

## **Ridgefield Poet Laureate Criteria, Duties and Application Process- January 2023**

“Poetry is a life-cherishing force. For poems are not words, after all, but fires for the cold, ropes let down to the lost, something as necessary as bread in the pockets of the hungry.”—Mary Oliver

### **Ridgefield Poet Laureate**

The Board of Selectman shall appoint a Poet Laureate for Ridgefield (selected by the Ridgefield Poet Laureate Selection Panel) to promote an appreciation for poetry for the “solace, enjoyment and delight” of residents of Ridgefield, Connecticut.

#### **Criteria:**

“A Poet Laureate is a person who is recognized for his or her long-standing involvement in poetry. This person demonstrates passion and expertise in the field and works to promote poetry in the general culture.” (Connecticut Coalition of Poets Laureate)

- Be 18 years old or older
- Have a strong desire to actively engage people of all ages in the community through poetry
- Be a resident of Ridgefield for at least 3 years prior to appointment and live in Ridgefield (or close to) during entire term
- Three-year term with possibility of extension
- Be experienced in the field of poetry and able to fulfill the required duties of the position

#### **Duties:**

- Organize and/or take part in poetry readings/workshops open to the public
- Foster public appreciation and participation in poetry and literary arts activities in Ridgefield
- This (unpaid) position will also serve to promote ideas of compassion and inclusion
- Fulfill one special project during the 3-year tenure
- Be part of the CT Coalition of Poets Laureate as Ridgefield’s official representative

### **Ridgefield Poet Laureate Selection Panel**

A seven-member, Ridgefield Poet Laureate Selection Panel (RPLSP) will include members of the Ridgefield Arts Council, Ridgefield Library staff, poetry advocates, representative from the school and senior communities, and others. Ridgefield Library staff will help coordinate the application process and publicity and any outreach activities with the Poet Laureate.

## **Application Process**

Applications for the Ridgefield Poet Laureate term that will run from April, 2023 through March, 2026 will be accepted from **January 15, 2023 through February 15, 2023**.

Please send your application, by email, hand-delivered, or by mail for the attention of the Ridgefield Poet Laureate Selection Panel at [lhandley@ridgefieldlibrary.org](mailto:lhandley@ridgefieldlibrary.org), Lucy Handley, Ridgefield Library, 472 Main St., Ridgefield, **no later than February 15, 2023**.

### **Application should include:**

- A cover letter that includes a little about yourself and your connection with poetry. This should also include a statement about what you would like to achieve during your tenure, especially any special project that you would like to undertake during that time.
- A poetry related resume or CV
- A selection of 8 to 10 poems that you think best demonstrate the style and range of your poetry
- Links to any online content that you would like us to consider

### **Selection Process**

Once the applications have been received the RPLSP will review the applications, gather any additional material needed, and make its decision based on the poet's ability to fulfill the requirements of the position and to actively engage the Ridgefield community in and around poetry.

The recommendation of the panel will be sent via the Ridgefield Arts Council to the Town's First Selectman **in early March, 2023**. The inaugural Ridgefield Poet Laureate will be officially announced in April as part of the National Poetry Month celebrations.