

Loutit District Library

Policy for Public Comments at Board Meetings

The Loutit District Library Board of Trustees welcomes and encourages comments from the public who attend Board meetings. The Board provides two specific periods during meetings when audience members may submit public comments, one early in the meeting and the other at the end of the meeting. In addition, the Board provides the opportunity for audience members to submit public comments on specific Board motions, after the Board has discussed the motion and before the Board votes on the motion.

The Board has adopted the following procedures to receive public comments at Board meetings:

1. The Director shall have copies of the Board meeting agenda available for the public who attend a Board meeting. The agenda shows designated times for the public to submit comments to the Board.
2. When the Board meeting reaches a designated time for public comments, and prior to the Board vote on a specific motion, the President shall call for public comments to be submitted.
3. The President shall ask persons wishing to speak to raise their hands to be recognized by the President. The President shall recognize one person to speak at a time, and shall ask each speaker to provide his/her name and address.
4. Public comments shall be addressed to the Board, not to other members of the audience.
5. The President shall ask persons who wish to speak to limit their comments to three (3) minutes until every person who wishes to speak has had an opportunity to speak. Then, the President may recognize persons who have already spoken and who wish to speak again.
6. The President shall have the discretion to close any public comment period in the interest of completing the Board's business in a timely fashion.
7. The Board encourages the public to submit written comments to the Board, including written text of oral comments. A person should submit any written comments to the Board Secretary. Written materials submitted to the Board are considered public documents.
8. The Board encourages free and complete public dialog on Library issues within the bounds of civil discourse. If the President determines that a speaker has overstepped the bounds of civil discourse, the President may request a speaker to return to civility or to cease his/her comments.

9. If a speaker includes specific questions to the Board or the Director in his/her public comments, the President may respond or may ask another Board member or the Director to respond. If the apparent answer to a specific question will be lengthy or will involve Library documents or will require research, the President may refer the question to the Director for a response at a later time.

Adopted by the Loutit District Library Board of Trustees on June 28, 2005.

Mary Jane Belter, Secretary