meet the requirement for filing with the Commissioner of Education?**

A: Commissioner of Education  
The New York State Education Department  
Albany, New York 12234

**Q: What action may be taken against a candidate who fails to file a statement or if a statement is incorrectly filed?**

A: The Supreme Court or a justice thereof, in a proceeding instituted by any candidate voted for at the election or by any five qualified voters, may compel a candidate by order to file a statement or to file a new or supplemental statement which was incorrectly filed originally.

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Date

Judith Kehoe  
Chief Business and Financial Officer  
Bethlehem Central School District  
Bethlehem Central High School  
700 Delaware Avenue  
Delmar NY 12054

Dear Ms. Kehoe:

In compliance with Chapter 359, Laws of 1978, expenses incurred by me running for a seat on the Bethlehem Public Library Board of Trustees have not exceeded \$500.00.

Very truly yours,

STATE OF NEW YORK >

> ss:

COUNTY OF ALBANY >

Sworn to before me on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ year \_\_\_\_\_

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Notary Public

CHAPTER 170 - LAWS OF 1979

**AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to the conduct of, and electioneering at, school district elections.**

I. Section 2031-a Electioneering within one hundred feet of polling place prohibited, distance markers.

1. At every election held for the office of trustee or member of a board of education and at every vote upon any proposition or issue in a school district where the election is held at a different time from and not during, the annual meeting of the district, there shall be conspicuously placed, by the inspectors of election, distance markers at a distance of one hundred feet from the polling place. Such distance markers shall indicate the prohibition contained herein and shall be so placed at least one-half hour before the opening of the polls and shall remain until the polls are closed.

2. At such elections or voting held at a different time from, and not during, the annual meeting of the district, while the polls are open, no person shall do any electioneering within the polling place, or within one hundred feet therefrom in any public street, or within such distance in any place in a public manner and no banner, poster or placard on behalf or in opposition to any candidate or issue to be voted upon shall be allowed in or upon the polling place or within one hundred feet therefrom during the election. For the purposes of this section, the one hundred foot distance shall be deemed to include a one hundred foot radial measured from the entrances, designated by the inspectors of the election, to a building where such election is being held. This section shall not be deemed to prohibit the board of trustees or board of education from displaying within any polling place a copy or copies of any budget or proposition to be voted upon.

3. Any person who willfully violates the provision of this sections shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

II. Section 2609 of such law is hereby amended by adding a new subdivision 4-1 to read as follows:

(a) At each such election there shall be conspicuously placed, by the inspectors of election, distance markers at a distance of one hundred feet from the polling place. Such distance markers shall indicate the prohibition contained in paragraph (b) of this subdivision and shall be so placed at least one-half hour before the opening of the polls and shall remain until the polls are closed.

(b) Where such markers are so placed and the polls are open, no person shall do any electioneering within the polling place, or within one hundred feet therefrom in any public street, or within such distance in any place in a public manner and no banner, poster or placard on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate or issue to be voted upon shall be allowed in or upon the polling place or within one hundred feet therefrom during the election. For the purposes of this subdivision, the one hundred foot distance shall be deemed, to include a one hundred foot radial measured from the entrances, designated by the inspectors of election, to a building where such election is being held. This section shall not be deemed to prohibit the board of trustees or board of education from displaying within any polling place a copy or copies of any proposition to be voted upon.

TO: Trustee candidates, Bethlehem Public Library  
FROM: Geoffrey Kirkpatrick, library director  
DATE: February 2023

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Each year, we like to feature our board candidates in the library's weekly *Spotlight* column, on our website, and in a candidate booklet produced in-house. To be included, please provide biographical information below and answer any or all of the questions on the attached sheet.

A digital version of this form can be filled out at

[www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org/trustee-candidate-questionnaire](http://www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org/trustee-candidate-questionnaire).

You may also e-mail your response (and a digital photo of yourself, if you have one) to [KristenR@bethpl.org](mailto:KristenR@bethpl.org), drop it off at the library, or mail it to 451 Delaware Ave., Delmar NY 12054.

This year, we will be hosting a Meet the Candidates night on **Wednesday, May 3, at 6pm**. We would like to invite all prospective candidates to this event.

Because the time between the petition deadline and the budget vote is short, please submit your questionnaire responses no later than **Monday, April 24**, or we may be unable to include them in our candidate publicity. Responses may be edited for length and clarity.

**1. Biographical information (please print)**

name \_\_\_\_\_

address \_\_\_\_\_

number of years you have resided in the town \_\_\_\_\_

telephone (work) \_\_\_\_\_ (home) \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

occupation \_\_\_\_\_

community service/volunteer work \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

other details you would like to share \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**2. Print or type answers to any or all of the following questions. Please limit your answers to 50 words per question (longer answers may be edited as needed):**

**Experience and goals**

What do you consider your most meaningful career accomplishment?

What skills do you bring to your tenure on the board?

What are your goals as a library board member?

**Views about libraries**

How does a public library best serve its community?

What are the most important issues facing public libraries today?

How are public libraries changing? How can a library board expedite these changes?

How have libraries influenced your life?

**Views about this library**

What do you like best about Bethlehem Public Library?

What is your vision for the future of this library?