

A. PURPOSE

Elkhart Public Library is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees. This policy establishes standard practices for Board of Trustees meetings, in addition to the Board by-laws and all legal requirements set forth in Indiana Code.

B. MEETINGS

1. Generally, the Board of Trustees meets once monthly inside the Library's buildings and in accordance with the Board's adopted bylaws.
2. Designated Library staff shall post meeting agendas and notify relevant news media outlets in accordance with Indiana Code.
3. Board of Trustees meetings conducted entirely in person, without the presence of a board member via electronic facilities, are the expected method of conducting official business. During such meetings, the presiding officer may close debate and ask for the vote without taking a formal roll call.
4. Hybrid meetings may occur when some number of Trustees appear in person at the designated meeting location and others participate via electronic communications. These sessions are considered acceptable for the Board of Trustees to conduct its regular public meetings, under the following conditions, in accordance with Indiana Code:
 - a. At least four Trustees must be present in person at the designated location for official business to be transacted.
 - b. Trustees participating via electronic communications must be both seen and heard to participate in votes.
 - c. The presiding officer may take votes only by roll call.
 - d. Trustees must notify the presiding officer at least 72 hours in advance of the announced meeting time if they choose to attend the meeting via electronic communications. This requirement may be waived for emergency circumstances.
 - e. Trustees may not attend more than two consecutive regular public Library Board meetings via electronic communications, and may not attend more than half of the Library Board's regular public meetings in a given year via electronic communications, unless the reason for attending electronically is due to one of the following:
 - i. Military service;
 - ii. Illness or other medical condition;
 - iii. Death of a family member;
 - iv. Emergency involving actual or threatened injury to individuals or property.

5. The Board of Trustees may not meet via electronic communications when the following items are on the agenda for final, decisive action:
 - a. Annual budget adoption;
 - b. Tax establishment, increase or renewal;
 - c. Referenda initiation;
 - d. Fee establishment or increase;
 - e. Penalty establishment or increase;
 - f. Eminent domain initiation or action; and/or
 - g. Personnel reduction beyond the typical Human Resources reporting of retirement, termination or leave of absence.
6. When allowed by Indiana Code or emergency proclamation by the Office of the Governor, the Board of Trustees may declare the entirety of its regular public meeting will be conducted via electronic communications.
 - a. Designated staff assigned to prepare meeting notices and agendas shall describe the method for the public to view, observe and record the public meeting.
 - b. The Board of Trustees may take official actions only when a quorum is present via electronic communications at the appointed time of the meeting.
 - c. The Board of Trustees may take votes only by roll call.
7. Failure or disruption of electronic communications during Board of Trustees meetings shall not be considered a termination of proceedings or invalidation of actions so long as a quorum remains present and able to participate as outlined in this section.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Elkhart Public Library and its Board of Trustees value and recognize the importance of public input and comment on issues related to Library business.
2. To permit fair and orderly public expression, the Board of Trustees provides a period for questions and public comment on agenda items at its regular public meetings.
3. Any member of the public wishing to request an item or presentation be placed on the Board of Trustees agenda must complete and submit the Public Participation Request Form. Submitted requests are subject to the deadlines presented on the form and will be placed on meeting agendas accordingly.
4. Members of the public generally will be granted no more than five (5) minutes to speak on a single issue.
 - a. An individual may not speak a second time on the same issue unless all others present have spoken and the presiding officer grants additional time. \

- b. Trustees have no obligation to answer direct questions presented by the individual speaking.
5. The Board of Trustees' presiding officer will have the authority and discretion to:
- a. Permit and determine the total length of time allowed for public comment;
 - b. Request each individual speaker identify by stating name, address, and, when relevant, group affiliation;
 - c. Interrupt, warn and/or terminate the speaking time of an individual, particularly when:
 - i. The statement has exceeded the time limit;
 - ii. The statement could be considered by a reasonable person to be abusive, obscene or irrelevant; and/or
 - iii. The statement contains an opinionated attack on the personal integrity of a Trustee or Library staff member.
 - d. Request an individual leave the meeting location when reasonable decorum is not observed, including conversations or discussions causing disruption or distraction;
 - e. Request the assistance of security and/or law enforcement to remove a disorderly individual from the meeting location when that person's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting; and/or
 - f. Call for a recess or adjournment when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct and progress of the meeting.
6. The Board of Trustees will not address personnel matters and specific issues regarding library users and guests during public meetings.
7. Members of the public are welcome to record Board of Trustees meetings. The Board of Trustees and/or Library staff may request recording devices to be relocated due to obstruction of view.

D. OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

1. The Board of Trustees shall abide by all standards for documents and records set by Indiana Code.
2. Meeting memoranda, also known as meeting minutes, must contain the following information:
 - a. Name of each Trustee participating in or absent from the meeting;
 - b. The means, in person or electronic (when applicable), by which the Trustees attended the meeting; and
 - c. The electronic communication mechanism (when applicable) used for the meeting.

3. On Board of Trustees' actions and obligations requiring the authority of signatures, a manual signature always will be preferred. However, electronic signatures will have the same force and effect as a manual signature, as specified in Indiana Code.

E. ADOPTION

1. Adopted by the Elkhart Public Library Board of Trustees: May 18, 2021.
2. Supersedes Board Meeting Public Participation Policy adopted Oct. 21, 2014.