

## **Henry County Public Library Public Comment Policy**

It is the policy of the Henry County Public Library Board of Trustees to invite audience participation during the public comment portion of the Board meeting agenda or during public hearings. In order to provide a fair opportunity to every person that desires to address the Board of Trustees:

1. No person wishing to address the Board will be required to provide his or her name, address or telephone number.
2. In the absence of special circumstances as determined by the Board President, individuals will be called to comment in the order in which they arrived. If more than five speakers are present, individuals may be assigned numbers and called to speak in numerical order.
3. Each speaker may take up to three (3) minutes to make his or her comments. This time constraint may be modified by the Board President to be fewer than three minutes if there are a number of persons wishing to speak. Speakers will be advised when they have one minute remaining.
4. All speakers will be asked to begin by stating their name and address, but will be informed that they are not required to comply.
5. The Board of Trustees acts as a body. Individual trustees have no power or authority to act on behalf of the Library. Therefore:
  - Speakers are not to address nor engage in dialogue with individual trustees during the public comment period. Comments are to be addressed to the Board as a whole.
  - Trustees will not engage individual speakers in dialogue nor ask or answer questions during the presentation, with the following exception:

If five or fewer speakers are present, and at the request of any trustee, the President of the Board shall allow questions from trustees to speakers for purposes of clarification, limiting the time for discussion as the President deems appropriate.

- The Board of Trustees cannot answer specific questions in dialogue format. Acting as a Board, and only as a Board, the trustees will consider comments and questions and may direct staff members to provide information.
- Speakers may be directed to staff or other sources for responses to questions raised during the Public Comment time of a meeting or during a public hearing.

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Any member of the public who does not respect these rules and respect the other people attending the meeting will be asked to leave the hearing/meeting.

The public is not normally invited to participate or contribute to the discussion of business on the agenda of a Board meeting. An exception is a person who has been invited (ahead of time or spontaneously) to speak, make a presentation, or in some other way provide information to the Board.