



Melissa A. Schiffel

Delaware County Prosecutor

February 19, 2026

Dave Yost
Ohio Attorney General
Opinions Section
30 E. Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3428

Via Email **ONLY**: OpinionsRequest@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov

Re: Request for Formal Opinion Regarding the Length of Appointment
of Board Members to a County Library District Board of Trustees

Dear Attorney General Yost:

Our office requests an opinion regarding the length of appointment of board members to a county library district board of trustees ("Board"). The relevant statute is R.C. § 3375.22, which was recently amended by H.B. No. 96 (136th G.A.), effective September 30, 2025.

The question is whether a new (or reappointed) trustee appointed to an existing Board on or after September 30, 2025 (i.e. effective date of the amendments) is appointed to a 4-year term or to a different term per the staggering schedule in the statute. As used here, an *existing* Board is one that was first established prior to the effective date of the amendments and is on-going.

This question arises as a result of the Delaware County Commissioners reappointing a trustee to the Delaware County District Library Board on January 1, 2026. The Board is an existing Board and this is the first appointment to the Board after the effective date of the amendments. Does amended R.C. § 3375.22, require this trustee be reappointed to a 4-year or 1-year term?

The confusion is with the phrase "at the first appointment." As used in the statute, this phrase triggers staggering the appointment lengths. Does this phrase mean the first appointments to a Board newly established on or after September 30, 2025 or the first appointments (or reappointments) made to an existing Board after the amendments' effective date?

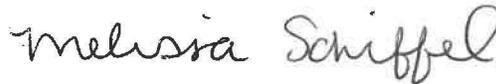
Complicating the issue, R.C. § 3375.22 later states that “all subsequent appointments shall be for seven years.” As written and in context, this seems to create temporary term reductions that defeat the purpose of the recent amendments (reducing terms from 7-years to 4-years). While we believe this was an oversight when the statute was amended, we are unable to ignore it in interpreting the legislative intent, and we are seeking your opinion on how to reconcile it with the prior term reduction language in the statute.

Given this background, we specifically request an opinion on the following question(s):

- 1) On or after the effective date of amended R.C. § 3375.22 (September 30, 2025), is a new (or reappointed) trustee appointed to an existing Board appointed to a 4-year term or to a different term per the staggering schedule in the statute?
- 2) What is the meaning of the phrase “at the first appointment” as used in amended R.C. § 3375.22? Does it mean the first appointments to a Board newly established on or after September 30, 2025 or the first appointments (or reappointments) made to an existing Board after the amendments’ effective date?
- 3) After initially being appointed to a shorter term, does the length of appointment for Board members for all “subsequent appointments” return to 7-years?

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Melissa A. Schiffel
Delaware County Prosecuting Attorney