



Public Comment Policy for Board Meetings

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures and expectations for public participation during meetings of the Nippersink Public Library District Board of Trustees (“Board”). Public comment provides an important opportunity for community members to share feedback, express opinions, and engage in transparent dialogue regarding Library business.

The Board values and encourages input from the public while maintaining an orderly, respectful, and efficient meeting environment.

Policy Statement

The Nippersink Public Library District encourages all members of the community to share their views on topics related to Library operations, programs, or policies. Public comment sessions are conducted in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Individuals requiring reasonable accommodations to participate in public comment should contact the Library Director in advance.

Each meeting agenda will include time for public comment at either the beginning or the end of the meeting. To ensure the completion of scheduled business, public participation will generally be limited to 30 minutes in total. The Board may extend this period, table agenda items, or schedule a special meeting as needed.

Public Participation Guidelines

- **Sign-In or Identification:** Individuals wishing to speak are asked to sign in before the meeting’s call to order, providing their name, town, and organization (if applicable). Those unable to sign in may notify the Board President or Library Director prior to the start of the public comment portion. This information will be recorded in the official meeting minutes.
- **Time Limit:** Each speaker will be **allotted three (3) minutes** to address the Board. If multiple individuals wish to speak, each will have three minutes until the total 30-minute comment period is reached. Time may not be transferred from one speaker to another.
- **Written Comments:** Members of the public may submit written comments in advance via mail, email, or the Library’s website. Written comments should be directed to the Library Director or the Board of Trustees and will be distributed to all Trustees prior to the meeting. Written comments will be acknowledged during the meeting and included in the official record but will not be read aloud.



Conduct and Interaction

- The Board will listen respectfully but will not engage in two-way dialogue during the public comment period.
- The Board President will recognize speakers, introduce them, and ensure time limits are observed.
- Trustees may ask clarifying questions only after being recognized by the President.
- Speakers are expected to maintain civility and decorum. Comments that include discriminatory, harassing, threatening, or disruptive language may be ruled out of order by the Board President.

Personnel and Confidential Matters

To protect privacy and maintain compliance with applicable laws:

- No person—including Trustees, employees, or the public—may present or discuss complaints about specific employees or Trustees in open session.
- Indirect identification of individuals through demographic information, job title, or other personal characteristics is also prohibited.
- Personnel or confidential matters should be submitted in writing to the Library Director for review and appropriate handling.
- The Board may convene in closed session as permitted by law to address confidential or personnel-related issues.