



## COMSEWOGUE PUBLIC LIBRARY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

Public Library board meetings are open to the public, though there is no statutory or regulatory *requirement* that members of the public be allowed to speak at Library board meetings.

The Comsewogue Public Library Board of Trustees *encourages* public expression at its regular Board meetings, providing at least one period for public expression at each regular meeting of the Board.

During this period, the Board President, who is responsible for the orderly conduct of the meeting (or, in the President's absence, the Presiding Officer) will solicit comments from audience members wanting to speak. The Board will actively listen and consider each speaker's comments. Items may then be referred to the Director or to Counsel, who will then report findings and may make recommendations to the Board.

Members of the public will:

- Be treated equally during this fair and orderly process
- Be granted 3 minutes to speak during a 15-minute total period for public expression
- Face and address the Board when speaking
- Keep comments direct and to-the-point
- Avoid speaking on matters involving privacy issues, including disclosing information about or complaining/levelling charges against particular individuals\*
- Be permitted to speak more than once on the same topic (within the allotted total time) once others have been heard

Members of the public will be requested to state their name, district of residence, group or organization affiliation (if any), and identify the agenda item/Comsewogue Public Library matter on which they will comment.

*(While the Board acknowledges that a person may not be **required** to provide his or her name or other identifiers in order for them to attend, speak during, or otherwise communicate in relation to a regular Board meeting, the Board does request this information.)*

The Board President will recognize speakers prior to their speaking and rule on such matters as the:

- Total time permitted for period of public expression
- Relevance of topic presented to the meeting agenda and to Comsewogue Public Library matters
- Repetitive and/or inappropriate/defamatory/abusive/offensive (as opposed to simply negative or critical) nature of remarks (speaking privilege may be terminated)

The Library Board will, with the support of security staff and law enforcement, as needed, ensure public order on Library property is maintained.

The Library Board meeting may be photographed or filmed by the Library or members of the public and these recordings may be shared.

Visual displays brought to the meeting by the public may not obstruct attendees' views, violate fire code, or contain obscene language, including abbreviations denoting obscene language.

*\*Charges, complaints, or challenges regarding individual employees or trustees must be presented in writing to the Library Director and signed by the complainant.*

*Note: The process for challenging an item in the Library's collection is outlined in the Collection Development Policy and is initiated via the complainant's completion of a Request for Reconsideration of a Library Resource form (policy and form at [www.cplib.org](http://www.cplib.org))*