

SPOKANE COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT

POLICY: PUBLIC COMMENT AT BOARD MEETINGS

APPROVAL DATE: October 17, 2023

Related Policies

Code of Conduct

Statutory Reference

RCW 42.30

Purpose

In compliance with Washington state law, this policy establishes the rules and expectations for the public's participation at its meetings in order to ensure a fair, equitable, and consistent means for any individual to address the Board of Trustees (the "Board") of the Spokane County Library District (District).

Policy

Meetings of the Board of Trustees of the Spokane County Library District are open to the public in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (RCW 42.30).

The public is not normally invited to participate or contribute to discussion of District business on the agenda, except when specifically invited to speak, make a presentation, or provide information to the Board.

Time will be reserved on the meeting agenda for public comment. The public comment period will normally be held at the beginning of the meeting. The total comment period is limited to twenty (20) minutes unless otherwise determined by the presiding officer of the Board.

Generally, the meeting minutes will record only the name(s) of public commenters, and written public comments and/or materials presented to the Board will be retained in the District's records rather than included in the meeting minutes.

Public Comment

Public comments may be made in person or virtually, or may be submitted in writing [see "**Written Public Comment**" section below]. Individuals wishing to address the Board during the public comment period will be asked to provide their full name, address, and any relevant group affiliation.

Individuals are allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes to address the Board and may comment only once at a meeting. The presiding officer of the Board shall have the discretion to modify this time limit. The Secretary of the Board will invite individuals to speak on a first-come, first-served basis.

Comments will be directed to the Board as a whole, not to individual trustees, and will be relevant to District matters.

The Board does not engage in discussion or debate with commenters during the public comment period or business portion of its meetings, though they may ask clarifying questions.

All comments are taken under advisement. There is no guarantee that suggestions brought forth by the public during the public comment session will be addressed by the Board at a future meeting.

Public Conduct

Respectful and courteous behavior and language is expected of all participants. The District's [Code of Conduct Policy](#) applies to behavior in Board of Trustee meetings, in both virtual and physical spaces.

In the event that the presiding officer deems the conduct of a commenter to be disruptive or disrespectful, the presiding officer may call the session to an end. Any person(s) determined by the presiding officer to be causing undue disruption, or who does not follow the guidelines established by the Board, will be asked to leave the meeting. Refusal to leave the meeting may result in removal by law enforcement. In the event that any meeting is interrupted by a person, group or groups of persons so as to render the orderly conduct of the meeting unfeasible, the Board may address interruptions in accordance with RCW 42.30.050.

Comments in Public Hearings

Comments during public hearings will be made at the appropriate time on the agenda set for that purpose. Comments are limited to the agenda topic of the public hearing.

Written Public Comment

Members of the public may submit written comment to the Board at any time via regular mail or hand delivery, email, or through an online form:

Mail or hand delivery:

Board of Trustees
Spokane County Library District
4322 North Argonne Road
Spokane, WA 99212

Email:

trustees@sclld.org

Online Form:

<https://www.sclld.org/connect/ask-board-of-trustees/>

The deadline for submitting written public comment for a specific meeting will be stated in that meeting's agenda posted on the District's website and at all District library locations.

Written public comment received before a meeting's deadline will be distributed to the Board at that meeting. Otherwise, it will be distributed to the Board at the next meeting.

Request for Accommodation

Requests for interpreter assistance or accommodation may be made to District Administration. Whenever possible, 72 hours' notice is advised.

The Executive Director will establish administrative procedures necessary to implement this policy. In accordance with the administrative procedures, any appeal of an administrative action under this policy will first be made in writing to the Executive Director. Any subsequent appeal of Executive Director action and/or decision will be made in writing to the Board of Trustees.

The District will make a good faith effort to implement this policy in a fair and consistent manner.