

RHL Trustee Meeting Public Comment Policy

Reuben Hoar Library Trustees welcome public comments at monthly Library Trustee meetings. Public comments should be confined to subject matters within the Library's jurisdiction, an item on the current agenda, and/or an item that has appeared on an agenda over the last 60 days. Speakers will have two minutes or less for public comment; in the event that the speaker exceeds their time, they will be asked to conclude their comments by the Trustee Chair.

- Speakers may only speak if they are recognized by the Chair.
- Once recognized, a speaker addressing the Library Trustees is required to provide their name and street address for the record.
- Comments must be kept to two (2) minutes or less; no more than ten (10) minutes in total from all speakers will be devoted to the Public Forum.
- All remarks shall be addressed to and through the chair rather than to any individual member of the Board of Library Trustees, city official, department head or employee, or other persons in attendance at the meeting.
- Audience members are not permitted to interrupt recognized speakers.
- Policy may be subject to exception at the discretion of the Board (and/or Library Director, if applicable).
- Any petitioner or member of the public wishing to speak is encouraged to place their name on a list. The chair of the Board of Library Trustees will recognize speakers at the Public Forum in the order in which their names appear on the list.
- Speakers may not give their comment time to another individual.
- If attending virtually, a speaker is required to identify their screen name with their full name and address for the record. This is to protect the integrity of the meeting.

Attendees of all public meetings should be aware of Massachusetts Recording Law M.G.L. Ch. 20A §20 (f)* if they are personally considering recording any part of a meeting or a meeting in its entirety. Public Input will last for 10 minutes, and speakers are allowed to speak for no longer than 2 minutes. While speakers can be assured their concerns will be addressed, they should not expect an immediate response, as Library Trustees may decide to address the matter privately first and/or with a vote by adding the matter to a future agenda with expected public notice. The meeting minutes will acknowledge the speakers and their topics.

The Public Forum is not a time for debate or response to comments by the Board. Comments made during the Public Forum period do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the

Board. Because of constitutional principles, the Board does not have authority to prevent all speech that may be upsetting and/or offensive made during the Public Forum period.

Approved by
Reuben Hoar Library Trustees
October 10, 2025