

Coleman Area Library

Policy for Public Comment at regular and special meetings

The Coleman Area Library welcomes and encourages comments from members of the public who attend Library Board meetings. Pursuant to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act, a person is permitted to make a public comment during the meeting under rules established by the Library Board.

Public Comment Period; Meeting Agendas

- A. If an agenda is available, the Library Board will have copies of the agenda available for the public who attend the meeting. At the minimum, one shared copy will be available. The agenda will indicate the designated time(s) for the public to provide comments. The Library Board will include at least one public comment period during each meeting. These rules apply to the public comment period in any regular or special meeting or in any committee meeting that is open to the public ("Public Comment").
- B. Members of the public have no right to address the Library Board or make comments outside of the Public Comment. At any time, the Library Board, at its discretion, may accept comments from the public. However, outside of the Public Comment time, the Library Board is under no obligation to hear comments from the public during a meeting.
- C. The Library Board has sole discretion to determine the content of each meeting agenda and is not obligated to add any item to the agenda.

Rules of Public Comment

The Library Board adopts the following procedures to receive Public Comments:

- A. When the Library Board meeting reaches a designated time for Public Comments, the Board President will invite attendees to make Public Comments. If the Board President is absent, the acting President of the meeting will perform the Board President's duties under this policy.
- B. The Board President will ask persons wishing to speak to raise their hands and wait to be recognized by the Board President. The Board President will recognize one person to speak at a time, and each speaker must provide their name and address. No person in attendance may make a comment without being recognized.
- C. Public Comments must be addressed to the Library Board, not to members of the audience.
- D. Each speaker is only entitled to one (1) three-minute time during any Public Comment period per meeting and may not split the time or "give" the time to another speaker.
- E. In lieu of speaking, a person may submit any written comments to the Library Board Secretary. Written materials submitted to the Library Board are considered public documents.
- F. The Library Board encourages free and complete public dialogue on Library Board issues within the bounds of civil discourse. Speakers may not breach the peace of the meeting. No person shall engage in disruptive, discourteous, belligerent, impertinent, threatening, disparaging, or other uncivil behavior. The Board President may limit or end the comments of any person who engages in this conduct.
- G. If a speaker includes specific questions to the Library Board in his or her Public Comments, the Library Board has no obligation to respond.
- H. Groups are encouraged to designate one or more individuals to speak on their behalf to avoid cumulative comments. However, there is no requirement to make this designation. If a speaker is speaking on more than one individual's behalf, they must state as such at the beginning of their comment and shall be entitled to one (1) three-minute time during Public Comment.
- I. The Library Board may determine, in its sole discretion, how Public Comments will be summarized in the meeting minutes. Members of the public should not expect the minutes to include verbatim transcripts or details of any individual comment.

- J. All signs are prohibited in the Board meetings.
- K. Members of the public are also encouraged to contact the Library during regular business hours to ask questions, raise concerns, and request information about Library matters.

Recording of Rules

These rules will be recorded in the minutes and kept on file by the Library Board Secretary and the Library Director. The Coleman Area Library is establishing this policy under the following:

- MCL 15.263 - “a public body may establish reasonable rules and regulations to minimize the possibility of disrupting the meeting
- MCL 15.263 – A person shall be permitted to address a meeting of a public body under rules established and recorded by a public body