

## Public Comment Board Guidelines

### GUIDELINES STATEMENT

The Board of Trustees (Board) believes that the ability for the public to observe and participate in the regular business of the Board through public comment, is an essential part of its stewardship and oversight responsibilities for Kitsap Regional Library (Library). The Board encourages participation in its meetings and invites input inclusive of a wide range of perspectives about how we can best steward Kitsap Regional Library in service to its diverse communities. In support of creating a welcoming environment for all, community members participating in a Board meeting are encouraged to presume that all parties, while potentially presenting different perspectives, have the highest good of the Library in mind.

### How to Provide Public Comment

Members of the community wishing to address the Board can do so in three ways:

#### *In-Person Public Comment:*

Individuals wishing to address the Board in-person at their monthly meeting will sign up on the sign-in sheet provided in the room prior to the beginning of the meeting.

#### *Virtual Public Comment:*

Individuals wishing to address the Board virtually will need to register at [www.krl.org/trustees](http://www.krl.org/trustees) via the registration link provided by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday of the Board Meeting. Once registered, the link to the meeting will be provided via email.

#### *Written Public Comment:*

Written public comments may be submitted by regular mail to: Board of Trustees, 1301 Sylvan Way, Bremerton, WA 98310, or email to: [board@krl.org](mailto:board@krl.org). Written and emailed public comments must be received by 4:00 p.m. 24-hours prior to the meeting to be included in the Board meeting packet for review and consideration at the meeting.

#### *Requesting Assistance for Access Accommodations*

It is the Board's intent to support a welcoming environment for everyone, including accommodating community members' special needs requests related to translation or interpretation for non-English speakers, as well as enabling persons with disabilities to participate in the Board's public meetings. Requests for accommodation may be made to the Library's ADA Coordinator in writing, email or calling. We encourage requests to be made at least five (5) business days in advance of the meeting to ensure the best possible response, however requests may be made up to 48 hours in advance.

## Guidelines for Public Comment

The following guidelines have been adopted to facilitate the fair and orderly expression of public comments:

1. Community members are invited to attend all Board meetings. However, not all Board meetings include a time for public comment. Please check [www.krl.org/trustees](http://www.krl.org/trustees) for current meeting information, including: schedule, locations, and opportunities for input by public comment of upcoming Board meetings. Only those wishing to speak are required to sign in.
2. Public comment is accepted on any topic of Library interest, unless specifically excluded in the [Public Engagement Board Policy](#).
3. Public comments include in-person or virtual oral remarks, as well as written comments and/or the text of emails submitted to the Board in advance.
4. Individuals wishing to address the Board within the meeting may sign-up for public comments prior to the start of the meeting (in person or via virtual attendance).
5. Public comments shall include the submitter's full name, organization affiliation (if they are speaking as a representative of a group), and topic they wish to address. Providing mailing and/or other contact information such as email and phone number are optional, but encouraged in the event they wish to contact you. Anonymous public comments are not accepted.
6. Written public comments may be submitted by regular mail or email. Written public comments must be received by 4:00 p.m. the day prior to the meeting in order to be included in the Board Meeting Packet. Written public comments are retained as public record. However, external sources providing additional information as part of written comments, such as articles, photos, links within emails to websites, videos, etc., will not be included. Likewise, emails that are a forward of others' remarks will not be accepted as a separate public comment.
7. The Public Comment period is generally at the beginning of the regular agenda and is limited to twenty (20) minutes, unless otherwise determined by the Board President. The public comment time on the agenda is set aside for listening to feedback from the community, without discussion or debate with the speakers. Concerns and/or suggestions will be taken under advisement and may be considered for action at a future meeting.
8. Each speaker is allowed up to three (3) minutes. Time will be kept for each speaker.
9. If the number of individuals wishing to speak cannot be accommodated during the twenty (20) minute public comment period, the President may, at their discretion, limit the number of individuals speaking on the same topic,

reduce the time allocated to each speaker, or both, so that as many individuals as possible have an opportunity to speak and to ensure that the Board has an opportunity to hear comments pertaining to a variety of perspectives and multiple topics. In the interest of optimizing the number of people who wish to speak, speakers are requested to not repeat points already made by previous speakers. However, speakers may make a short statement of support for previous comments on a topic.

10. Among individuals speaking on the same topic, comments will be heard in the order of sign-in, starting with in-person attendees, followed by virtual participants.
11. The Board may choose to hold a Public Hearing on an alternative date/time, providing for an extended period of public comment; and which Administration may be asked to respond to comments and concerns on library-related issues.
12. The Board seeks to maintain a positive, productive atmosphere at Board meetings. The Library's [Standards for Patron Conduct Library Policy](#) applies to everyone in the Library's physical and virtual meeting spaces. Community members in attendance are expected to be considerate of others, respect the rights and privacy of others, and not engage in loud, disruptive, or harassing speech.

In managing public comments, the President may: call a speaker to order if their statement is too lengthy or falls outside of reasonable decorum; request that a speaker leave the meeting if they refuse to come to order; request the assistance of building security or law enforcement in the removal of a disorderly person who refuses a request to leave; or, recess or adjourn the meeting if a lack of public decorum rises to the level that interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting.

Anyone posing a threat to others, either verbally or physically threatening harm or violence, will be asked to leave immediately.

13. Limitations to public comment include: anonymous comments; forwarded emails of others' remarks; comments pertaining to personnel issues; and those that don't align with the Library's [Standards for Patron Conduct Library Policy](#).
14. Public questions and comments must be directed to the President on behalf of the entire BOT, not an individual member of the Board, nor the Library Director or other members of the staff or audience. The President may choose to redirect the question if appropriate. Questions for staff members may be redirected for discussion during library hours.
15. Further information regarding handling of public comments for the public record is addressed in [Public Engagement Board Policy](#).

## **How to Contact the Board**

Please mail to:

Board of Trustees  
Kitsap Regional Library  
1301 Sylvan Way  
Bremerton, WA 98310

or

Email: [Board@krl.org](mailto:Board@krl.org)

If you would like additional information or have questions, please contact the Executive Assistant to the Board, Tammy Jeffries, at (360) 405-9158 or [tjeffries@krl.org](mailto:tjeffries@krl.org).

To request an access accommodation, please contact the ADA Coordinator for the Library, Lucretia Robertson, at (360) 475-9166 or [lrobertson@krl.org](mailto:lrobertson@krl.org).