

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Notice of Meeting

DATE: October 7, 2025

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Evergreen Senior Center, 5830 Grand Ave.

AGENDA

Call to order

Welcome and introductions

Review and approve agenda

Approve minutes of September 2 meeting

Public comment

Reports

Library Manager's Report – Powers

Library Usage Report – Powers

Foundation Report – Arezzo

Friends Report – Marcia Semerau

Guest staff member – Lori Crocker

Old Business

Safety update

Main Library facility/regional library services district

2026 budget

Advocacy update

New Business

Laptop lending policy

Adjournment

Next regular meeting: 4:30 PM on December 2, Main Library Gold Room

Duluth Public Library Board Meeting Minutes September 2, 2025

Present: Bill Arezzo, Sue Henke, Lori Steinbach, Ellen Hatfield, Lizzy Luoma, Jose Gonzalez, Carlee Bladl, Sarah Kessler, Michelle Foshay

Also in attendance: Carla Powers, Jim Filby Williams, Steph Myers – DPL, Carolyn Baird - LWV

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM by Bill Arezzo, President

Approval of minutes of August 5, 2025

Motion by Gonzalez, seconded by Bladl, to approve minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports

Library Manager

- West Duluth Branch Alcove project is nearing completion.
- Summer Reading Program has gone well, and participation is up in nearly all categories as compared to 2024.
- The library has organized several programs to help celebrate Duluth-Superior Pride Festival.
- Main Library is scheduled to resume Saturday hours starting September 6th.
- Filling vacancies in permanent staff roles has been put on pause until decisions have been made about the 2026 budget.

Foundation

- No report due to not having a meeting

Friends

- The board is working on building membership and to continue working to update the Friends' website.

Guest Staff Member – Steph Myers

- Steph shared about her work as the Adult Services Supervisor and work happening in the local history center.

Old Business

Safety Update

- Increase in folks using the Plaza outside of Library hours.
- No public WiFi 9pm-8am and no WiFi on Sundays already in place at the branches and will be in the coming months at Main.

Regional Library Update

- Duluth, Proctor, Hermantown, Rice Lake committed to study Regional Library.
- Final plans still need to be submitted to HUD.

2026 Budget

- Preliminary budget cuts haven't been communicated to departments.
- Plan for presenting full budget in early November.
- Changes happening in budget process as compared to previous years.

Advocacy Update

- Speakers have been at every City Council meeting since May and it has been going well.

New Business**2026 Fee Schedule**

- Reviewed proposed fee schedule for 2026. Only increase recommended was for Non Minnesota Resident Borrower's Card – 1st Family member – Annual (\$55 to \$60)
- Motion by Henke, seconded by Gonzalez, to approve the 2026 Fee Schedule. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned: 5:30pm

Library Manager's Report to Library Board

October 2025

Circle Gardens. Following up on a question that came up last month, Jim and I have talked with Parks Maintenance staff about options for the circle gardens along Michigan St. near the Main Library. The City Forester recommends annual plantings as the best option for this space. The gardens do not receive enough sunshine or rain for successful tree growth, and perennials are a challenge due to winter snow removal. Parks Maintenance is willing to plant annuals in the gardens in the spring, but its staff do not have the capacity to water and maintain the gardens during the growing season. I will talk with library staff about the possibility of staff or volunteers taking on this maintenance. In the meantime, Parks Maintenance promptly took care of the weeds that had been growing in the gardens.

Vermicomposting. It's been almost a year since the library set up a worm bin for composting food scraps. Staff has been feeding the worms one gallon of food waste from the library's break room almost every week. Soon a staff member will harvest castings from the bin, which will be used to fertilize shrubs in the library's garden. The worm bin not only provides an eco-friendly way to dispose of food scraps, but the weekly task of feeding the worms is also an opportunity to educate the public about vermicomposting. Library patrons are invited to watch the worms being fed and ask questions.

Communication Board. A DPL staff member has created a communication board to improve service for people with communication difficulties and comprehension challenges. It was developed with input from staff in the Minnesota Department of Human Services' Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing Division. The board features commonly used words along with icons to illustrate them. A copy is displayed and available at service desks in each of the library's locations.

Author Visit. The Duluth Library Foundation teamed up with Zenith Bookstore and DPL to host a visit by bestselling author William Kent Krueger on Sept. 12. The event took place at the Depot, and 243 people attended. Foundation staff were on hand to sell t-shirts and other merchandise. Library staff provided information about upcoming events and introduced the author at the start of the program. Zenith bookstore organized the program and sold copies of the author's latest book.

Great North Star Read Together. On Saturday, Sept. 20 DPL joined more than 50 other libraries in Minnesota to participate in an event that highlighted the importance of libraries. The Duluth Library Foundation took the lead on organizing a read-in at the Main Library that brought in 25 participants. Foundation staff was also present for library outreach at Chester Bowl Fall Fest, which reached over 500 people.

Staffing Update.

- A 67-day Library Technician position has been filled. This position is providing additional staffing coverage for the branch libraries.
- A new 13-hour-per-week Delivery Driver is scheduled to start work soon. This position was approved as a 67-day position for the time being. Ideally it will become an ongoing part-time position once the 2026 budget is finalized.
- Two full-time Librarian positions and a half-time Library Technician position remain vacant while administration conducts a review of all open positions city-wide.

MAIN																
2025 Hours, Visitors, Circulation, Internet Users																
Summary	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL	2024 YTD		
Days open	25	23	26	25	24	20	22	21					186	187	99%	
Hours open	202	185	206	202	190	161	184	171					1,501	1,522	99%	
Visitors	12449	13031	13970	13782	11944	12695	13216	11367					102,451	107,343	95%	
Internet uses Labs	1929	1746	1910	1888	1706	1481	1472	1437					13,569	14,410	94%	
Internet uses laptops	28	22	49	38	47	53	30	64					331	442	75%	
Internet total	1957	1768	1959	1926	1753	1534	1502	1501	0	0	0	0	13,900	14,759	94%	
Circulation print,av	19912	19014	22082	20672	19167	20695	22169	26867					170,578	177,339	96%	
Circulation OverDrive	13616	11905	13430	13239	13227	13341	13911	14449					107,118	84,901	126%	
Circulation Hoopla	3214	3068	3462	2690	2491	2439	2497	2451					22,312	19,892	112%	
Circulation - LLG	21	30	0	0	17	108	119	152					447	215	208%	
Circulation - Other***	429	424	519	470	419	449	493	537					3,740	3,503	107%	
Circulation total	37192	34441	39493	37071	35321	37032	39189	44456	0	0	0	0	304,195	282,347	108%	
In Person Programming Attendance*	803	2457	525	1063	1159	2231	2483	3113					13,834	14,232	97%	
Virtual Attendance**	0	25	21	13	0	6	0	0					65	114	57%	
Self-Directed Participation	407	202	150	427	270	200	163	246					2,065	3,198	65%	
Programming Attendance TOTAL	1210	2684	696	1503	1429	2437	2646	3359	0	0	0	0	15,964	17,544	91%	

*includes on and off-site programs

**includes live and recorded

MT ROYAL																
2025 Hours, Visitors, Circulation, Internet Users																
Summary	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL	2024 YTD		
Days open	21	19	21	21	21	20	22	21					166	167	99%	
Hours open	168	154	174	174	168	167	181	171					1,357	1,358	100%	
Visitors	9109	8548	9654	9397	9176	12178	13055	12006					83,122	74,126	112%	
Internet uses Labs	556	545	670	671	702	734	752	751					5,381	4,591	117%	
Internet uses laptops	9	6	9	5	5	6	1	6					47	28	168%	
Internet total	565	551	679	676	707	740	753	757	0	0	0	0	5,428	4,619	118%	
Circulation print,av	21971	19729	22227	21368	20172	24010	25666	30783					185,926	184,923	101%	
Circulation - Other***	52	57	53	71	63	88	105	103					592	400	148%	
In Person Programming Attendance*	402	498	541	768	582	956	627	419					4,793	4,288	112%	
Virtual Attendance**	0	9	8	7	4	0	0	0					28	12	233%	
Self-Directed Participation	1104	696	391	206	513	1071	1703	947					6,631	7,453	89%	
Programming Attendance TOTAL	1506	1203	940	981	1099	2027	2330	1366	0	0	0	0	11,452	11,753	97%	

*includes on and off-site programs

**includes live and recorded

WEST DULUTH																
2025 Hours, Visitors, Circulation, Internet Users																
Summary	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL	2024 YTD		
Days open	21	19	21	21	21	20	22	21					166	167	99%	
Hours open	174	157	171	174	174	161	184	171					1,366	1,373	99%	
Visitors	5341	5091	5942	5634	5302	5593	7065	6468					46,435	43,229	107%	
Internet uses Labs	465	533	578	576	569	498	708	728					4,655	3,193	146%	
Internet uses laptops	8	4	0	2	1	3	3	0					21	12	175%	
Internet total	473	537	578	578	570	501	711	728	0	0	0	0	4,676	3,205	146%	
Circulation print,av	8428	7650	8681	8306	8108	8579	9598	11593					70,943	70,403	101%	
Circulation - Other***	10	26	56	51	57	65	65	49					379	198	191%	
In Person Programming Attendance*	320	266	369	247	273	307	315	279					2,376	2,490	95%	
Virtual Attendance**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					-	-	0%	
Self-Directed Participation	158	134	239	239	181	125	229	65					1,370	2,162	63%	
Programming Attendance TOTAL	478	400	608	486	454	432	544	344	0	0	0	0	3,746	4,652	81%	

*includes on and off-site programs

**includes live and recorded

TOTAL MAIN AND BRANCHES																
2025 Hours, Visitors, Circulation, Internet Users																
Summary	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL	2024 YTD		
Visitors	26898	26669	29566	28813	26422	30465	33336	29840	0	0	0	0	232,008	224,698	103%	
Internet uses Labs	2950	2824	3158	3135	2977	2713	2932	2916	0	0	0	0	23,605	22,194	106%	
Internet uses laptops	45	32	58	45	53	62	34	70	0	0	0	0	399	389	103%	
Internet total	2995	2856	3216	3180	3030	2775	2966	2986	0	0	0	0	24,004	22,583	106%	
Circulation print,av	50332	46423	52990	50346	47464	53392	57552	69395	0	0	0	0	427,894	432,880	99%	
Circulation OverDrive	13616	11905	13430	13239	13227	13341	13911	14449	0	0	0	0	107,118	84,901	126%	
Circulation Hoopla	3214	3068	3462	2690	2491	2439	2497	2451	0	0	0	0	22,312	19,892	112%	
Circulation - Other***	491	507	628	592	539	602	663	689	0	0	0	0	4,711	4,101	115%	
Circulation total	67653	61396	69882	66275	63182	69172	73960	86295	0	0	0	0	557,815	541,774	103%	
In Person Programming Attendance*	1525	3221	1435	2078	2014	3494	3425	3811	0	0	0	0	21,003	21,010	100%	
Virtual Attendance**	0	34	29	20	4	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	93	126	74%	
Self-Directed Participation	1669	1032	780	872	964	1396	2095	1258	0	0	0	0	10,066	12,813	79%	
Programming Attendance TOTAL	3194	4287	2244	2970	2982	4896	5520	5069	0	0	0	0	31,162	33,949	92%	

*includes on and off-site programs

**includes live and recorded

***Circulation - Other:

Computer Accessories, Toys, Toy Bag, Electric Meters, Hotspots, Community Passes, Puzzles, Ereaders

Visitors: New door counters installed in June 6, 2025

Circulation print, av: Auto-renewals started August 1, 2025

**Duluth Library Foundation Report
October 2025**

The Library Foundation Board met on Sept 10, 2025 in the Library Gold Room.

The members were asked to state why they support the library. Responses will be used as a part of foundation activities.

Board Assessment Survey was completed. Results will be used as a base to recruit new board members.

Discussed candidates for the Olga Walker Award. Presentation will be made at the Books Buzzers Bash.

Update on Books & Buzzers Bash was presented. To date 53 tickets have been sold. Goal is 200. Date of event is 11/13/25.

T-shirt sales are going very well. There have been 428 pre orders to date. There will be an additional 250 shirts available for sale at events including the 9/20 Great North Star Read Together.

Discussion was held on the Friends/foundation working group. Members will be formally selected soon.

Strategic planning will be happening soon. It will be taking the form of updating the current plan which expires in 2025 rather than a full reset. Exec Comm will be coordinating & the process will probably be completed by year end.

The next foundation board meeting is currently scheduled to be held October 8.

Prepared by Bill Arezzo

**Friends of the Library Report
October 2025**

The Friends of the Library met on Sept. 16.

>Audit completed

>Website update

>Brochure is almost ready

>Together for the Library Team - ready to begin

>Littlest Holiday Book Sale at Mount Royal Library Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday the first week in December, 2nd-3rd-4th

>Banned Books Week, October 5-11 - Library hosting a community read-in

>National Friends of Libraries Week, October 19-25

Prepared by Marcia Semerau

Duluth Public Library Laptop Lending Policy

~~In order to~~ To help people connect with the digital world, the Duluth Public Library offers laptop computers for checkout and use within the library building. ~~Please be aware of the following rules for laptop use.~~

~~Rules:~~

Please be aware of the following rules for laptop use;

- You must be 18 years or older, and have a valid officially government issued ID and a Duluth Public Library card in good standing to check out ~~an adult~~ a laptop. Only one laptop may be checked out per library card.
- Teen laptops ~~are~~ may be available for sign-out checkout and use by teens ages 13 to 17.
- Laptops will be checked out on a first come, first served basis. Laptops are not to be removed from the library, and they must be returned by closing time to the desk at which they were checked out.
- The Duluth Public Library's Internet policy applies to laptop use. You must read and agree to the policy before Internet access is allowed.
- Each laptop is equipped with software similar to that provided on other public access computers at the Duluth Public Library.
- ~~If you wish to save files, you must provide your own memory device or ask library staff if one is available for short-term use. If you wish to save files,~~ you must save them to your own cloud document storage (available through most email providers), email them to your own email account, or provide your own USB storage device (some may be available for short-term use at the service desk). Any created or downloaded files will be deleted after a session ends. The library is not responsible for lost or corrupted files.
- ~~If a laptop computer is lost, stolen or damaged, the person who signed it out or whose card was used to check it out is responsible for the cost of repair or replacement. In addition, if a laptop is not returned by the time the library closes on the day it was checked out, it will be considered stolen and the police will be contacted. Overdue fines on library laptops are \$50 per day.~~

The Duluth Public Library's policies are subject to change without notice.

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Adopted ~~March 28, 2017~~ (NEW DATE)
Duluth Public Library Board