

Bucks County Free Library

BOARD MEETING PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY

Policy Statement

The function of the regular meetings of the Library Board is to conduct the business of the Bucks County Free Library, as distinguished from providing an open citizen's forum. The Board does, however, encourage public attendance at, and participation in, its meetings when appropriate to the business at hand.

Regulations

Public comment is welcome during the designated public comment period. If the agenda is open to comment during other parts of the meeting, the Board President will specifically indicate this to attendees. Comments will be permitted only from attendees who fully identify themselves for the record by signing in on the Board meeting attendance sheet.

The Library Board will permit comment only on topics listed on the current Board meeting agenda. Anyone who wishes to communicate with the Board on other topics should contact the library Board by e-mail with specific and detailed information about the proposed topic at bcflboard@buckslib.org. The Library Board, at its discretion, will choose whether to place a requested topic on a future Board agenda or respond to the request by phone or in writing. Repeated requests on the same/similar topics or personal attacks on Board members or staff generally will not receive a response.

Comment is limited to 3 minutes total per person/group per topic and 5 minutes total per person/group on all topics in cases where attendees comment on multiple topics over the course of a single meeting.

While commenting:

- State your name and address. Anyone refusing to identify himself or herself will be prohibited from commenting. If you are the official representative of an organization, please state the name of the organization.
- Stay focused on the topics scheduled for review listed on the current Board meeting agenda.
- Avoid characterizing the motives of others or taking “cheap shots,” such as name calling, personal remarks, and opinions or assertions that are not backed with facts which the speaker can verify to the Board.
- Speak only for yourself or the organization you officially represent, not on behalf of “the community as a whole” or others not in attendance or represented by you or your group.
- Do not repeat previous points that others already have made or that you have already made in prior Board meetings.

The Library Board will not entertain comment in its public meeting about any topic for which it is permitted to go into executive session, such as confidential personnel matters or any item in litigation or threatened litigation.

If any person has a complaint about a specific library Board member or employee, the complaint must be put in writing to the Board with specific and detailed information and will not be addressed in the public comment section of the Board's meeting.

Board Response: As a general rule, the Board will not respond to public comments at the time they are made. However, the Board may comment, take an action, or not take action with respect to a public comment at the current or future Board meeting, as it deems appropriate.

The Library Board reserves the right to waive this policy and these procedures when necessary to conduct Board meetings effectively.

APPROVED BY THE BCFL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JANUARY 19, 2021