

MEMORANDUM

November 14, 1988

MEMO TO: Library Board of Trustees  
FROM: James C. Seidl  
SUBJECT: Public Participation at Board Meeting

Following is a proposed addition to the bylaws for your consideration concerning public participation at Board meetings.

Article X. The Library Board of Trustees acknowledges that public participation at Board meetings provides necessary input on various matters of concern to the public and contributes to the effective operation of the library. Members of the public are encouraged to participate at Board meetings in accordance with this Policy. The Library Board of Trustees hereby states its intention to comply with the laws of Illinois concerning provisions for public comments at open meetings.

1. Public participation shall be permitted at any regular or special meeting of the Library Board of Trustees or any committee thereof which is required to be open to the public under the provisions of the Illinois Open Meetings Act (Illinois Rev. Statutes, ch. 102., par. 41 et seq.). The Board shall not, however, permit public participation during any meetings or portions of meetings which are deemed closed sessions under the Open Meetings Act.
2. A portion of each meeting required to be open to the public shall be reserved and set aside for purposes of public comment and participation. In addition to that portion of the meeting set aside for public participation, the president of this Board, in his discretion, may permit public comment at any other time during the meeting.
3. The Board shall permit any member of the public including non-residents and employees of the library to comment to or ask questions of the Board during that portion of the meeting designated for public participation. The Board has no obligation, however, to respond to any comments or answer any questions raised by members of the public.
4. Members of the public shall be permitted to comment on any subjects or issues of public concern, with the exception of matters discussed and acted upon at a prior meeting. If the subject falls within the statutory exceptions to the Open Meetings Act, however, the Board reserves the right to immediately adjourn the meeting to closed session to discuss such matters. If the president of the Board, in his discretion, decides that circumstances merit recon-

sideration of a matter discussed and acted upon at a prior meeting, the Board may permit public comment on such a matter. The president's allowance of public comment on such matters shall be non-precedential in character.

5. Members of the public shall be permitted to make comments or ask questions of the board at each meeting, subject to the following time limitations:

- a. 5 minutes per speaker
- b. 60 minutes per meeting

The president of the Board, upon the request of any member of the public seeking to make comments to or ask questions, may reasonably extend either or both of the foregoing time limitations. Any such extension of the time limitations shall be discretionary and non-precedential in character.

If a substantial number of members of the public desire to comment at any meeting, the president of the Board, in his discretion, may appoint members of the public to act as representatives or spokespersons for purposes of making public comments.

6. Any person seeking to make comments at a Board meeting shall notify the City Librarian by submitting a written notice immediately prior to the meeting at which they intend to comment. In his discretion, the president may recognize such persons in any sequence or order.