Reviewed and Approved: 07/21/2026

INDIAN RIVER AREA LIBRARY

Public Comment Policy

1. STATEMENT of PURPOSE

   The *Indian River Area Library* Board of Trustees welcomes and encourages comments from the public who attend Board meetings. Pursuant to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act, being Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, as amended, a person shall be permitted to address a meeting of the *Indian River Area Library* Board under rules established and recorded by the Library.

2. APPLICATION

   A. If an agenda is available, the Library shall have copies of the agenda available for the public who attend a Board meeting to review. The agenda shows designated times for the public to provide comments to the Board. These rules apply to the Public Comment Period in any regular or special meeting or any portion of a public hearing where public comment is required or designated ("Public Comment").
   B. Members of the public have no right to address the Library Board or make comments outside of the Public Comment. At any time, the Library Board, in 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.

3. RULES of PUBLIC COMMENT

   The Library has adopted the following procedures to receive public comments at Board meetings:

   A. When the Library meeting reaches a designated time for Public Comments, the President (or other person who is Chair of the meeting) shall call for on people for Public Comments.
   B. The President (or meeting Chairperson) asks persons wishing to speak to raise their hands to be recognized by the President. The President shall recognize one person to speak at a time, and each speaker shall provide their name and address. No person in attendance shall make a comment without being recognized.
   C. Public comments shall be addressed to the Library Board, not to other members of the audience or specific Board members.
   D. Public comments shall be limited to three (3) minutes. Each speaker is only entitled to one (1) three-minute time during each meeting and may not split the time or "give" the time to another speaker.
   E. In lieu of speaking, a person should direct any written comments to the President of the Board of Trustees. Written materials submitted to the Library are considered public documents.

F. The Library encourages free and complete public dialogue on Library issues within the bounds of civil discourse. Speakers may not breach the peace of the meeting and must follow the Library's Code of Conduct Policy. Personal attacks on Library Board members, staff members or members of the public will not be tolerated, nor will language that is considered offensive, harassing, or profane. If at any time a speaker appearing before the Board exceeds the time limitations set forth in this policy or becomes abusive in language or behavior, the President or presiding officer may declare that person out of order and refuse them permission to continue addressing the Board. Any person or persons judged by the Board to be disorderly or who do not follow the guidelines established by the Board will be asked to leave the premises.

G. If a speaker includes specific questions to the Board or the Director in their public comments, the Library Board has no obligation to respond.

H. 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 such designation.

I. The Board may or may not take action on any presented items. The Board President or other presiding officer may respond as appropriate and, for example, direct speakers to the appropriate staff member for assistance. Issues requiring possible action by the Board may be added to a future agenda. Issues that may need to be addressed by the Library Director will be duly noted.

J. Signs, placards, banners, or similar items shall not be permitted at any time during a Board meeting. This rule does not apply to a display board pertaining to an agenda item.

K. Speakers shall understand that the Library Board has full discretion of the inclusion and detail of any public comment, including written correspondence, within the Minutes. Speakers shall not expect the Minutes to include verbatim transcripts or details of any individual comment.

4. AMENDMENT of POLICY

This Public Comment Policy may be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to align with changing legal requirements or organizational needs. Any amendments to the policy shall be subject to public notice and discussion and be in accordance with the laws of the State of Michigan.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Public Comment Policy shall take effect immediately upon approval by the *Indian River Area Library* Board of Trustees.