The East Central Regional Library Board of Directors ("Board") welcomes public input at its meetings. The Board further recognizes both the importance of public comment on issues before the Board and the ability of the members of the community to express their views on matters of relevance to the Library.

Persons are strongly encouraged to discuss their comments and concerns with the appropriate library staff members or administrators before directing such comments to the entire Board during a meeting. In particular, no persons shall verbally initiate charges or complaints against individual employees of the library or challenge materials owned by the library. All such charges, complaints, or challenges must follow Library policies and be directed to the Executive Director or their designee, in writing, and signed by the complainant.

The Board is committed to conducting its meetings in a civil, orderly, efficient and productive manner that will allow the Board’s regular business to be completed in a reasonable period of time while allotting a fair and adequate opportunity for public input. Consequently, public participation at Board meetings will be governed by the following principles:

1. Public participation at Board meetings is limited to the public comment portion of the meeting as indicated in the agenda. At all other times during a Board meeting, the audience will not be recognized by the Board unless specifically requested to do so by the President of the board (or other presiding officer). Undue interruption or other interference with the orderly conduct of Board business will not be permitted.

2. Persons wishing to address the Board should be physically present and register their names, county of residence, and topic on the sign-in sheet which will be provided at the meetings. Comments should be as brief as possible and relate to public library matters. Speakers must fill out the sign-in sheet before they will be recognized. If time is limited, preference will be given to persons residing in the six-county region served by ECRL.

3. Persons unable to be physically present at a meeting may address the Board in writing. Such communication can be mailed or emailed and should reach the library at least five (5) business days in advance of a meeting. Communication received after that deadline may not be provided to the Board until their next meeting.

4. Routinely, each person addressing the Board is limited to two minutes. This time limit may be modified at the discretion of the Board President (or other presiding officer) in order to ensure an orderly and productive meeting. A maximum of twenty (20) minutes of public participation will be permitted at each meeting. The President will designate a Library staff member who will keep track of the time.

5. The President will attempt to balance time for opposing views and different topics and attempt to allow speakers that have not recently addressed the Board. Persons addressing the Board may not speak on the same topic more than once per quarter.
6. Persons addressing the Board are expected to observe a level of civility and decorum appropriate for a public meeting, and refrain from vulgar, profane, or harassing and/or personal attacks. The President of the Board (or other presiding officer) may terminate any presentation deemed not to adhere to these standards.

7. An immediate response from the Board will not be provided.

Failure to adhere to these principles may result in removal from the meeting. A copy of these guidelines will be placed next to the sign-in sheet made available to members of the public.
Guidelines Governing Public Comment

Persons are strongly encouraged to discuss their comments and concerns with the appropriate library staff members or administrators before directing such comments to the entire Board during a meeting.

Complainants about employees and/or challenges to library materials, programs or displays MUST follow ECRL policies and will not be recognized.

- Public comment is limited to the public comment portion of the meeting as indicated by the agenda.
- Individuals wishing to make public comment MUST sign in and register their names, county of residence and topic before they will be recognized to speak.
- Individuals should state their name and county of residence at the beginning of their remarks.
- Individuals are limited to two minutes of public comment. A maximum of 20 minutes will be allotted for public comment. Library staff will keep track of time.
- Board President will attempt to balance opposing viewpoints and different topics if time is limited.
- Individuals may not speak on the same topic more than once per quarter.
- Comments should be addressed to the Board as a whole and not to individual members.
- Individuals are expected to observe a level of civility and decorum appropriate for a public meeting. Defamatory or abusive remarks are always out of order.
- The Board will not respond to comments.

Excerpted from ECRL Public Comment Policy (approved 12/12/22) available at ecrlib.org/policies