
May 17, 2024

TO: RAILS Board
FROM: Monica Harris, Executive Director
SUBJECT: 8.3 Public Comment Rules

The RAILS Board Policy Committee met on April 22, 2024, and reviewed the Public Comment Rules. Recommended changes are to keep us compliant with the Open Meetings Act, as well as rulings regarding public comment by the Public Access Counselor of the Office of the Illinois Attorney General. These changes have been reviewed by the RAILS Staff and the RAILS attorney. The Committee approved the draft Public Comment Rules as presented and voted unanimously at their April 22 meeting to approve them for recommendation to the RAILS Board.

Changes include:

- Omitting a time limit on public comment
- Omitting a section allowing the Board the opportunity to deny public comment based on repetition
- Changing the limit from 20 minutes on each subject to 30 minutes total (unless the Board unanimously votes to extend)
- Addition noting that the public comment policy applies to all committees, subcommittees, and subsidiary bodies of the board

I look forward to further discussion at our May 24 meeting.

Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS)

PUBLIC COMMENT RULES

Public Participation at Library System Board Meetings and Petitions to the Board

At each regular and special open meeting, the members of the public and System employees may make public comments ~~on or ask questions of~~ to the Board, subject to reasonable constraints.

The individuals appearing before the Board are expected to follow these guidelines:

1. Address the Board only at the appropriate times as indicated on the agenda and when recognized by the Board President.

2. Individuals should identify with their full name before addressing the board. Each public comment shall be limited to five minutes unless authorized by the Board President. ~~Identify oneself by full name and address, and be brief. Ordinarily, such comments shall be limited to 5 minutes. In unusual circumstances, and when the person has given advance notice of the need to speak for a longer period of time, such person may be allowed to speak for more than 5 minutes.~~

3.2. The Board President may shorten or lengthen a person's opportunity to speak. ~~The President may also deny the opportunity to speak to a person who has previously addressed the Board on the same subject within the past 2 months.~~

4.3. ~~No more than 20 minutes shall be allowed to each subject under discussion.~~ An overall limit of thirty minutes of public comment shall be allowed at each Board meeting. This may be extended by except with unanimous consent of the Board.

5.4. The Board President shall have the authority to determine procedural matters regarding public participation not otherwise defined in Board policy.

Petitions or written correspondence to the Board shall be presented to the Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. This policy applies to the Board and all of its committees, subcommittees, and other subsidiary bodies of RAILS.

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3. The Board President may shorten or lengthen a person's opportunity to speak.
4. An overall limit of thirty minutes of public comment shall be allowed at each Board meeting. This may be extended by except with unanimous consent of the Board.
5. The Board President shall have the authority to determine procedural matters regarding public participation not otherwise defined in Board policy.
6. Petitions or written correspondence to the Board shall be presented to the Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. This policy applies to the Board and all of its committees, subcommittees, and other subsidiary bodies of RAILS.