

Public Comments & Conduct at SDL Meetings Policy

Sanilac District Library welcomes and encourages members of the public to attend Library Board meetings. Pursuant to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act, a person is permitted to speak during a meeting under rules established by the Library Board. As a limited public forum, public library boards may adopt, implement and enforce policies to support SDL's mission and operations. The SDL Board will include at least one public comment period during each meeting. This policy applies to the public comment period in any regular or special meeting or in any committee meeting that is open to the public.

Sanilac District Library maintains a Patron Grievance Policy regarding complaints about SDL materials, operations, other patrons, personnel, procedures, policies, and/or services. Person's wishing to address any of these topics are requested to first follow the procedures in the Grievance Policy which may be found on SDL's website or requested at SDL's Circulation Desk.

Meeting Attendance

1. Members of the public are required to register their name and municipality with the Secretary of the Board for inclusion in the minutes of the meeting.
2. At registration, people wishing to address the SDL Board are required to indicate their intention to speak during the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

Attendance Limits

If attendance exceeds the number of people allowed inside the building:

1. The meeting may be adjourned until arrangements are made to hold the meeting at another location.
2. The date of the meeting will be announced according to legal requirements.
3. Attendees of the postponed meeting will be notified of the rescheduled meeting if telephone numbers or email addresses are registered with the Secretary of the Board.

Meeting Agendas

1. A copy of the agenda, if available, will be provided for the public who attend the meeting.
2. The agenda will indicate the designated time for public comment.
3. Members of the public have no right to address the Library Board or make comments outside of the Public Comment.
4. 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.
5. Members of the public may request that a topic be added to an agenda by notifying the Library Director two weeks prior to a Library Board Meeting. However, 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.

Minutes of the Meeting

1. All persons in attendance will be listed in the minutes.
2. The Library Board may determine, in its sole discretion, if/how public comments will be included or summarized in the meeting minutes. If included, members of the public should not expect verbatim transcripts or details of any individual comment.

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Public Comment Procedures

1. The President (or acting chair) will recognize one person to speak at a time. Each speaker must provide their name.
2. No person in attendance may make a comment without being recognized.
3. There is a three-minute time limit. The person may not split the time or “give” the time to another speaker.
4. Speakers must be residents of SDL’s service area unless invited to speak by the SDL Board.
5. Public Comments must be addressed to the Library Board and not to other members of the audience.
6. If time allows, the President may ask if additional persons wish to make a comment.
7. The number of speakers may be limited due to time constraints.
8. 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 person is representing more than one individual, the person must indicate this at the beginning of their comment.

Alternatives to Public Comment

1. In lieu of speaking, a person may submit written comments to the Library Board Secretary. Written materials submitted to the Library Board are considered to be public documents and will be included in the minutes of the meeting.
2. Members of the public are also encouraged to make an appointment with the Library Director during regular business hours to ask questions, raise concerns and request information about Library matters. The Library Director is under no obligation to meet with persons who reside outside of SDL’s legal service area.

Public Conduct

1. SDL’s Patron Code of Conduct Policy also pertains to attendance at all SDL meetings.
2. The Library Board encourages public dialogue on issues concerning SDL within the bounds of civil discourse. Speakers may not breach the peace of the meeting.
3. Members of the public must remain seated or stand in the back of the room or stand along the sides.
4. Members of the public may not stand in the area in front the first row of chairs or behind the table where Board Members are seated.
5. Posters and/or picket signs are not allowed inside the library or on SDL property.
6. Handouts of copyrighted materials or literature about organizations may not be passed out to the audience during the meeting or on SDL property.

Library Board Response To Public Comment

1. During Public Comment, it is the obligation of the Library Board to listen to each speaker.
2. The Library Board is not required to respond, comment or answer questions.
3. The Library Board is not required to act at this meeting and will not make an immediate decision. Time is needed for the Library Board to thoroughly research SDL’s Policies, to consider all aspects of the subject and to consult with the Library Director and an attorney before making a decision. The Library Board will determine when or if action will be taken.

Adopted: 7/18/2023