

**LINCOLN CITY LIBRARIES  
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA**

**POLICY TITLE: PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY**

**PURPOSE: Citizen input at Library Board Meetings**

The function of the regular meetings of the Lincoln Library Board is to conduct the business of the Lincoln City Libraries, as distinguished from providing an open citizen's forum. The board does, however, encourage public attendance at and participation in its meetings when appropriate to the business at hand. The board also provides opportunity for public comment and recommendations on issues during regular and special board meetings.

At the regular board meetings the agenda provides for citizens to present information or to express opinions to the board on any matter. Citizens are encouraged to advise the Library Director or the President of the Library Board no later than one week prior to the Library Board meeting of their intent to appear at a meeting and the matter that he/she wishes to present.

No request in advance will be required for any person who wishes to speak under the agenda item "Public Comment" which appears both at the beginning and at the end of each regular meeting agenda. At the beginning of the meeting, public comments are restricted to the items on the agenda. Individual statements will be limited to five minutes and a total of up to thirty minutes will be allotted per meeting.

If the number of people wishing to speak is large, the chair of the meeting may rule that a separate meeting be scheduled on the issue in question and ask that those wishing to comment do so at that meeting.

If at any time persons appearing before the board exceed the time limitations set forth in this policy or on the agenda or become abusive in language or behavior, it shall be the responsibility of the chair to declare that person out of order and to refuse him or her permission to continue to address the board.

Each person speaking to the board will be asked to provide their name and home address. Anyone refusing to identify himself or herself will be prohibited from appearing.

Statements from persons wishing to appear will be heard in the order in which they are received unless the chair rules otherwise.

**Adopted by Library Board: August 15, 1985**

**Revised: November 20, 2001**

**Expanded: June 2002 to Include Guidelines for Special Board Meetings (attached)**

**Affirmed by Library Board: April 21, 2015**

## **GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT SPECIAL BOARD MEETINGS**

1. A sign-in roster will determine the speaking order for people who wish to make public comment. The names will be called in the order in which they appear on the sign-up sheet.
2. This is an open meeting, with speakers addressing members of the Board, others waiting to comment, and the public at large, as a simple audience.
3. Each person is allowed to comment only once. Each speaker will have five minutes total to comment. The speaker may be asked to respond to questions from the Board. Meeting facilitators will inform the speaker and Library Board when one minute of discussion time remains. When five minutes are called, the person speaking may finish the current sentence.
4. A spokesperson representing several other parties or organizations shall also have only five minutes to make public comment. The group being represented may stand in the audience to be recognized.
5. If possible, each speaker will be asked to make public comment from a standing position in front of the Library Board and others present. A podium will be available.
6. Written comments will be accepted from anyone who does not have time to speak or anyone who wishes to supplement public remarks. Deadline for submitting written comments may be established. Comments may be submitted in either electronic or paper format. Send comments to: Library Board, c/o Library Director, Lincoln City Libraries, 136 So. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, NE 68508 or [library@lincolnlibraries.org](mailto:library@lincolnlibraries.org)
7. A written summary of public comments will be prepared for review by the Library Board following public meetings.