

Polish Library Building Association



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BYLAWS

Article 1: General Rules

The mission of the Association is to organize, develop and represents the local Polish community.

The Association bears the name of **Polish Library Building Association** in Portland, Oregon (henceforth the Association). The Polish name of the Association shall be **Towarzystwo Biblioteki Polskiej** w Portland, Oregon. The short names of the Association are the "Polish Library Association" or the "Polish Association".

The Association is a fraternal and social organization based on the principles of universality, equality, and democracy, and is of non-political nature.

Objectives of the Association:

1. To stimulate and propagate the desire to read Polish books, to use the Polish language, and to uphold Polish culture.
2. To promulgate teaching of the Polish language.
3. To unite all Poles regardless of their birth date or place.
4. To sustain fraternal bonds amongst members and to safeguard Polish traditions.
5. To help members in improving their economic status and to satisfy their cultural needs.
6. To assist newcomers in obtaining American citizenship.
7. To aid members who are disabled, sick, orphaned, or widowed.
8. To maintain connections with the native country according to the above stated objectives.

Article 2: Members

The members of the Association are divided into Ordinary Members, Members of Merit, Honorary Members, and Life Members.

An **Ordinary Member** may be any person of Polish origin or related to a person of Polish nationality, at least 16 years of age, regardless of his or her political and religious convictions.

A **Member of Merit** is a person who has been a member of the Association for 40 consecutive years. After receiving a title of Member of Merit, the member is exempt from paying the Association dues, and has full membership rights and privileges.

The title of **Honorary Member** may be granted to a member of the Association who has rendered extraordinary services on behalf of the Association for over 10 years. This title may also be granted to non-members for merits benefiting the Association or Polish community. An Honorary Member is exempt from paying the Association dues, and has the full membership rights.

A member becomes a **Life Member** with a majority approval vote at an Association meeting after a one-time fee is collected.

The titles of Member of Merit, Honorary Member, and Life Member are granted at the annual General Meeting of the Association (election meeting).

A **Friend of PLBA** may be any person. Friend of PLBA has the same rights and duties as an Ordinary Member except having the right to vote and a requirement to be initiated.

Membership Rights:

1. All members of the Association have full rights.
2. All members of the Association have the right to vote and to be elected an Officer of the Association. The minimum age to become a member and to vote is 16. In case of family membership, children remain members until they reach the age of 18 or 25 if they are students and are dependents of their parents.
3. All members have the right to share in benefits derived from the realization of the

objectives of the Association.

4. A member, whose membership is at least a year long, has the right to utilize the Polish Hall at a 50% discount from the regular rate. A member is entitled to such a discount once a year.
5. All members of the Association are entitled to a 10% discount for all functions organized by the Association.

Membership Duties:

1. To conduct oneself in accordance with Christian ethics and dignity of a Polish citizen.
2. To abide by provisions of the Bylaws, resolutions, and regulations adopted by the Association.
3. To participate in all activities of the Association.
4. To be loyal to the organization and to promote fraternal lines of conduct amongst members.
5. To safeguard property and assets of the Association.
6. To pay membership dues systematically. Membership dues are required for the entire calendar year and give the members the right to vote at the General Meeting in December. A member is a person who has paid dues for the current fiscal year; the fiscal year begins on December 1st and ends on November 30th. The membership due for the next year is to be paid no later than the General Meeting in December. Obtaining a lost membership requires the consent of the members of the Association.
7. To advocate Polish interests in words and in deeds.

Admittance of New Members

Applications for new members must be submitted at least a month prior to a new member being admitted and initiated. During the deliberation over the question of accepting new members, the new candidates should leave the deliberation room.

Forfeiture of Membership Rights

1. A member who causes harm to the Association will be expelled from the Association.
2. A member who propagates or supports subversive organizations antagonistic towards the government of the United States and Republic of Poland will be expelled from the Association.
3. All decisions regarding disciplinary actions are made by the Trial Committee.
4. Each member has the right to appeal the decision made by the Trial Committee to the General and Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association.

Article 3: Organization

The hereby document with all the legally validated amendments will be permanently displayed in the Polish Hall building. The Bylaws, translated into English, will constitute a document used by the Association for legal purposes.

The Bylaws may not be changed, amended, or revoked in any other way than by a 2/3 majority vote of all members present at the General or Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association. Any proposed amendments to the Bylaws must be submitted in writing in October so they could be read at the November meeting and approved and adopted with necessary corrections if applicable at the General Meeting in December.

The Association shall be dissolved if less than five members in good standing remain. A member is in good standing if the member is not in arrears with his or her membership dues. In case of dissolution, all property and assets of the Association shall be transferred to the Polish National Alliance in Chicago, Illinois, United States of America.

Assets of the Association

The assets of the Association consist of:

1. Membership dues (initiation fees, individual and family monthly dues, and life membership dues) and donations.
2. Hall rental fees.
3. Proceeds from functions.
4. Fixed property in possession of the Association (Polish Hall including Library).

Article 4: Board of Officers

President, Financial Secretary, Administrative Vice President, Cultural Vice President, Correspondent Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Board of Directors composed of five members, Board of Counselors composed of three members, Librarian, Custodian, Sergeant at Arms.

Duties of Officers:

President

The President, by virtue of his office, through his authority, sagacity, and competence directs all operations and activities, and ensures that objectives and purposes of the Association are being accomplished in accordance with the desired direction.

He represents the Association both internally and externally. He presides over the meetings and signs documentation and all financial receipts. He participates in meetings of various committees. As a meeting chairman he does not have the right to discuss any questions before the organization or make any motions. He may, however, transfer his presidency over to the Vice President in order to participate and speak during discussions or to make a motion.

He does not have the right to vote except for the event of a tie vote in which case the President has the decisive vote. The President is obliged to transfer his presidency to each Vice President at a meeting at least once a year. The office of the President may not be held by the same person for more than three consecutive years.

Administrative Vice President, Cultural Vice President

The Vice Presidents are obligated to aid the President in all his actions. During the President's absence the Vice Presidents shall act in accordance with the duties of the President. The Administrative Vice President automatically presides over the Board of Directors.

Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary is in charge of financial books. He may not perform duties of the Treasurer and does not have the right to sign checks. He keeps accurate records of all incoming and outgoing monies. All financial receipts accepted by the Financial Secretary are required to bear signatures of the President and the Treasurer. At each monthly meeting he shall present a detailed business report.

After closing books for the fiscal year, the books, per the Board of Directors instruction, are subject to an audit by an expert accountant from outside of the Board of Officers. Upon the acceptance of the audit results by the Board of Directors and the President as well as the approval by the Board of Counselors, the books signed by the President and the Financial Secretary shall be deposited in a specifically assigned safe storage to which keys are in possession of the President and the Treasurer.

Treasurer

The Treasurer collects membership dues and manages the membership register. He manages operating finances. Along with the President's and the Vice Presidents', his signature is listed at a financial institution where he deposits and draws money.

Each month he delivers detailed and documented expense reports accompanied by copies of checks signed by the President and the Treasurer to the Financial Secretary. Along with the President, he is responsible for protection and storage of financial documentation and securities of the Association.

Correspondent Secretary

The Correspondent Secretary manages the list of all members and their addresses. The secretary manages also the correspondence of the Association.

Recording Secretary

The Recording Secretary records the meeting minutes in Polish or in English. Meeting minutes shall be available at the Library a week prior to the following meeting.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors oversees the entirety of property, assets, and administration of the Association. The Board of Directors determines and accomplishes a plan and an annual budget of the Association activities. The Board of Directors appoints an auditor or an Auditing Committee for an annual audit of the Association's financial books. The audit results are presented to the Board of Directors and the President, and subsequently submitted to be approved by the Board of Counselors. The Board of Directors consists of five members elected for a two year term.

Board of Counselors

The Board of Counselors verifies conformance of the Association's activities with the Bylaws. It verifies the progress of actualization of the plan and the annual budget of the Association. It sporadically audits books and financial operations. It approves the annual financial audit results. Along with the Board of Directors, it evaluates and approves motions.

Board of Counselors performs duties of the Trial Committee. It investigates member violations of any obligations under Article 2 of the Bylaws. The Trial Committee may impose the following penalties:

1. Warning
2. Reprimand
3. Temporary suspension of membership
4. Expulsion from the Association

The Board of Counselors consists of three members elected for a two year term.

Librarian

The Librarian organizes and manages library activities. He is in charge of the book collection, manages the precise register of books, keeps an accurate record of books in circulation, and cares for their condition. He enhances the collection of books by adding new publications in Polish.

Custodian

The Custodian keeps a detailed record of the inventory of the entire building. He meticulously protects all assets of the Association. He is responsible for renting out the hall and keeping the entire building clean. The Custodian submits expense and income receipts to be approved by the President. He keeps a record of expenses and income. He presents a report at each monthly meeting. The amount of his wages is determined at the annual General Meeting. The officers may commission other person than custodian renting the hall.

Sergeant at Arms

Duties of the Sergeant at Arms include solicitous care of flags and ensigns, and their proper placement at different activities, keeping order at functions and meetings, and meeting and introducing guests.

Any Officer who is absent at three consecutive meetings shall be automatically expelled from office (unless the absence is justified). Their replacement shall be elected at a next meeting.

Article 5: Meetings

The meetings of the Association are divided into Ordinary, Annual General, and Extraordinary General.

The **Ordinary** Meetings take place once a month at a time determined by the Board of Officers of the Association. The **Annual General** meeting takes place in December. The **Extraordinary General** meeting is called by the President on a request of the Board of Directors and the Board of Counselors or following a motion of majority of half of the members of the Association. In case of any urgent business, the President calls the meeting of the Board of Officers.

The meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order in Polish or English and interpreted to the other language if such need arises.

For a meeting to be legally valid, the following quorums are required (a required number of members at a meeting):

1. Ordinary Meeting - 10% of members
2. Extraordinary General Meeting - 50% of members plus one
3. General Election Meeting (annual) - 2/3 of members. In case of an election allowing absentee ballots (valid votes of absent members), the absentees are counted for a quorum.

Meeting Order:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Roll call of officers and meeting quorum
3. Presentation of minutes from a previous meeting in writing and their approval
4. Reading of correspondence
5. The Custodian's report
6. The Financial Secretary's report
7. The Librarian's report
8. The Committees report
9. Discussion of the reports and vote for their approval
10. Introduction and initiation of new members
11. Old business
12. New business
13. Adjournment

To simplify the procedure and to reduce the duration of a meeting, if possible, the

reports will be sent electronically to all Officers for comments. Upon the acceptance of the reports at a following meeting, they will be forwarded by the Recording Secretaries to the Librarian to be included in the recording book available to all members.

Article 6: Election

The election of the Officers of the Association for a one year term takes place at the General Meeting in December. Before the election each member is obliged to register and verify that their name is listed on the Election Committee's register.

Qualifications of Candidates

To become a candidate for the Office, one must be a member of the Association for at least one year prior to the election. Candidates for the Office should be socially savvy and enjoy a good reputation both within and outside the Association. Candidates for the office of the President and the Vice President must be citizens of the United States of America.

Election Procedure

1. Election is conducted by the Election Committee consisting of at least three members who should be appointed and approved at a meeting of the Association no later than in October.
2. All members on the list approved by the Membership Committee and forwarded to the Election Committee are eligible to vote.
3. All candidates for the posts of the Officers of the Association shall be proposed to the Election Committee no later than at a meeting in November and announced no later than three weeks before the election.
4. Election allowing absentee ballots is permissible.
5. Only officially published by the Election Committee absentee ballots will be accepted during election.
6. A full list of candidates for the posts of the Officers of the Association will be included in the absentee ballots.
7. Absentee ballots will be available for interested parties at the Library on the Sundays prior to the election as designated by the Election Committee. Absentee ballots will also be available from the members of the Election Committee at the request of interested parties. The interested party certifies with their signature the receipt of the election documentation.
8. Absentee ballots must be returned by the interested parties to the Election Committee in sealed and signed envelopes no later than before the start of the election. The authenticity of absentee ballots will be confirmed by the Election Committee by comparing the signatures upon the receipt and return of the election documentation.
9. Filled in absentee ballots may be returned by mail to: PLBA - Election Committee, Polish Library Building Association, 3832 N. Interstate Avenue, Portland, OR 97227.
10. Voting by proxy is impermissible.
11. Due to the significance of the election, candidates for the Officers of the Association shall not be proposed on the day of the election.
12. All litigations on the Election Day will be settled by the Board of Counselors.
13. Two (or more) members of the same family can not be in office on positions of President, Vice-president, Boards of Directors, or Board of Counselors.

The Text of the Initiation

In the presence of Almighty God, for the love of my country and my ancestors, in the presence of all members of the Polish Library Building Association, I solemnly state that I voluntarily take upon me all obligations of a member of this organization and I promise faithfully to observe, support, and defend the Constitution of this Association as well as the Constitution of the United States of America. So help me God. Amen.

These Bylaws were adopted and approved by the Annual General Meeting on December 8, 2002. The Bylaws Committee of 2001-2002:

- Giedwoń Bożena
- Górecki Egon
- Koliński Edward
- Stępień Marek
- Wielgosz Stanisław