

Starr Library

PUBLIC COMMENT AND MEETING CONDUCT POLICY

Purpose

The Starr Library Board of Trustees welcomes public input as part of its commitment to transparency, community engagement, and informed decision-making. This policy is intended to ensure that public comment is conducted in a respectful, orderly, and effective manner.

Public Comment Period

In accordance with the Library's Bylaws, time is set aside at Board meetings for public expression.

Members of the public are invited to speak during designated public comment periods. Comments should relate to library services, operations, or matters within the Board's purview.

Procedures for Public Comment

- Individuals wishing to speak may be asked to sign in prior to the meeting.
- Speakers should state their name for the record.
- Comments may be limited to a reasonable amount of time (e.g., 3–5 minutes per speaker), at the discretion of the Board President.
- The total time allotted for public comment may also be limited to ensure the orderly conduct of Board business.

The Board will listen to comments but may not respond or engage in dialogue during the public comment period.

Standards of Conduct

All participants at Board meetings, including speakers and attendees, are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner.

The following behaviors are not permitted:

- Disruptive conduct that interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting
- Personal attacks, harassment, or threatening language
- Use of obscene or abusive language
- Repeated interruptions or refusal to yield the floor
- Conduct that intimidates or interferes with others' ability to participate

The Board President is responsible for maintaining order and may take appropriate action to address disruptive behavior.

Addressing Disruptions

If a speaker or attendee engages in prohibited conduct:

- The Board President may issue a warning
- If the behavior continues, the individual may be directed to leave the meeting
- If necessary, the meeting may be recessed or adjourned

Law enforcement may be contacted if a situation poses a safety concern or if an individual refuses to comply with lawful directions.

Written Comments

Members of the public may submit written comments (complete with contact information) to the Library Director or Board of Trustees at least 48 hours in advance of a meeting. Written comments may be shared with the Board and may be included in the record, at the discretion of the Board.

Protests and Demonstrations

The Library respects the rights of individuals to express their views.

Protests or demonstrations may take place in a manner that does not:

- Disrupt library operations or Board meetings
- Block access to the building or interfere with public use of the Library
- Threaten the safety of staff, patrons, or trustees

The Library reserves the right to enforce applicable laws and policies to ensure safe and uninterrupted operations.

Authority of the Board President

The Board President (or presiding officer) is responsible for enforcing this policy and ensuring that meetings are conducted in accordance with the Bylaws and applicable law.

Approved by the Starr Library Board of Trustees: August 27, 2026