

The Friends of the Library Executive Board will meet on Monday, September 17, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. in the Library Board Room. This will be an open meeting. Committee chairs and members are welcome.

## AGENDA

1. Call to order (Sowls)
2. Motion to approve minutes from the meeting held Monday, July 16, 2018 (Sowls)
3. Call for additions to agenda and announcements (Sowls)
4. Treasurer's reports (Kocken)
5. Board liaison report (Brant)
6. Library director's report (Westby)
7. Program & Development Coordinator and Administrative Assistant (Claudio)
  - a. General Updates
8. Committee Reports
  - a. Book Sale (Sowls)
  - b. Books for Babies (Claudio)
9. Old business
  - a. Claudio's vacation (Claudio)
10. New business (Sowls)
  - a. Mity Lite Tables (Claudio)

cc: Pamela Westby, Library Director  
Nancy Sowls, Give a Kid a Book Committee Chair  
Brenda Brant, Nominating Committee  
Isa Small, Programming & Communications Services Manager

Enclosures/Attachments

### **The Mission of Friends of the Library**

*To encourage public use of and advocate for library resources and services; To assist in fundraising efforts that provide the public with an enhanced library collection and improved services; To support the Freedom to Read statement of the American Library Association; To provide volunteer services requested by the library for special events and projects.*

**To: Friends of the Library Board**

**From: Pamela K. Westby, Director**

**Re: L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library Progress Report on Special Initiatives – 2017-2018**

**Date: September 2018**

### **Library Self-Checkouts**

In early 2018, the first self-checkouts were introduced in response to customer requests. These machines provide customers with more privacy and less waiting time. Six months later, the self-checkout method accounts for over 60 percent of all checkouts at the library. This process improvement allows staff to spend more time providing excellent customer service to other customers.

### **Fines-Free Library Update**

In 2018, the library waived past fines and adopted a fines-free policy for most materials. By removing this financial barrier, 5,232 people can now borrow materials, including 1,080 children. This decision was based on the desire to increase circulation and to better serve the community in a more equitable manner. This initiative has increased circulation numbers by more than 9.1 percent. The County pays the library a fee for all items that are checked out by patrons living outside the city. Some portion of this increased circulation will result in increased funds to the Library. More than a dozen libraries in the IFLS system and the St. Paul Public Library were inspired to do the same!

### **Library Collaborative Spaces**

The L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library's lack of study and small group spaces has long been a problem for customers. In 2017, the fee for meeting room use was eliminated (annual income of \$1,500). A small meeting room was converted into a first come, first served conference room, which has allowed small groups to meet more frequently. This decision was based on the library's mission statement to "create collaborative spaces" and aligns with the American Library Association's interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights.

### **Library Planning Studies**

A Space Needs and Building Feasibility Study was completed by Zimmerman Architectural Studios in 2017 and recommended an expansion and renovation of the existing structure. In August of 2018, Crescendo Consulting was hired to determine the community's ability to afford the recommended option through fundraising.

### **Library Print Management**

In 2018, the library purchased its first color printer and color copier for public use as a direct response to customer suggestions. Customers now have the option to print a variety of materials at the library. The new system even offers remote printing so customers can send a print job from a home computer and pick up their printout at the library. The system will generate more than \$12,000 per year.

## **MEETING NOTES**

### **September 11, 2018, 2-3:40 PM, Chippewa Room, Sorters (Friends Brainstorming 1)**

*Met for just over 90 minutes. We had a good, more wide-ranging discussion and although we didn't stick specifically to the agenda, some decisions made follow.*

Sorters should and need to feel more comfortable to discard materials based on their condition and age and that they are supported in those decisions. Although none of us like to throw out materials, each item we keep involves space and the time of those who sort, appraise and input—which is finite. It is better to toss items that are in poor condition, smell, etc. than to continue to handle them. We'd rather discard to start with than hold on to a lot of items we will spend time on and end up throwing away anyway.

Even though an item may be in good condition, it might need to be tossed because of age which depending on the subject might be sooner than later—technology, computers, law, business, even cooking and crafts. That is one reason library staff withdraws materials to start with. Old information can be bad information. Although we started to try to zero in on parameters we didn't quite lay out those guidelines. Suffice it to say at this point that we have educated volunteers and they should use their judgment and we respect that. (Library staff does this on a routine basis and it's called weeding. One well-known method is called *CREW—Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding*. Here's an example that includes guidelines on a subject by subject basis: <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/sites/default/files/public/tslac/ld/ld/pubs/crew/crewmethod12.pdf>)

We will no longer separate out Harlequin and inspirational romance from other romance items. Instead just a softcover and hardcover division.

We should *not accept* encyclopedias, textbooks, magazines (except for certain ones the library provides us through withdrawal), VHS, vinyl records and audiocassettes (both music and audiobooks). We need to make this clear to the public via clear and prominent in-house signage, the website, the newsletter, at book sales, library staff awareness, etc.

We will no longer be so concerned with “stickers.” If a sticker comes off easily and we remove it, that's fine, but no major effort to remove them. To a certain degree, this also should apply to the cleaning of items. We do deal in “used” items and not every item needs to be cleaned.

Between the library staff doing a heavier withdrawing of materials right now and a large influx of public donations (perhaps partially because of spring, summer and fall house cleaning, thrift sales, etc.), we are experiencing an enormous influx of materials which hopefully will begin to become more manageable. We don't have the space for additional shelving, carts, etc.

We felt the last book sale went off well. The efforts of all volunteers in all areas at the book sales and weekly tasks are greatly appreciated.

### **September 13, 2018, 2-4 PM, Library Board Room, Online Sales (Friends Brainstorming 2)**

*The meeting went on for over two hours on Thursday and, like Tuesday, it was clear that we have a cadre of very educated, enthusiastic volunteers with lots of ideas, but only so many hours to give*

*and so much to do. We had a very aggressive agenda, reflecting a large number of issues but our limited time and spirited discussions resulted in only a few recommendations at this time.*

There are only a few volunteers who appraise and input at this point and, especially because of that, it was agreed that they should concentrate on items that are priced for \$20-25 or more instead of \$10 or more (which has been the guideline), keeping in mind that our goal is to underprice what we see those items going for from other sellers. We will experiment, for now, with attempting to sell more items at the book sales for slighter higher prices instead of online. This might mean enlarging the area for what we currently display "incredibooks" to include those items that we would have attempted to sell online. One example is that the library has recently withdrawn a fairly large number of music CD sets which will try to sell at the next book sale for an \$8-10 price instead of the normal book sale price. Sheila (Rozich) did point out that while ideas about special pricing and special sales are good ones, we don't necessarily have the volunteers or the space to offer those special sales.

Some of the discussion focused on what to do with excess books/materials as an alternative to throwing them out. However, the point was also made that distributing materials to other libraries and/or institutions or groups does not raise funds for the Friends and can take a lot of volunteer time to accomplish.

Amanda (Favret) will try to evaluate past sales data from Abe and Alibris to give us a better idea of the items that are sold and for how much. Margot (Bouchard) made a point of saying the online general guideline should include a 30% discount from the lower prices we compare to which the group felt was a good guideline until Amanda is able to provide more information on which materials were selling. However, the discount amount chosen might be higher or lower depending on other factors the appraiser feels are relevant.

Also pointed out, but not directly at the meeting, is that, because of the many other sellers out there, it might well be that the materials we sell most online are the ones that are substantially discounted. While Amanda may be able to better clarify what materials sold at what price, she will not know how much the materials were listed at on other websites and how much we discounted them. One suggestion is that the appraisal cards should be saved, even if just stacked for reference at this time. Right now, they are discarded. This might allow a volunteer at some point to develop a spreadsheet listing showing the materials sold, how much they sold for, how much the extra shipping was, how long since they were first entered online, who appraised them, what was the general discount offered (roughly, since the online sources can vary a lot), where they were shipped to, what website they sold from, generally what condition the book was in, and maybe what genre the material fit, etc. That information could be gleaned from the appraisal cards if the fulfillment staff agreed to enter the sales price, date, and shipping information. However, that is all something we need to agree is worth taking time to do.

There was some discussion about looking into the feasibility of hiring or providing a stipend for a part-time book sale manager, but this is really something the Friends Board would have to talk about if it were to be pursued.

We want volunteers to continue to suggest and share new ideas and ways to look at what we are doing even if we cannot act on those at this point, as Sally (Derksen) did with her appraisal notes that were distributed and appreciated.