

BOOKKEEPER and TREASURER: Definition, Description, Responsibilities

Library trustees have a fiduciary duty to maintain control of all finances through the board treasurer or through the board treasurer working with a contracted bookkeeper, CPA (certified public accountant), or private accounting and/or payroll service. The following RSAs describe their fiduciary duty:

202-A:11 Powers and Duties. – Except in those cities where other provision has been made by general or special act of the legislature, **the library trustees of every public library in the state shall:**

I. Adopt bylaws, rules and regulations for its own transaction of business and for the government of the library;

II. **Prepare an annual budget indicating what support and maintenance of the free public library will be required out of public funds for submission to the appropriate agency of the municipality.** A separate budget request shall be submitted for new construction, capital improvements of existing library property;

III. **Expend all moneys raised and appropriated by the town or city for library purposes** and shall direct that such moneys be paid over by the town or city treasurer pursuant to a payment schedule as agreed to by the library trustees and the selectmen or city council. All money received from fines and payments for lost or damaged books or for the support of a library in another city or town under contract to furnish library service to such town or city, shall be used for general repairs and upgrading, and for the purchase of books, supplies and income-generating equipment, shall be held in a nonlapsing separate fund and shall be in addition to the appropriation;

IV. **Expend income from all trust funds for library purposes for the support and maintenance of the public library** in said town or city in accordance with the conditions of each donation or bequest accepted by the town or city;

202-A:12 Annual Reports. – **Every library** regularly open to the public, or to some portion of the public, with or without limitations, whether its ownership is vested in the town, in a corporation, in an organization or association, or in individuals, **shall make a written report to the town or city at the conclusion of each fiscal year of (a) all receipts from whatever sources, (b) all expenditures, (c) all property in the trustees' care and custody, including a statement and explanation of any unexpended balance of money they may have, (d) and any bequests or donations they may have received and are holding in behalf of the town, with such recommendations in reference to the same as they may deem necessary for the town to consider, (e) the total number of books and other materials and the number added by gift, purchase and otherwise; the number lost or withdrawn, (f) the number of borrowers and readers and a statement of the use of the property of the library in furthering the educational requirements of the municipality and such other information and suggestions as may seem desirable, (g) submit a similar report to the state librarian at such time and on such forms as the commissioner of cultural resources may require.**

BOOKKEEPER

Specific bookkeeping responsibilities are listed below but are not limited to:

- Maintain the checkbook register and any other bank accounts
- Provide transaction details of all donations received
- Reconcile and provide a balance sheet for all accounts on a monthly basis
- Provide a monthly manifest of invoices received
- Pay invoices approved by the treasurer or trustee board
- Process payroll as instructed by the treasurer or trustee board
- Provide a summary of operating expenditures versus annual budget
- Provide reports as requested by the treasurer or trustee board, generally monthly reports
- Refer any questions from outside the board to the treasurer or trustee board
- Participates in trustee board meetings as requested by the treasurer or trustee board regarding specific financial matters

A person or service hired as bookkeeper has no authority over expenditures other than to pay approved bills, and does not participate in the budget process.

Many libraries have an agreement or MOU (memorandum of understanding) with the town to process payroll, insurance and other benefits. In this case the treasurer, bookkeeper or library director submits information to the town for processing.

Per guidelines established by (RSA 31:25) the bookkeeper must be bonded from a surety company authorized to do business in New Hampshire

TRUSTEE BOARD TREASURER

The Treasurer is responsible for the oversight of all library funds. The treasurer must submit regular reports to the board on the financial status of the library in relation to the current budget. The treasurer helps with the preparation of the annual budget. A person hired as bookkeeper has no authority over expenditures other than to pay approved bills and does not participate in the budget process. The library's operating budget may be handled through the municipal financial structure, but the trustee treasurer handles the trustee special/fines accounts and receives and reviews monthly reports from the municipality. The treasurer and any library trustees investing funds (RSA 202-A:23) must follow guidelines established by RSA 31:25 and must be bonded from a surety company authorized to do business in New Hampshire (RSA 41:6).

In addition to the treasurer, the board should designate at least one other trustee as a signatory for all library bank accounts. Generally, the chair is a second signatory along with the treasurer for all library bank accounts. The Library Director should not be a signatory.

The Trustee Board functions as a quorum or group and no one member has any more power or authority than any other.

It is important to remember that the Trustee Board has fiduciary responsibility for appropriated funds per **RSA 202-A:11**.