

3.27 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COMMENT AT BOARD MEETING

The Board of Library Trustees of the Niles-Maine District Library encourages and welcomes public participation and input, and will hear any interested individual pursuant to the guidelines outlined in this policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that interested individuals are allowed time to address the Board while permitting the Board to conduct its meeting in an efficient and effective manner.

Therefore, at each regular meeting, a period of time will be devoted to concerns presented by the public. Before appearing before the Board, the members of the public are urged to seek solutions to their concerns through administrative channels. If there are no members of the public wishing to address the Board, the Board may continue with its meeting.

The following rules shall govern speakers who address the Board:

1. Members of the public wishing to speak are encouraged and asked to, but are not required to sign up with the Director or Board President before the Board Meeting. Members of the public who sign up in advance will be allowed to speak first in the order that they signed up. If time remains in the Public Comment portion of the meeting, other members of the public who did not sign up will be allowed to provide 3 minutes of public comment each. No person may assign their time to any other person. The speakers' concerns or comments should be limited to Library business but public comment will be entertained on any subject matter.
2. Public participation and comment will be permitted during the "Public Comment" portion of the Agenda. As the Illinois Open Meetings Act is intended to provide the right to address the Board to members of the public.
3. The Board President or person presiding over the meeting will ask if anyone wishes to address the Board who did not sign up in advance of the meeting and will determine the order in which the speakers are recognized.
4. The time allowed for each person to speak will be three (3) minutes per person, per meeting. Only one person may speak at a time during the Public Comment period. Speakers are asked to strictly adhere to time allocated and to be brief and to the point.
5. Speakers may provide written copies of their concern and/or pre-prepared copies of his or her public comments to the Board prior to his or her public comment session. Requests to append written statements or correspondence to the meeting minutes will not be favored as meeting minutes are a summary of the Board's discussion and actions. Written materials presented to the Board will be included in the Board's files, but will not be attached to the meeting minutes.
6. A group of three (3) or more individuals speaking on the same topic are asked to designate a single spokesperson to present the group's public comments.

7. Board members will generally not respond to comments from speakers. The Board President or other presiding officer may respond to questions as appropriate and, for example, direct speakers to the appropriate staff member for assistance. Issues requiring possible action by the Board may be added to a future agenda. Issues that may need to be addressed by the administration will be duly noted.
8. Abusive and profane comments will not be permitted and shall promptly be ruled out of order by the President or other presiding officer.
9. Individuals addressing the Board must at all times adhere to the Library policies and other rules as may be necessary for the efficient and orderly conduct of the meeting.
10. Public comments may be emailed to the Director no less than 24 hours before the official start time of the board meeting and must adhere to the above rules. Such comments will be read into the record.

The Board vests in the Board President or presiding officer, the authority to terminate the remarks of speakers who fail to adhere to the above rules.

No final action may be taken on any public comment or concern which requires a resolution, or written contract, or which has the effect of approving any expenditure of funds. The Board may, however, direct that any matter raised on these subjects be set for a future agenda, including the preparation of resolutions or other documents for consideration at such time.

Adopted by the Niles Public Library District Board of Trustees 4.20.11; 3.20.19; 7.17.23