

The Friends of the Library Executive Board will meet on Monday, January 19, 2026, at 6 p.m. at the L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library in room 105. Committee chairs and members are welcome.

AGENDA

1. Call to order/Roll Call (Mathson)
2. Motion to approve minutes from the meeting held on Monday, November 17, 2025 (Mathson)
3. Call for additions to the agenda and announcements (Mathson)
4. Treasurer's reports (Gragert)
5. Library report (Hennings)
6. Board liaison report (Pesicka)
7. Staff General Updates (Yearous/Hayden)
 - a. Seasonal Train Exhibit Update
 - b. Give a Kid a Book Summary
 - c. 2026 Membership Drive
 - d. Reminder of Bag Sale, January 31, 2026
8. Old Business
 - a. Reminder of Future Meeting Dates
 - Monday, February 9, 2026 (moved up a week due to library closure)
 - Monday, March 16, 2026
 - Monday, April 20, 2026
 - Monday, May 18, 2026 – Annual Meeting at 5 pm with a short Board Meeting to follow.
 - Monday, June 15, 2026
9. New Business
 - a. Distinguished Service Award

The Mission of Friends of the Library

The mission of the Friends of the L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library is to encourage literacy, expression, and discovery in the Chippewa Valley through support to the L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library and the surrounding community.

Friends of the Library Monthly Meeting 11/17/2025

Present: Jeremy Gragert, Treasurer; Michael Kersting, Member at Large; Astrid Hayden, Administrative Assistant; Kimberly Hennings, Deputy Director; Mary Jo Mayer, Secretary; Deb Mathson, President; Stacy Yearous, Program and Development Coordinator; Sara McLquham, Vice President; Gary Persicka, Board Liaison
Absent: Esther Moen, Past President; Anna Zook, Member -at-Large

1. **Mathson** - Meeting called to order 6:02 p.m.
2. **Mathson** - Motion put forth to approve Friend's meeting minutes with change from October 20, 2025. Sara M. approves, Jeremy G seconds. Motion approved. Astrid Hayden to make change.
3. **Mathson** - Call for any additions to agenda - None given
4. **Treasurer's report (Gragert)** - October was a strong month for book sales. The Card Crawl was a factor for bump in sales as well as a sale of a collectible edition of The Hobbit in amt. of \$2500.00, in which the Friends received 5% of this sale.
5. **Library report (Hennings)** - Director Nancy Kerr attended IFLS Retreat. Beneficial meeting of all directors from all the libraries in system. Nancy K. also had brainstorming session with city department heads and city strategic planning to discuss library strategic plan vs. city plan tie in. The library's primary vendor for books made major announcement that they would be going out of business, so much time spent with finding new vendors. Open enrollment time for new insurance. Chippewa Valley Book Festival huge success. Shout-out to Mike Paulus, the man behind our library's Facebook Page.
6. **Board Liaison report (Persicka)** - 2026 budget approved. Directors reports show very positive outlook for library programs. Youth Services stand out.
7. **General Staff Updates (Yearous/Hayden)** - The kick-off to the Seasonal Train Exhibit is Dec. 6th. Volunteer sign up has been sent, hoping to fill all spots. The ads went live in Volume One. Astrid working on more promotion this year such as flyers, etc. Membership drive for 2026 is starting with the printing of letters this week which should hit mail before Thanksgiving. **Motion put forth by Mathson to raise low end donation amt. on letters (supporting friend) from \$10.00 to \$15.00. Sara M approves, Michael K. seconds, all in favor. Motion approved.** Astrid and Stacy attended Community Foundation sponsored Grant Writing Workshop. These were two very beneficial sessions by Ann Kaiser.
8. **Old Business (Yearous)** - Review of 2026 meeting dates.
9. **New Business (Yearous/Mathson)** - **Give A Kid A Book** - Huge donation of \$10,000.00 was received by an anonymous donor. This is to stay with this program and may be carried over into next year. Will continue to pursue new places/ organizations to support. Gragert initiating discussion on if an endowment might be an option for future large donations. Suggestion from Mathson to put a space on GAKAB form "in memory of." Noted by Stacy. Mathson shared that the refreshments offered at the Book Fest by the Friends were very much appreciated. Mathson shared feedback she had received regarding parking issues between

library and city, i.e. more handicapped parking spaces for library. This is an ongoing issue, feedback is appreciated. Mathson suggested future brainstorming session on ways to increase our membership.

Meeting adjourned by Mathson at 7:00 p.m. **Next mtg. Jan. 19, 2026.**

Minutes submitted by Mary Jo Mayer, Secretary

Statement of Financial Position Summary

Friends of the LE Phillips Memorial Public Library

As of December 31, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Assets	\$130,128.00
Current Assets	\$130,128.00
Bank Accounts	\$68,360.12
Other Current Assets	\$61,767.88
Total for Current Assets	\$130,128.00
Total for Assets	\$130,128.00
Liabilities and Equity	\$130,128.00
Liabilities	\$15,008.42
Current Liabilities	\$15,008.42
Credit Cards	
Other Current Liabilities	\$15,008.42
Total for Current Liabilities	\$15,008.42
Long-term Liabilities	\$0.00
Total for Liabilities	\$15,008.42
Equity	\$115,119.58
Total for Liabilities and Equity	\$130,128.00

Statement of Activity

Friends of the LE Phillips Memorial Public Library

December 1-31, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Income	
Book Sales	
Amazon/Ebay/Pango Sales	337.20
Bookstore Sales	1,055.45
Online Book Sales	945.07
Total for Book Sales	\$2,337.72
Capital Appeal Donations	3,550.00
Event Income	4,501.87
Interest	361.33
Memberships (Households)	11,687.16
Monies Received from Library	6,000.00
Programs	
Give-a-Kid-a-Book	1,431.00
Total for Programs	\$1,431.00
Total for Income	\$29,869.08
Gross Profit	\$29,869.08
Expenses	
Book Sale Expenses	
Online Book Sales	
Supplies	35.00
Total for Online Book Sales	\$35.00
Total for Book Sale Expenses	\$35.00
Credit Card Co. Fees	33.46
Memberships	66.22
Monies Remitted to Library	6,000.00
Payroll Expenses	
Taxes	184.97
Wages	2,417.79
Total for Payroll Expenses	\$2,602.76
Program Expense	
Books for Babies	
Books	1,195.28
Supplies	13.49
Total for Books for Babies	\$1,208.77
Give-a-Kid-a-Book	
Books	606.37
Total for Give-a-Kid-a-Book	\$606.37
Total for Program Expense	\$1,815.14

Statement of Activity

Friends of the LE Phillips Memorial Public Library

December 1-31, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Subscriptions/Org. Membership	197.99
Total for Expenses	\$10,750.57
Net Operating Income	\$19,118.51
Net Other Income	
Net Income	\$19,118.51

Statement of Activity by Month

Friends of the LE Phillips Memorial Public Library

July 1-December 31, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	JULY 2025	AUGUST 2025	SEPTEMBER 2025	OCTOBER 2025	NOVEMBER 2025	DECEMBER 2025	TOTAL
Income							
Book Sales							
Amazon/Ebay/Pango Sales	481.45	627.07	311.97	613.86	669.94	337.20	3,041.49
Bookstore Sales	1,085.58	1,355.79	1,266.91	2,510.83	828.36	1,055.45	8,102.92
Online Book Sales	842.83	621.77	337.69	2,965.49	-1,713.06	945.07	3,999.79
Total for Book Sales	2,409.86	2,604.63	1,916.57	6,090.18	-214.76	2,337.72	\$15,144.20
Capital Appeal Donations	400.00				100.00	3,550.00	4,050.00
Corporate Memberships/Sponsorships	250.00	250.00	250.00	500.00	3,000.00		4,250.00
Event Income					35.00	4,501.87	4,536.87
Interest	116.43	370.58	116.33	237.33	241.34	361.33	1,443.34
Memberships (Households)	678.92	161.74	188.38	158.63	648.92	11,687.16	13,523.75
Miscellaneous Income		450.00		400.00			850.00
Monies Received from Library					5,250.00	6,000.00	11,250.00
Programs							
Give-a-Kid-a-Book			1,595.00	50.00	12,310.00	1,431.00	15,386.00
In Honor Of	450.00	100.00	100.00				650.00
Total for Programs	450.00	100.00	1,695.00	50.00	12,310.00	1,431.00	\$16,036.00
Total for Income	4,305.21	3,936.95	4,166.28	7,436.14	21,370.50	29,869.08	\$71,084.16
Cost of Goods Sold							
Gross Profit	4,305.21	3,936.95	4,166.28	7,436.14	21,370.50	29,869.08	\$71,084.16
Expenses							
Book Sale Expenses							
Book Sales							
Promotions	9.98	9.92	17.78	2.45	12.50		52.63
Supplies			407.25				407.25
Total for Book Sales	9.98	9.92	425.03	2.45	12.50		\$459.88
Online Book Sales	20.00						\$20.00
Postage	289.19	49.65	30.90	61.80	424.89		856.43
Supplies	76.24		67.24	19.37	84.18	35.00	282.03
Total for Online Book Sales	385.43	49.65	98.14	81.17	509.07	35.00	\$1,158.46
Total for Book Sale Expenses	395.41	59.57	523.17	83.62	521.57	35.00	\$1,618.34
Credit Card Co. Fees	25.93	25.93	25.93	65.01	27.18	33.46	203.44
Event Expenses					17.78		17.78
Insurance			252.00				252.00
Memberships	59.79				5.89	66.22	131.90
Miscellaneous Expense		30.00	0.00				30.00
Monies Remitted to Library					5,250.00	6,000.00	11,250.00
Newsletter					148.00		148.00
Office Supplies	12.99	-20.00		6.17			-0.84
Payroll Expenses							
Taxes	213.43	222.74	202.47	218.62	239.98	184.97	1,282.21
Wages	2,789.90	2,911.66	2,646.74	2,857.65	3,137.11	2,417.79	16,760.85
Total for Payroll Expenses	3,003.33	3,134.40	2,849.21	3,076.27	3,377.09	2,602.76	\$18,043.06
Program Expense							
Books for Babies							
Books	590.58	489.39	231.75	476.10	1,218.00	1,195.28	4,201.10
Supplies	10.94	90.07				13.49	114.50
Total for Books for Babies	601.52	579.46	231.75	476.10	1,218.00	1,208.77	\$4,315.60

Statement of Activity by Month
Friends of the LE Phillips Memorial Public Library
July 1-December 31, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	JULY 2025	AUGUST 2025	SEPTEMBER 2025	OCTOBER 2025	NOVEMBER 2025	DECEMBER 2025	TOTAL
Give-a-Kid-a-Book							
Books					863.69	606.37	1,470.06
Misc. Expenses	4.99				30.53		35.52
Total for Give-a-Kid-a-Book	4.99				894.22	606.37	\$1,505.58
In Honor Of							
Library	450.00	100.00	100.00				650.00
Total for In Honor Of	450.00	100.00	100.00				\$650.00
Total for Program Expense	1,056.51	679.46	331.75	476.10	2,112.22	1,815.14	\$6,471.18
Subscriptions/Org. Membership	182.99	297.99	227.99	197.99	238.99	197.99	1,343.94
Telephone	7.80				16.00		23.80
YS Programs and Services (Prizes/Giveaways)		304.28	137.31		6.64		448.23
Total for Expenses	4,744.75	4,511.63	4,347.36	3,905.16	11,721.36	10,750.57	\$39,980.83
Net Operating Income	-439.54	-574.68	-181.08	3,530.98	9,649.14	19,118.51	\$31,103.33
Other Income							
Other Expenses							
Net Other Income							
Net Income	-439.54	-574.68	-181.08	3,530.98	9,649.14	19,118.51	\$31,103.33

**Friends of the
L. E. Phillips Memorial Public Library
Budget**

	<u>2025-2026</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>12/31/25</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u> <u>Remaining</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Budget</u>
Revenue				
Memberships(Households)	20,000	13523.75	6,476	67.62%
Corporate Sponsorships	3,750	4250	(500)	113.33%
Corporate Partners	1,000		1,000	0.00%
Bookstore Sale	19,000	8102.92	10,897	42.65%
Online Booksales	14,000	7041.28	6,959	50.29%
Grants	2,000		2,000	0.00%
Give-a-Kid-a-Book	7,500	15386	(7,886)	205.15%
Books for Babies	5,500		5,500	0.00%
Special Event Fundraising	4,000	4536.87	(537)	113.42%
Capital Appeal Donations/Contribution	5,000	4050	950	81.00%
In Honor Of	1,000	650	350	65.00%
Interest	2,000	1443.34	557	72.17%
Miscellaneous	500	850	(350)	170.00%
Monies Received for Library	10,000	11250	(1,250)	112.50%
Transfer From Balance	12,900		12,900	0.00%
Total Revenue	\$ 108,150	71084.16	37,066	65.73%
Expenses				
Library Allocations	15000		15,000	0.00%
Capital Appeal Contribution	15000		15,000	0.00%
Special Event Fundraising Expenses	1000	17.78	982	1.78%
Salaries	37600	16760.85	20,839	44.58%
Payroll Taxes	2900	1282.21	1,618	44.21%
Insurance	300	252	48	84.00%
Memberships Expenses	1000	131.9	868	13.19%
Credit Card Fees	600	203.44	397	33.91%
Annual Meeting	250		250	0.00%
Telephone/General Postage	100	23.8	76	23.80%
Newsletter	800	148	652	18.50%
Give-a-Kid-a-Book	3500	1505.58	1,994	43.02%
Books for Babies	6500	4315.6	2,184	66.39%
In Honor Of	1000	650	350	65.00%
Booksales: Expense	500	459.88	40	91.98%
Online Booksales: Expenses	4500	1158.46	3,342	25.74%
Volunteer Appreciation	500		500	0.00%
Office Supplies	2500	-0.84	2,501	-0.03%
Subscriptions/Org. Memberships	3100	1343.94	1,756	43.35%
Miscellaneous	500	30	470	6.00%
Monies Remitted to Library	10000	11250	(1,250)	112.50%
YS Program Prizes	1000	448.23	552	44.82%
Total Expense	\$ 108,150	39980.83	68,169	36.97%

2025 Seasonal Train Report

Dates: December 6th – 30th

- Day trains on Saturday, night trains Tuesday and Thursday evenings
- Polar Express readings each Saturday
- Cancelled due to weather on 12/18

Total earned: \$5,203.87

- Ticket sales: \$4,853.87
- Income from sponsorships after expenses were met: \$350

Total attendees: 1,662

- Total paid attendees: 1,254
 - 694 adults
 - 270 kids 5-17
 - 188 kids 0-4
 - 102 unknown age (Polar Express)
- Special free session for Noon Year's Eve party – 408 attendees

Total Friends volunteers: 27

- 23 ticket takers (many worked multiple sessions)
- 4 Polar Express helpers (2 worked multiple sessions)

Give a Kid a Book 2025 Wrap up

Events

- Backpacks in the Park – 472 books
- December Give a Kid a Book – 3,379

Total – 3,851 books given out in 2025

Books Donated

- BAM – 2,175
- Library – 173
- M3 Insurance – 18
- RCU - 123

Volunteer Hours

- 8 volunteers – 91 hours

Agencies

- Bethlehem Lutheran Sunday School – 26
- Big Brothers and Sisters – 303
- Community Table – 75
- Family Promise (Carol Gorzek) – 156
- Eau Claire Area School District Early Learning – 300
- Eau Claire Area School District Homeless – 80
- Eau Claire Head Start – 19
- Family Promise of the Chippewa Valley (Jaiden Erickson) - 335
- Family Resource Center – 470
- Helping Hands for our Children – 347
- Ms Julias Schoolia – 10
- River Source Family Center – 60
- Strong Arms Helping Families – 226
- Western Dairyland Head Start EC County – 60

- Western Dairyland Head Start – 34
- Little Star DayCare – 151
- Salvation Army – 727

Books by Category – Give a Kid a Book

- 0-2 – 608
- 2-5 – 1138
- Lower Elementary – 482
- Upper Elementary – 498
- Middle School/High School – 331
- Hmong – 31
- Spanish – 181
- Miscellaneous – 110

Foreign Language (not Hmong or Spanish)

- French – 15
- Swahili – 2
- Chinese – 4
- Lao – 1
- Amharic – 1

Note: Miscellaneous include Foreign Books, Christmas books and Activity Books

Books by Category – Backpack in the Park

- 0-2 – 75
- 2-5 – 74
- Lower Elementary – 156
- Upper Elementary – 75
- Middle School/High School – 77
- Ethnic – 6
- Spanish - 9

Administrative Services
Nancy Kerr, Library Director

This will be the third year of our Strategic Plan, and we are proud of many tasks (linked to our goals) that we have been able to accomplish. We began 2024 with a 3-year plan, as we were still settling into the newly remodeled building, not quite sure what the new experiences would include. One initial goal, for example, was to “Make the Most of the New Building,” and while making the most of our building is an effort that continues, our staff has done an amazing job of adapting to the new spaces and adapting the new space to what works best for our customers. Next steps will involve seeing what goals we can wrap up in 2026, and working on an addendum to the plan for 2027. Terms of library strategic plans have certainly become shorter, as technology and society change more quickly than they did in the era of 10-year and even five-year plans – also taking into account that large events like a pandemic can send a long-term planning into a tailspin.

We’ve been asked several times this month what kind of effect, if any, the new Day Resource Center has had on our library usage, and on our library behavioral incidents. The answer is that we don’t know yet! It has only been open since the end of December. Our objective is certainly not to welcome fewer customers who may be experiencing homelessness to our library, but to appreciate all of the efforts by many organizations and individuals to provide a dedicated location where people can access services that they need 365 days per year. Our hope is that the DRC’s new location will offer new opportunities for many people, and we’ve already heard good comments on it from some of their customers.

The library over the past month has had many opportunities for customers of all ages, from the return of the Friends fundraiser featuring a very large model train set in action to an exciting “Noon Year’s Eve” party complete with confetti cannons to a beautiful new art exhibit entitled Four Sight, featuring the work of four retired Eau Claire art teachers. There is also nothing better than a good book when it’s cold and icy outside. One thing I’ve been doing over the past few months is checking out a different cookbook every

(almost every) Friday and making one thing from that cookbook during the next week. We have an extensive cookbook collection if you've never checked it out! In honor of the new year, "A Healthier Home Cook" is coming home with me today. Happy New Year!

Youth Services

Kelly Witt, Youth Services Manager

We closed out both December *and* 2025 with a celebration to remember: our second annual Noon Year's Eve Party. Designed for families who prefer celebrating earlier in the day, this event welcomed **408 children and families**. Families enjoyed blacklight dancing, face painting, balloon twisting, craft projects, a scavenger hunt, and free admission to the Friends of the Library's Seasonal Train Exhibit. Just before noon, everyone gathered for a singalong of *Auld Lang Syne*, followed by a countdown and a massive confetti drop right at noon. **WEAU covered the celebration**, spotlighting the library as a joyful community gathering space. [Check out the story here!](#)



December also capped off a strong year for **outreach**. In 2025, the Laundromat Libraries and Chippewa Valley Little Libraries programs distributed **5,200 new, high-quality children's books** in English, Spanish, and Hmong to families across Eau Claire. Since launching these efforts, more than **16,200 books** have been placed directly into children's hands. We will continue pursuing grants and donations to sustain and grow these high-impact programs in 2026 and beyond.

Reference Services

Elizabeth Steans, Reference Services Manager

One of our new Dabble Box passive offerings was a Gift-Wrapping Station, which was very popular in December! Stephanie, RS Coordinator, coordinated this offering and the Library received a lot of positive feedback and supply donation inquiries. We saw numerous customers using this seasonal station intended for anyone who struggles to find the physical space to roll out wrapping paper, stays up late to wait until their kids are in bed, or doesn't have the budget for gift wrap.

RS program stats for December 2025:

- 10 Dabble Box Open Labs, 281 attendees
- Genealogy "Exploring Ethnicities: Native American Ancestry", 12 attendees

The Staff Blog provides recommended reads, library resources, and culture. Have a look at these blogs!:

- [Languages and Cultures at the Library by Juliette, Reference Services](#)
- [Exploring the World Through Spices: The Adventure Continues by Bethany, Reference Services](#)

RS desk staff documented 1,666 reference transactions in December 2025.

The top three topics include:

1. Room reservations (243 transactions)
2. Ready reference questions (179 transactions)
3. Guest pass information or distribution (167 transactions)

RS desk staff experienced a 25% increase of overall questions in December 2025 compared to December 2024.

Technical Services

Lynn Gates, Technical Services Manager

The Technical Services Department was a flurry of activity early in December, sending out the last orders of the year, receiving and cataloging all the incoming books and media, processing everything to go out to our customers, and starting to prep for upcoming projects.

In 2025 the Technical Services Department:

- Imported over 7,000 OCLC records into MORE.
- Created over 100 original records for library materials.
- Received, invoiced, cataloged, and processed close to 16,000 items.
- Weeded 16,000+ items from the collection.
- Over 1,500 were checked out from our 2nd floor & pop-up displays.
- Other things we did this year:
 - Purchased and prepared a lot of new materials (and updated some old) to start the Community Language Collection
 - Started “TS Tips” a monthly email
 - Rearranged the Non-Print materials
 - Adjusted shelf height in nonfiction so all oversize books (except for 8) will fit with their friends
 - And (as we say), so much MORE

The very popular Holiday Baking display was up on the 2nd floor display for the first half of December, followed by essays. The pop-up display had holiday movies and CDs with a record 247 checked out!