

Constitution of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System
Approved April 20, 2010

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of the library shall be the Ocmulgee Regional Library System.

ARTICLE II. LOCATION

The headquarters for the Ocmulgee Regional Library System shall be located in the Dodge County-Murrell Memorial Library in Eastman.

ARTICLE III. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Ocmulgee Regional Library system shall be to furnish library service to the people of the region under the regulations governing public libraries as set forth by the State of Georgia.

The Ocmulgee Regional Library System shall offer a full program of library service to all citizens of the participating counties to meet their informational, educational and recreational needs; acquire, process and dispense library materials; circulate materials to the public through the member libraries or by other appropriate means of library extension; develop existing libraries and establish and develop member libraries, deposits, community outreach and other services as appropriate to the needs of the service area; build a reference collection adequate to provide current and reliable information of a research nature as demanded by the needs of the communities comprising the area served; computer and other technological resources, including Internet access; and promote the use of library resources by means of instruction, library-centered programs, exhibits, and other public relations media.

ARTICLE IV. CONSTITUENCY

The Ocmulgee Regional Library System shall serve all citizens of Bleckley, Dodge, Pulaski, Telfair, Wheeler and Wilcox counties, and such other counties or municipalities as may become part of the region, through the headquarters library, branch libraries, and bookmobile and other extension services. Membership in the Ocmulgee Regional Library provides the citizens of Bleckley, Dodge, Pulaski, Telfair, Wheeler and Wilcox counties with reciprocal borrowing privileges in all libraries in the system.

Any county or municipality adjoining any county that is a member of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System may become a part of the Ocmulgee Regional Library either by contract or agreement with the library's Board of Trustees, or by payment of an amount agreed upon for such participation, based on the cost of

providing the service in said county or municipality, and by the provisions of Title 20, Chapter 5, Article 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated. Existing libraries are located in the cities of Abbeville, Alamo, Cochran, Eastman, Hawkinsville, and McRae.

ARTICLE V. LEGAL AUTHORITY

The legal authority for public libraries and boards of trustees is described in Title 20, Chapter 5, Article 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, amended in 1993 (O.C.G.A. #20-5-2).

ARTICLE VI. GOVERNING BODY

Section 1. The governing body of the Ocmulgee Regional Library shall consist of a Board of Library Trustees composed of trustees serving on member county Library boards who are elected to the Regional Library Board by each County Library Board as specified in the bylaws and the state law. Each county library board sends two representatives to create a Regional Board totaling twelve members. The operation of the Regional library system is legally vested in this Board under the provisions of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, Title 20, Chapter 5, Article 2.

Section 2. The term of office for library trustees shall be four years, with starting and ending dates corresponding to the library's fiscal year. No member may serve on this board for more than two successive four-year terms (8 years). Upon serving two four-year terms, two years must elapse before returning to the Board.

Section 3. 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 4. 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 5. In the event a member of the Regional Board ceases, for any reason, to be a member of his County Library's Board, then his term on the Regional Board shall end at the same time, and the County Library Board shall elect a new representative to the Regional Board.

Section 6. Additional representatives may be added from any library system which may affiliate with the Ocmulgee Regional Library in the future.

Article VII. OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the Board of Trustees shall be a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman elected from those serving on the Board. The Regional Board shall appoint a Secretary and Treasurer (or a Secretary-Treasurer), who will be a member of the Board or an employee of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System, and who shall be appointed or reappointed annually by the Regional Board. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed by the Bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Board.

Section 2. Nominations shall be made by a committee of three Board Members appointed by the Chairman of the Board. An officer is elected for a one-year term and may succeed himself or herself, except that the Chairman may not serve more than three successive terms.

Section 3. The officers shall be elected at the June meeting to serve for one year or until their successors are elected, and their term of office shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected.

Section 4. The Treasurer, the Director, and any members of the staff authorized to handle library funds shall be bonded for an amount commensurate with the amount of funds handled, determined by the Board and entered in the minutes, and a copy of the bond filed with the Georgia Public Library Service when applying for the Annual Renewal of State aid.

Section 5. All federal, state, and local funds used for the operation and improvement of the services and facilities of the Regional Library System shall be received by the Treasurer and shall be used in accordance with the budget approved by the Board.

Article VIII. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

An Executive Committee, composed of the officers of the Board, shall be entrusted to govern in the name of the Board of Trustees between meetings of the Board.

Article IX. STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committees shall be the Finance Committee, the Personnel and Policies Committee, the Building and Grounds Committee, and the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws. Other special committees may be appointed by the Chairman as needed.

Article X. INTERLIBRARY COOPERATION

The Ocmulgee Regional Library may enter into cooperative endeavors with other library systems for the purpose of sharing personnel, materials, and services by

confederation or by merger as seen fit by the governing bodies of the library systems. Such cooperative endeavors must be within the limits of funds available to the Boards of Trustees, conducive to mutual growth and development of library services, and not in violation of state or federal laws, regulations, or other agreements, contracts, or Library Board policies.

Article XI. CONTRACTS

The Ocmulgee Regional Library is authorized to make and enter into such contracts or agreements, for all or any part of the Regional Library System as are deemed necessary and desirable under the provisions of Title 20, Chapter 5, Article 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated.

Article XII. AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

This constitution may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board of Trustees by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment(s) is sent to all board members at least two weeks prior to the meeting, and provided that a quorum is present. All amendments to the Constitution will be filed with the Georgia Public Library Service immediately upon adoption.

**By-Laws of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System
Adopted April 20, 2010**

ARTICLE I. Duties and Responsibilities of Board Members

The Regional Board of Trustees is the legal governing body of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System. It shall be the duty and responsibility of Members of the Board of Trustees:

- (a) To employ a director for the Ocmulgee Regional Library System who meets state certification requirements and such other employees as necessary, upon the recommendation of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System Director. Authority for the technical administration and supervision of the libraries in the system shall be vested in the Ocmulgee Regional Library System Director.
- (b) To approve budgets prepared by the Ocmulgee Regional Library System Director and, together with the county Boards of Trustees, assume responsibility for the presentation of the library system's fiscal needs to the supporting agencies.
- (c) To attend board meetings.
- (d) To establish policies governing library programs.
- (e) To set policies for the receipt and administration of gifts of money and property.
- (f) To present financial and progress reports to governing officials and to the public.
- (g) To notify the Ocmulgee Regional Library System Director in advance of all meetings of the Board or of committees.

ARTICLE II. DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

Section 1. The Chairman shall preside at all regular or called board meetings. He shall appoint all committees and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the Nominating Committee.

Section 2. The Vice-Chairman shall preside in the absence of the Chairman. All other duties of the Vice-Chairman shall be assigned by the Chairman.

Section 3. The Secretary shall record the official actions of the Board, keep a record of attendance at Board meetings, and have the custody of the official

books, which shall be housed in the Regional Library Headquarters. The Secretary shall notify the proper appointing local Boards of vacancies which may occur on the Ocmulgee Regional Library Board. The Secretary shall report changes of membership to the Georgia Public Library Service. The Secretary shall send copies of the minutes of all meetings to the participating agencies and the Chairman of all county Boards.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall deposit all monies received in a bank or banks approved by the Board of Trustees. He shall notify, in writing, any supporting agency whose appropriations are not paid promptly and in full. He shall pay all bills which have been approved by the Director, who shall make all purchases and who shall countersign all checks. An account of all receipts and expenditures must be kept and a report made at each quarterly meeting. The accounts shall be audited at the direction of the Board and according to State Aid Criteria and other State and/or Federal laws and regulations. Official copies of all financial reports and the Treasurer's books shall be kept in the Regional Library headquarters at all times.

ARTICLE III. DUTIES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Finance Committee shall make a careful study annually of the library's needs and shall advise the Director in the preparation of the budget. The committee shall recommend the need for library appropriations provided by each county library for Regional financial support. Each county library will negotiate with their respective funding agencies to provide them with sufficient financial support.

Section 2. The Building and Grounds Committee shall maintain strict watch over the headquarters library's needs in matters of building maintenance and repairs, expansion, addition of permanent equipment, and upkeep of the grounds. The committee shall make recommendations to the Board of Trustees and to the Budget and Finance Committee as needed.

Section 3. The Committee on Constitution and By-laws shall periodically review the Library's constitution and by-laws and shall bring to the Board's attention any matter that needs revision.

Section 4. The Personnel and Policies Committee shall prepare and submit to the Board for its approval a statement of library board policy for dealing with daily operation of the library, including book and materials selection policies, policies for handling patron complaints about books and materials, personnel policies and grievance procedures, and other such policies as the board deems necessary and as are specified by law or Georgia Public Library Service.

ARTICLE IV. DUTIES OF THE DIRECTOR

Section 1. The Director of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System must hold at least a Grade 5(b) Librarian's Professional Graduate Certificate as defined by the State Board for the Certification of Librarians.

Section 2. The Director shall be appointed by the Board of Directors and shall be the administrative head of the library system under the direction and review of the Board.

Section 3. It is the duty and responsibility of the Director:

- (a) To recommend for employment or termination other staff members, as necessary, in compliance with applicable laws and the availability of funds, and to employ and terminate other staff members if so authorized by the Regional Board.
- (b) To attend all meetings called by the Georgia Public Library Service or send a substitute authorized by the Division Director.
- (c) To prepare any local, state, or federal annual budgets.
- (d) To notify the Board of Trustees and Georgia Public Library Service of any failure to comply with:
 - (1) Policies of the Board
 - (2) Criteria for State Aid
 - (3) State and Federal rules and regulations
 - (4) All applicable local, state, or federal laws
- (e) To administer the total library program, including all affiliated libraries, in accordance with policies adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System.
- (f) To attend all meetings of the Boards of Trustees of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System and of the county libraries in the Region, or to designate a person to attend in the Board member's place.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

Section 1. The Ocmulgee Regional Library System Board shall hold no less than four regular meetings during each fiscal year, including no less than one each calendar quarter. Meetings shall be held on the third Tuesday in the months of January, April, June, and October at 1:00 p.m. at the headquarters library, or at some other location as designated by the Chairman.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the Chairman or by the Executive Board, and shall be called upon written request submitted to the Chairman and Director, and signed by three Board members. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call, and no business other than that for which the meeting was called may be discussed or conducted at a called meeting.

Section 3. No later than one week prior to each regular or called meeting, the Director of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System shall send written notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting to each member of the Board.

Section 4. Meetings of the Executive committee may be called by the Chairman to transact any business requiring attention between regular meetings of the Regional Board.

Section 5. All meetings must be open to the public and the news media pursuant to the Open Meetings law, O.S.G.A. 50-14-1. The Regional Board may, however, enter into a closed session for the discussion of proposed or pending litigation, deliberation on acquisition or sale of real property, or hearings or discussions on the appointment, discipline, or dismissal of an individual employee, without restricting the employee's right to a public hearing if requested. If the Board enters into a closed session, no formal action will be taken. All decisions must be formally moved and adopted in an open Board meeting to be legally binding.

Section 6. The rules contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the proceedings of the Board in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with these by-laws and any special rules of order the Board may adopt.

Section 7. Each member of the Regional Board shall have one vote. The Chairman shall not vote except in the case of a tie vote, at which time the Chairman shall vote to break the tie.

Section 8. The members present at a regular or called meeting constitute a quorum. Except as stated in Article IX of this document, a simple majority affirmative vote of the quorum present and voting shall be necessary to approve any action before the Board.

ARTICLE VI. ATTENDANCE

Section 1. A Board member shall be removed for cause or for failure to attend three consecutive regularly-scheduled meetings.

Section 2. A letter reporting the removal of a board member and specifying the cause shall be sent by the Secretary of the Board to the affected Board member, to the local board responsible from which he was elected, and to the funding agency responsible for his appointment. The local board shall be asked to elect another representative to fill that member's unexpired term.

ARTICLE VII. REPORTS

The Ocmulgee Regional Library System is responsible for all reports as deemed necessary by local and state funding agencies. An annual report of activities, income and expenditures, and any other reports necessary to obtain funds or meet requirements of the law or the Georgia Public Library Service, shall be filed with each funding agency.

ARTICLE VIII. PENALTIES

Employees or agents of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System may cause the arrest, fine, and imprisonment of persons who:

- borrow, or fail to return, books and other property owned by the Ocmulgee Regional Library System pursuant to O.S.G.A. 20-5-53;
- deface, damage, steal, or otherwise improperly use and/or abuse library property; or commit other violations as described in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, Title 20, Chapter 5, Article 52.

ARTICLE IX. DISSOLUTION OF OR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE OCMULGEE REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM

Section 1. The Ocmulgee Regional Library System shall be dissolved by a reversal of the procedures followed in its original organization. A majority of the Board members in a majority of the counties must agree to the dissolution of the system.

Section 2. One county may withdraw from the system if a majority of the Board members vote to do so. Notice of withdrawal must be sent to the Chairman of the Regional Board of Trustees and the Regional Library Director at least six months prior to the end of the state fiscal year. This notice must include reasons for the withdrawal and the method by which the decision was reached. The Georgia Public Library Service must be notified of the receipt of this letter of intent within five working days.

Section 3. The Ocmulgee Regional Library System must elect to expel a member county upon the following conditions:

- (a) Failure of the county to maintain the agreed level of support to the Ocmulgee Regional Library System as in the most recent system participating agreement; or
- (b) Failure of the county to meet criteria which may jeopardize the Ocmulgee Regional Library System's eligibility for state or federal funds.

Section 4. Notice of expulsion shall be sent not less than six months prior to the end of the state fiscal year to the Chairman of the County Board of Trustees, all funding agencies party to the participating agreement, the Director of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System, and the Georgia Public Library Service.

Section 5. In the event of the withdrawal of one county from the regional system, all equipment and materials purchased with state or federal funds for use in the library or libraries in that county shall be dealt with according to the provisions of Georgia Law Title 20, Chapter 5, Article 2, part 2, 20-5-51. After the notice of withdrawal has been received by the Ocmulgee Regional Library System Board, there is no obligation on the part of the Ocmulgee Regional Library System to purchase books, equipment, supplies, or other items for the use of the library or libraries in the withdrawing county, other than the fair share of items in the existing Materials and Maintenance and Operations budgets for the current year.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board of Trustees with a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment(s) be sent to each board member at least two weeks prior to the meeting, and provided that a quorum be present. All amendments to these Bylaws shall be filed with the Georgia Public Library Service immediately upon adoption.