

FAQ

What is the purpose of this board meeting?

Due to the volume of outreach, this meeting is a "special meeting" to provide time for the community to address the Library's Board of Trustees regarding the "Public Meeting Policy."

What is the format of this meeting?

This special meeting will begin as any other: the board will confirm it has a quorum, and then convene the meeting. The Board President will then explain the rules and the meeting will then open to public comment.

What are "the rules?"

- *All attendees must abide by the Library's Patron Conduct Policy while on Library premises.*
- *Meeting starts at 6pm, doors open around 5:30pm.*
- *Speakers are limited to three minutes. The Board will alert you when 30 seconds are left.*
- *For accessibility, speakers will use the microphone.*
- *The first public comment period will be limited to 90 minutes; those who do not have a chance to speak may submit written commentary to <https://www.bethlehempubliclibrary.org/board-of-trustees/e-mail-the-board-of-trustees/>*
- *Attendees must not interrupt or otherwise limit a speaker's opportunity to be heard.*

Is the December 5 event a Library-sponsored event?

No.

Then why is this event happening at our Library?

The Library's policies allow community groups to host events open to the community.

How did the Library come to allow this particular group to schedule the room?

To maximize use of the rooms we have, and to serve the community, the Library has a sign-up process that is designed to aid groups in identifying available space and to apply to use a room no more than once per month. This event was scheduled per the usual process.

How did the Library come to allow this group to schedule the room for this particular event?

Consistent with the Library's "Public Meeting Policy."

Why isn't this type of event against the rules?

While the Library is not under a legal duty to make buildings available for public gatherings, the law requires that if the Library elects to do so--which Bethlehem Public Library has done for many years--we must grant the use of such facilities in a reasonable and nondiscriminatory manner, equally applicable to all and administered with equality to all.

This means that the Library cannot bar access to library resources that are generally available based on the particular viewpoint of the group or the event they are hosting.

Is there anything that can prevent this type of use in the future?

Yes. The Library can change the policy so unrestricted use by community groups is no longer allowed.