

WHITE OAK LIBRARY DISTRICT

Public Comment Policy

The White Oak Library District Board of Trustees welcomes public participation and will hear any interested individual pursuant to the guidelines outlined in this policy. At each regular monthly meeting, a period of time not to exceed 30 minutes will be devoted to Library related concerns presented by the public. An individual may address the Library Board only during this portion of the regular monthly meeting. Before appearing before the Board, the members of the public are urged to seek solutions to their concerns through administrative channels.

The following rules shall govern speakers who address the Board:

- Members of the public wishing to speak are asked to call the Library Director before 4:30 p.m. on the day of the meeting and provide their name and the topic on which they wish to speak. If applicable, the individual will provide the organization or association with which they are affiliated.
- All public comments must be given in person. No telephone, video conferencing or other electronic means will be accommodated.
- Members of the public will not be allowed to discuss individual personnel issues or confidential patron matters, and the speakers' concerns or comments should be limited to Library policies or operations.
- No public comments shall be heard on behalf of or opposed to a candidate for public office or on any matter that may be subject to discussion by the Board of Library Trustees in closed/executive session in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.
- Speakers must sign in at the beginning of the meeting and identify themselves by full name and are requested to provide their current address, including city.
- District residents will be given priority to speak.
- Speakers must identify themselves and their topic before speaking.
- The Board may deny public comment by speaker(s) who have voiced the same concerns publicly at previous meetings.
- Speakers may provide written copies of their concern to the Board.
- Groups are asked to designate a single spokesperson.
- The time allowed for each person to speak will be five (5) minutes. Speakers are asked to strictly adhere to time allocated.
- Any person may record the proceedings at meetings required to be open by tape, film, or other means, provided, however,
 - (a) taping shall not interfere with the overall decorum and proceedings of the meeting (i.e., the machine and/or operator must be quiet and unobtrusive);
 - (b) the machine and/or operator shall not interfere with the auditory rights of the other citizens;

- (c) no electricity of the Library shall be used; and
- (d) no taping or filming will be allowed as set forth under 735 ILCS 5/8-701. That statute provides that “no witness shall be compelled to testify in any proceeding conducted by a court, commission, administrative agency or other tribunal in this State if any portion of his or her testimony is to be broadcast or televised or if motion pictures are to be taken of him or her while he or she is testifying.” In this regard, Section 2.05 of the Open Meetings Act provides that, “[i]f a witness at any meeting required to be open by this Act which is conducted by a commission, administrative agency or other tribunal refuses to testify on the grounds that he may not be compelled to testify if any portion of his testimony is to be broadcast or televised or if motion pictures are to be taken of him while he is testifying, refuses to testify, the authority holding the meetings shall prohibit such recording during the testimony of the witness. (5 ILCS 120/2.05)
- The Library will make reasonable accommodations for those wishing to record the meeting and request they stay in the area designated for the public.
 - Board members may, but will generally not, respond to comments from speakers. The Board President or other presiding officer may respond 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 can be addressed by the administration will be duly noted.
 - Abusive, profane, harassing and/or repetitive comments and language and/or personal attacks will not be permitted and shall promptly be ruled out of order by the President or other presiding officer.
 - 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.
 - The thirty-minute time limit and/or five minute maximum per speaker may be extended upon a majority vote of the Board.

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.

All public comment shall be addressed to the Board as a whole and no comments shall be addressed to individual members of the Board, Library staff or other members of the public.

There shall be no debate on any matters raised during public comment. The Board may, however, refer any matter of public comment to the Library Director, Library staff, or an appropriate agency for review, or may place the matter on a subsequent agenda for discussion.

No final action will 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 unless a majority of the Library Trustees in attendance determines the matter requires immediate action. 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.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on December 15, 2015