

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Notice of Meeting

DATE: February 3, 2026

TIME: 4:30 PM

LOCATION: Main Library (520 W. Superior St.) Gold Room

Agenda

Call to Order

Welcome and introductions

Review and approve agenda

Approve minutes of January 6 meeting

Public comment

Reports

Library Manager's Report – Powers

Library Usage Report – Powers

Foundation Report – Arezzo

Friends Report – Gonzalez

Guest staff member – Libby Spehar

Old Business

Safety update

Main Library facility/regional library services district

Advocacy update

New Business

Applications open for upcoming Library Board vacancy

Election of officers at March meeting

Duluth Library Foundation year in review

Adjournment

Next meeting: March 3, 2026 at 4:30 PM in Mt. Royal Blue Room

Duluth Public Library Board Meeting Minutes

January 6, 2026

Call to Order

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

Also in attendance: Carla Powers, staff member Jessica McLamb-Manor, League of Women Voters observer Carolyn Baird

Call to Order

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

Review & Approve Agenda

Motion by Gonzalez, seconded by Foshay, to approve agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of minutes of December 2, 2025

Motion by Luoma, seconded by Foshay, to approve minutes. Motion passed with amendments.

Reports

Library Manager

- Winter Reading Program kickoff at the Jolabokaflod event and the Noon Year's Eve program went well and were well attended.
- DPL's website is compliant with the upcoming federal digital accessibility requirements. Current focus is to ensure that any documents linked to the website also are compliant.
- Updates were provided on new hires who will be starting in January and February.
- When reviewing usage stats, board discussed that lower programming numbers for the year were due to staff vacancies at the Main Library and West Duluth Branch. Fewer staff resulted in less programming being available.

Foundation

- Foundation Board approved the 2025 annual gift disbursement to the Library.
- Fundraising is continuing for the Downtown Children's Section project.
- New 3-year strategic plan was approved.

Friends

- No Friends report due to no meeting in December.

Guest Staff Member

- Jessica McLamb-Manor discussed her work in the Business Office at the Main Library. She also fills in at the branches, serves as one of two notaries in the library, and unpacks all of the new book shipments.

Old Business

Safety Update

- Frequent violations of the library's behavior policy are continuing.
- Meetings will take place soon with city administration and representatives from the police department to address continued safety issues.

Main Library facility/regional library services district

- Staff visited a facility up on the hill as a potential relocation of the Main Library. There are pros and cons to the location.
- Next steps are to work with a consultant to assess the feasibility of the space as well as space needs for a downtown branch.

2026 Budget

- Discussed Property, Parks & Library Department restructuring, which currently is on pause.

Advocacy Update

- Advocacy team will set up meetings with new council members to orient them to the library.

New Business

MLA e-book legislation

- Minnesota Library Association will be lobbying for legislation to help lower the cost of e-books and downloadable audiobooks for libraries

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned: 6:02 pm

Library Manager's Report

February 2026

Spanish Language Storytime. Another storytime program has been added to DPL's lineup. Storytime in Spanish debuted in January with a program at the Main Library that brought in 33 children and caregivers. It will take place monthly and rotate among the library's three locations, similar to Ojibwe Family Storytime. In addition to offering more diverse storytime options for the community, these programs provide added enrichment for students who attend the Duluth school district's language immersion programs.

History Day Hullabaloo. A total of 41 students in grades 6 through 12 came to the Main Library on Saturday, Jan. 24 for DPL's annual History Day Hullabaloo. The event is held in partnership with the University of Minnesota, which coordinates Hullabaloo's all around the state each winter. History Day Hullabaloo's provide students an opportunity to consult primary sources and receive assistance from librarians as they work on History Day projects.

Puzzle & Game Swap. The Mount Royal Branch held a puzzle and game swap on Wednesday, Jan. 28. Community members were invited to drop off new and gently used puzzles and board games for a couple of weeks prior to the event. On swap day, 97 people showed up to take home a puzzle or game that was new to them. Swap events are popular with the community and align with DPL's focus on sustainability.

Juvenile and Young Adult Book on Disc Collections. On Feb. 1 the book on disc collections for children and teens will be discontinued. With the growth of streaming options such as Libby and Hoopla, fewer audiobooks on CD are being published and the collections are getting less use. Juvenile and young adult audiobooks on Playaway devices will continue to be offered. Playaways are small devices that hold a single audiobook.

Staffing Update.

- A new full-time Librarian I will start work on Feb. 9. The position will be based in Adult Services at the Main Library, focusing on outreach and volunteer coordination.
- The Senior Library Technician position at Mount Royal has been posted internally. Current staff can apply through Feb. 8. As this is a promotional opportunity, filling it will create a vacancy elsewhere on staff.

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	25	26	22	24	283	284	100%	
Hours open	202	185	206	202	190	161	184	171	202	209	172	192	2,276	2,295	99%	
Visitors	12449	13031	13970	13782	11944	12695	13216	11367	12390	12676	10986	10748	149,250	156,382	95%	
Internet uses Labs	1929	1746	1910	1888	1706	1481	1472	1437	1706	1717	1518	1559	20,069	21,509	93%	
Internet uses laptops	28	22	49	38	47	53	30	64	44	62	51	38	526	442	119%	
Internet total	1957	1768	1959	1926	1753	1534	1502	1501	1750	1779	1569	1597	20,595	21,961	94%	
Circulation print,av	19912	19014	22082	20672	19167	20695	22169	26867	26776	27164	26660	25177	276,355	254,783	108%	
Circulation OverDrive	13616	11905	13430	13239	13227	13341	13911	14449	13993	14595	13480	13652	162,838	130,876	124%	
Circulation Hoopla	3306	3167	3636	2897	2557	2536	2596	2591	2444	2624	2973	2958	34,285	31,009	111%	
Circulation - LLG	21	30	0	0	17	108	119	152	91	32	7	1	578	372	155%	
Circulation - Other***	429	424	519	470	419	449	493	537	562	527	518	560	5,907	4,954	119%	
Circulation total	37284	34540	39667	37278	35387	37129	39288	44596	43866	44942	43638	42348	479,963	417,040	115%	
In Person Programming Attendance*	803	2457	525	1024	1159	2231	2483	3113	1537	1068	930	1086	18,416	19,209	96%	
Virtual Attendance**	0	25	40	13	0	6	0	3	3	25	0	0	115	179	64%	
Self-Directed Participation	407	202	150	427	270	200	163	246	131	0	211	209	2,616	5,350	49%	
Programming Attendance TOTAL	1210	2684	715	1464	1429	2437	2646	3362	1671	1093	1141	1295	21,147	24,738	85%	

*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	21	22	16	21	246	247	100%	
Hours open	168	154	174	174	168	167	181	171	171	178	136	171	2,013	2,011	100%	
Visitors	9109	8548	9654	9397	9176	12178	13055	12006	10028	10715	8617	9846	122,326	107,517	114%	
Internet uses Labs	556	545	670	671	702	734	752	751	732	717	572	665	8,067	6,889	117%	
Internet uses laptops	9	6	9	5	5	6	1	6	3	7	2	4	63	53	119%	
Internet total	565	551	679	676	707	740	753	757	735	724	574	669	8,130	6,942	117%	
Circulation print,av	21971	19729	22227	21368	20172	24010	25666	30783	28938	27859	24749	25030	292,502	266,970	110%	
Circulation - Other***	52	57	53	71	63	88	105	103	94	93	58	61	898	610	147%	
In Person Programming Attendance*	402	498	605	768	555	961	627	425	585	616	549	327	6,918	5,906	117%	
Virtual Attendance**	0	9	8	7	4	0	0	0	13	7	0	0	48	12	400%	
Self-Directed Participation	1104	696	391	206	513	1071	1703	947	746	624	534	1197	9,732	10,443	93%	
Programming Attendance TOTAL	1506	1203	1004	981	1072	2032	2330	1372	1344	1247	1083	1524	16,698	16,361	102%	

*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	21	22	17	21	247	247	100%	
Hours open	174	157	171	174	174	161	184	171	174	181	137	168	2,026	2,027	100%	
Visitors	5341	5091	5942	5634	5302	5593	7065	6468	5382	5869	4579	4666	66,930	64,737	103%	
Internet uses Labs	465	533	578	576	569	498	708	728	582	534	469	441	6,681	5,186	129%	
Internet uses laptops	8	4	0	2	1	3	3	0	1	1	2	1	26	19	137%	
Internet total	473	537	578	578	570	501	711	728	583	535	471	442	6,707	5,205	129%	
Circulation print,av	8428	7650	8681	8306	8108	8579	9598	11593	10340	10225	9481	9791	110,780	103,296	107%	
Circulation - Other***	10	26	56	51	57	65	65	49	42	48	34	28	531	346	153%	
In Person Programming Attendance*	320	266	369	247	273	307	315	279	211	363	252	190	3,392	3,791	89%	
Virtual Attendance**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0%	
Self-Directed Participation	158	134	239	239	181	125	229	65	173	59	96	205	1,903	2,693	71%	
Programming Attendance TOTAL	478	400	608	486	454	432	544	344	384	422	348	395	5,295	6,484	82%	

*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	27799	29260	24181	25259	338,506	328,635	103%	
Internet uses Labs	2950	2824	3158	3135	2977	2713	2932	2916	3020	2968	2559	2665	34,817	33,584	104%	
Internet uses laptops	45	32	58	45	53	62	34	70	48	70	55	43	615	524	117%	
Internet total	2995	2856	3216	3180	3030	2775	2966	2986	3068	3038	2614	2708	35,432	34,108	104%	
Circulation print,av	50332	46423	52990	50346	47464	53392	57552	69395	66145	65280	60897	59999	680,215	625,421	109%	
Circulation OverDrive	13616	11905	13430	13239	13227	13341	13911	14449	13993	14595	13480	13652	162,838	130,876	124%	
Circulation Hoopla	3306	3167	3636	2897	2557	2536	2596	2591	2444	2624	2973	2958	34,285	31,009	111%	
Circulation - Other***	491	507	628	592	539	602	663	689	698	668	610	649	7,336	5,910	124%	
Circulation total	67745	61495	70056	66482	63248	69269	74059	86435	82582	82499	77350	76609	877,829	793,216	111%	
In Person Programming Attendance*	1525	3221	1499	2039	1987	3499	3425	3817	2333	2047	1731	1603	28,726	28,906	99%	
Virtual Attendance**	0	34	48	20	4	6	0	3	16	32	0	0	163	191	85%	
Self-Directed Participation	1669	1032	780	872	964	1396	2095	1258	1050	683	841	1611	14,251	18,486	77%	
Programming Attendance TOTAL	3194	4287	2327	2931	2955	4901	5520	5078	3399	2762	2572	3214	43,140	47,583	91%	

*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

Foundation Report to the Library Board

February 2026

The Library Foundation Board met on January 14, 2026 in the Library Gold Room.

- The Board reviewed a draft MOU between the Foundation and the Friends, drafted by the Friends & Foundation working group. There were no suggested changes to the text. The document will be presented to the Friends Board before any formal action is taken.
- Nominations committee presented four names for election to the board to replace four retiring members. New members elected to a 3-year term are Jose Gonzalez, Luis Islas, Christina Knetsch, and Kristi Moos. They will be seated on the board at the annual meeting in March. Retiring board members are Craig Chilcote, Leah Fisher, David Moeller and Matt Rosendahl.
- Fundraising continues for the Children's section with construction anticipated to begin in the fall of 2026.
- 2025 Foundation Year in Review was presented by Erin. She has agreed to make the same presentation to the Library Board. It was an extremely successful year.
- Matt made a presentation on library structures and funding. It also delved into the effects a regional library structure could have on the existing financing base. A presentation of this information will be on our Library Board agenda in some form at a meeting in the near future.
- The Foundation Board's next meeting will be Wednesday, March 11, 2026. It will be the annual meeting.

Prepared by Bill Arezzo

Friends of the Library Report

February 2026

The Friends of the Duluth Public Library Board meet on January 20, 2026.

- The Board discussed a draft of a memorandum of understanding (“MOU”) between the Duluth Library Foundation and the Friends of the Duluth Public Library which is intended to outline the duties of each organization and the areas where the two organizations can assist one another, but the MOU makes clear that the two organizations will remain independently operated. The MOU was well received.
- The Board also discussed the need for more individuals to take an active role in leadership positions within the Friends organization. The Friends have been without a treasurer for a month. There are not any candidates to fill the role, except for individuals who are already in other executive leadership positions. Some possible long-term solutions were discussed, but there was not a solution reached on how to fill the current vacancy in the treasurer position.

Prepared by Jose Gonzalez