

**HALF HOLLOW HILLS COMMUNITY LIBRARY**  
**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS POLICY**

The Board of Trustees of the Half Hollow Hills Community Library encourages public comment on matters related to Library governance and operations at Board meetings, as outlined in this policy. To allow members of the public to address the Board, a reasonable period shall be set aside during each regular Board meeting for public comment. There shall be no public comment periods during Board work sessions or committee meetings, except at the discretion of the Board President.

Persons wishing to address the Board shall sign in prior to the meeting and provide their name and municipality of residence, and the topic on which they wish to comment. Speakers will be recognized by the Board President during the designated portion of the meeting. Presentations should be as brief as possible. Any group or organization wishing to address the Board must designate a single spokesperson. The Board President may limit the length of comments, and no speaker shall be permitted to speak for longer than three minutes. Speakers may not yield or transfer unused time to another speaker.

Public comment is limited to residents of the Half Hollow Hills Library District, Library employees, and business owners located within the Library District. Individuals who do not fall within these categories may submit written comments to the Board or request a meeting with the Library Director or Board President.

The Board will not permit discussion in public session of matters involving specific Library employees, specific patrons, or matters that are properly discussed in executive session pursuant to the New York Open Meetings Law. Individuals wishing to raise concerns regarding specific employees or patrons should present such concerns to the Library Director during regular business hours.

All speakers and observers are expected to conduct themselves in a civil and respectful manner. Obscene language, defamatory statements, threats of violence, or speech that disrupts the orderly conduct of the meeting will not be permitted.

Speakers shall address remarks to the Board President and may direct questions or comments to Trustees or Library administration only upon recognition by the President. Trustees and the Library Director may ask clarifying questions of any speaker, but public comment is not intended to be a question-and-answer session. The Board and administration may correct factual inaccuracies or reference existing Library policies in response to comments.

Questions and comments concerning matters not on the agenda will be taken under advisement and referred to the Library Director for appropriate review or action. Individuals wishing to request that an item be placed on a future agenda shall contact the Library

Director in advance of the meeting in accordance with Board agenda preparation procedures.

The Board President shall be responsible for the orderly conduct of meetings and shall rule on matters including the time allowed for public comment and the relevance of topics presented. If there is disagreement regarding whether a speaker's topic is appropriate under this policy, the Board may determine the issue by majority vote.

The President will advise speakers whose comments are inconsistent with this policy of the applicable rules. If a speaker continues to violate this policy, the President may discontinue the presentation, call for a brief recess, close the public comment period, or order the removal of an individual who is actually disrupting the meeting. If necessary, law enforcement may be contacted to ensure the safety of attendees and the orderly conduct of the meeting.

Individuals who are unable or unwilling to speak during public comment periods may submit written comments to the Board of Trustees at the Library's official email address or by mail to the Library's administrative offices. Written submissions will be distributed to the Board.

All individuals attending Board meetings are expected to comply with the Library's rules governing public conduct. Behavior that disrupts the meeting, including shouting, interrupting speakers, blocking movement, or obstructing the ability of others to observe or hear the proceedings, is prohibited.

Pursuant to the New York Open Meetings Law, audio or video recording of public Board meetings is permitted so long as it is unobtrusive and does not interfere with the deliberative process or the ability of others to observe the meeting. Individuals addressing the Board are advised that meetings may be recorded and that their comments may appear in print, online, or on social media platforms.

Adopted by Board of Trustees: 2/25/26