

3

PUBLIC COMMENT – JUNE 16, 2025
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
RULES & REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member.
Please use one form for each agenda item you wish to comment on.

waived

✓ I request to speak on the following Agenda Item:

1A
(Example: # 1A)

Speakers must list an item that is printed on the agenda.
Your name will be called to approach the Board to speak.

COMMENTS: _____

FULL NAME: Bedey Zohn

ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

PHONE NUMBER: _____ EMAIL:

This information is a Public Record.

9

PUBLIC COMMENT – JUNE 16, 2025
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
RULES & REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member.
Please use one form for each agenda item you wish to comment on.

✓ I request to speak on the following Agenda Item:

A
(Example: # 1A)

Speakers must list an item that is printed on the agenda.
Your name will be called to approach the Board to speak.

COMMENTS: _____

FULL NAME:

LISA Rustenberg

ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

[REDACTED]

EMAIL:

This information is a Public Record.

PUBLIC COMMENT – JUNE 16, 2025
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
RULES & REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member.
Please use one form for each agenda item you wish to comment on.

✓ I request to speak on the following **Agenda Item**:

B
(Example: # 1A)

Speakers must list an item that is printed on the agenda.
Your name will be called to approach the Board to speak.

COMMENTS: _____

FULL NAME: Lisa Rastenecker

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED] EMAIL: _____

[REDACTED] information is a Public Record.

6

waived

PUBLIC COMMENT – JUNE 16, 2025
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
RULES & REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member.

Please use one form for each agenda item you wish to comment on.

✓ I request to speak on the following **Agenda Item**:

1B
(Example: # 1A)

Speakers must list an item that is printed on the agenda.

Your name will be called to approach the Board to speak.

COMMENTS: _____

FULL NAME: Kristen Wachinger

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ EMAIL: _____

This information is a Public Record.

PUBLIC COMMENT – JUNE 16, 2025
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
RULES & REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member.
Please use one form for each agenda item you wish to comment on.

✓ I request to speak on the following Agenda Item:

1C
(Example: # 1A)

Speakers must list an item that is printed on the agenda.
Your name will be called to approach the Board to speak.

COMMENTS: _____

FULL NAME: Becky Bohm

ADDRESS: [REDACTED] Mandeville LA

PHONE NUMBER: EMAIL:

2

PUBLIC COMMENT – JUNE 16, 2025
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
RULES & REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member.
Please use one form for each agenda item you wish to comment on.

✓ I request to speak on the following **Agenda Item**:

(Example: # 1A)

Speakers must list an item that is printed on the agenda.
Your name will be called to approach the Board to speak.

COMMENTS: _____

FULL NAME:

Jean Wiggins

ADDRESS:

[REDACTED]

PHONE NUMBER:

[REDACTED]

EMAIL:

[REDACTED] #1
C
Abita

This information is a Public Record.

7

PUBLIC COMMENT – JUNE 16, 2025
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
RULES & REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member.
Please use one form for each agenda item you wish to comment on.

✓ I request to speak on the following **Agenda Item:**

C
(Example: # 1A)

Speakers must list an item that is printed on the agenda.
Your name will be called to approach the Board to speak.

COMMENTS: _____

FULL NAME: Lisa Rustmeyer

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED] EMAIL: _____

This information is a Public Record.

1

PUBLIC COMMENT – JUNE 16, 2025
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL
RULES & REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Please print all information. Please return to designated library staff member.
Please use one form for each agenda item you wish to comment on.

✓ I request to speak on the following Agenda Item:

C
(Example: # 1A)

Speakers must list an item that is printed on the agenda.
Your name will be called to approach the Board to speak.

COMMENTS: would like to talk about this

FULL NAME:

Devin McGee

ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL:

This information is a Public Record.

Fw: [External] Comments for Rules and Regs Meeting

From: Gmail <kevinjmarino[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, June 15, 2025 10:18:24 AM
To: lboc <lboc@stpl.us>
Cc: Kelly LaRocca <kelly@stpl.us>
Subject: [External] Comments for Rules and Regs Meeting

Good morning,

Despite the fact that I am not going to be able to attend the rules and regulations meeting this Monday, I wanted to thank you for having this meeting instead of spending time hashing out rules and regulations changes during a standard board meeting.

I encourage you to continue having these types of meetings. I also hope during the meeting you considering asking for feedback from the public who is able to attend. I know there is a set public comment period, but hopefully the meeting can be a bit more collaborative with the public vs a standard board meeting with only comment periods.

Item 1A - I like this change. I sometimes find that I get blocked from checking out digital materials because of a small fine outstanding. Hopefully this change will allow me and others to continue to access materials while we have only a small fee balance outstanding.

Item 1B

Lost items. The way I am reading this change is that patrons would be required to pay the full value of a lost item costs if that's the case, you would need to change the preceding sentence that says it costs only \$3 for lost items. One option to limit the burden while still preventing abuse, would be to have a sliding scale for number of lost items. First item \$3, then \$10, then full replacement value, or some similar structure.

Regarding veterans printing for free, I would suggest adding active duty military as well to add clarity. Are there any other categories of patrons we should consider for free printing? Teachers, first responders, healthcare professionals, linemen and utility workers, senior citizens, college students.

I'm not suggesting we add all these categories to the free printing but we should consider if additional are warranted.

Also the exception is under black and white printing. Is it intended for all printing or just black and white? It would be good to clarify this in the language.

Item 1C

1. No discussion or Statements of Concern on books or other materials intended for adults -only Children's or Teen

- I think the idea behind this is good, but I would caution that care should be taken in crafting the language. I have several statements of concern in place that question the placement of adult graphic novels. I believe these challenges are appropriate and should be reviewed by the board. The statements that assume books located in the adult section are in the children's section should not be covered unless required by law.

1. More than two Statements of Concern at a time - board can set time limit for discussion and hear all public comments at once

- I like the idea of finding ways to make the process more efficient, I do have some concerns that different books require different comments and lumping all of them together removes the opportunity for nuance. Again this seems good but caution should be taken when crafting the language.

2. Must be specific about page numbers (if the book has them) when expressing concerns

- Again I think specifics are good but the statement form already asks for this. Would a statement be outright rejected if specifics are not given? My statements are about the entirety of the books and their location. I don't think a single page of a book should dictate that it is held where access is severely limited.

3. Books that meet the definitions of La. RS 25:225 can be reviewed (by the board) without reading the entire book. Books that have been accused of obscenity under La. RS 14:91.11 must be read in entirety

- This makes sense to me based on the difference in the two laws. 25:225 considers just one instance of the various conduct, while 14:91.11 required the full context of the book to be reviewed. Does anyone actually think books publishers would send us obscenity? Isn't it also illegal for publishers and distributors to send obscenity to libraries? Maybe there is some additional policies updated to clearly state there is no obscenity in the library.

• If the complainant does not show up to the meeting, the concern is thrown

- I like this idea. A couple of points for consideration: make sure notice is given to complainant well in advance and confirm scheduling works. Occasionally I am out of town for work and cannot attend every meeting. Also we should consider last minute emergency or extenuating circumstances. I wonder if a sliding scale here would work. The first meeting a complainant missed the challenge is still discussed but after 2 or 3 missed meetings the challenges are thrown out. While I can typically make the evening meetings I am concerned about the potential for meetings to held during the day and getting the challenges thrown out because I am at work. Again this likely needs some caution when writing.

On all of the changes to the statements of concern process, I suggest we continue to have rules and regulations meetings. I think it's important to get public input on these changes and have clear language in the policy proposals before bringing to a full board meeting.

Thank you taking the time to consider my comments. Hope you have a productive meeting and a good week.

Thank you,
Kevin Marino

Fw: [External] Comments on Monday's special meeting agenda

From: Lisa Rustemeyer <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, June 18, 2025 10:26:45 AM
To: lboc <lboc@stpl.us>
Subject: [External] Comments on Monday's special meeting agenda

Honorable members of the LBOC:

Thank you for your service. Please add this to the record of the meeting topics re: item #3, Statements of Concern from the meeting, this past Monday morning, June 16th.

Thank you for considering how best to streamline the backlog of book challenge forms still in the queue. Regarding the discussion on Statements of Concern, in order of the discussion bullet points from the agenda on Monday, I have the following thoughts:

- In 75 years of the existence of our St Tammany Library system we have not banned a single book. The Nazis did that. I don't think we need a provision to allow one patron to have a hearing to remove a book from our system - that is a book ban. It is a disservice to the taxpayers of STP to allow one person to lodge this type of complaint and legitimize it with the effort a hearing requires. Instead I recommend the complainant to discuss their concerns with a librarian to better understand how libraries function and why the patron's best option is to avoid books they do not like and be sure the library has the books they need so that they are not attempting to dictate their views to a parish of 273K+ what should or should not be in the adult section. We should emphatically not be deciding books by majority or perceived majority of residents; that is not the function of a library. Different points of view and stories are essential to be informed citizens. Instead, if a resident had a concern about an adult book, this should be an opportunity for the library staff to communicate with those complainants, to give background and education on how libraries work. The board doesn't need to hear any complaints that are not 25:225, if I understand; that the policy may need revising notwithstanding.
- Re: grouping statements of concern. The details matter too much to comment on this in general. This should be decided on a case-by-case basis with a resolution for a specific situation rather than giving 100% latitude to the board for deciding the complainant's purpose or intention in every situation. Or, the board could add a checkbox option to the SOC form, perhaps, to see if the complainant sees the complaints filed as a group or individual issue.
- I agree with what I heard about specific page numbers in the case where a complainant finds something objectionable or questions the legality of the shelving. This will help to understand the complainant's issues. However, when it is requested to move a book because of insufficient objectionable material to have it shelved where it is, there won't be page numbers to reference by the complainant (such as with The Hate U Give). In addition, I believe lists from websites that we've seen, ones that have no notes from the

complainant about their specific objection but only page numbers and quotes, pages copied and pasted from book looks and rated books, should not be allowed unless the complainant is going to explain their objection to each cited quote on each page. These SOC's should be returned to request more information from the complainant or discarded. My reason for this is observing that the copy/paste was done in lieu of reading the book, in order to mass submit complaints to sow chaos in our system at significant expense without any attempt to understand the references or read the book. This is not community standards and it is unfair to taxpayers to allow insincere SOC's.

- The books that do not fall under 25:225 will still be read in their entirety, if I understand, for an objection of obscenity or any other reason. I think not reading the whole book for the 25:225 is okay, however I think reading the passage that contains objectionable language in context is important. Maybe two pages around the wording? I defer to a librarian for their experience in this matter.
- Please, let's be proactive regarding meetings where those that do not show up at meetings when the book they challenged is on the agenda. The hearings for each book are time consuming and costly. We learned a year or so ago that each complaint costs (time and \$), \$400-\$600. This doesn't include volunteer time spent by the board to read and review. A complainant's insincerity and lack of commitment to this process should not adversely affect library expenses. I especially like the idea of reviewing the current list of challenges and contacting the complainants that lodged theirs over a year ago (or 6 months or ?), especially if their complaint was they wanted it in the adult section and through library policy it's been moved to adult (this case should require a resubmittal of an SOC for further action). It makes sense that the library would send the letter informing the complainant of the hearing date for the title to require an RSVP in order for the hearing to remain on the agenda. This letter should be sent in enough time that we don't need to purchase the books and have staff, board and public prepare with a reasonable RSVP date. That a complainant would copy/paste and complete a form in 5-10 minutes and not show or communicate when the date is set for the hearing on that title should be avoided except in an emergency. It makes sense to allow rescheduling to a different board date (set at the time the first date doesn't work out), maybe once per title, to accommodate the complainant's pre-set plans.
- Additional consideration: A book **not** being challenged under 25:225 should/could be evaluated against the tenure and record of the title in our system. That record is an indication of community standards. So, for example, if a title has been on the shelf in the teen section for ten (?) years, checked out with frequency (15+ times?), perhaps even requested for purchase by another patron for the teen collection, this should be weighed against the challenge and this information brought to the attention of the complainant before the challenge is lodged, if possible, and possibly brought to the attention of complainants with titles on the challenged list for possible reconsideration.

I believe it's critical for a public library system to work against censorship and acknowledge that all children (and adults) need information about their world and books that are relevant to them. A resolution by the board or council could make this clear. It was disturbing to hear a member of the board specifically request the door be left open to a complainant that wanted to ban a book from our system. This is government overreach. Free people read freely. Neither the council nor the board should be directing the reading of residents.

I know of no child that has been harmed by reading a book -- rather reading more is in their best interest. Education of our children in Louisiana is constantly in need of improvement and reading is crucial. If Louisiana teens can get married at 16 in this state and we have a high rate of teen pregnancy in our communities, our community is best served by allowing children and teens as much access within the law and the guidelines provided by the experts, especially our STPL librarians.

Thank you for your consideration

Lisa Rustemeyer
Mandeville 70448