

615 Phillips Blvd, Sauk City, WI 53583 • (608) 643-8346 • saukcitylibrary.org • info@saukcitylibrary.org

Library Board Meeting Monday, November 10, 2025, at 7:00 pm George Culver Community Library

Call to Order: The Board Meeting was called to order by Board Vice-President Michael Wipperfurth at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call: Lori Brattset, Shari Cook, Betty Kalscheur, Lynn Rausch, Julie Roelke, and Michael

Wipperfurth. Also present Library Director Kylee Bear. Absent: Julie Rogers

Addition/Changes to the Agenda: None

Public Comment: None

Consent Agenda* Approve/Deny

- Previous Meeting Minutes
- Financial Report
- Payment of Library Bills
- Payment of Trust Fund Bills

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion: Lori Brattset Second: Shari Cook Motion carried.

Reports:

Librarian's Report
 Star news article attached.

Business:

- Update on 2026 Library Budget
 The Village Board will be discussing it at their next meeting (Tuesday, 11/11). Public forum at the end of the month.
- Consider/Approve/Deny (C/A/D) Policy on Public Posting Displays
 Motion to approve the Policy as presented.

Motion: Lori Brattset Second: Betty Kalscheur Motion carried.

- C/A/D Holiday Party
 Shari to look into dates for the Holiday Party at Dorf Haus.
- Update on Book Return Interior Bin Adjustment
 The first attempt didn't work so Mike will be looking at a different approach this month.
- Discuss Trustee Essential 27: Trustee Orientation and Continuing Education
 Information on the August 2025 AnnualTrustee Training Week from SCLS is available at: www.wistrusteetraining.com/archive

Future Agenda Items:

2026 Budget Update
C/A/D Holiday Party
C/A/D Gift Certificates and Yearly Recognition Amounts
C/A/D 2026 Holiday Library Closure Schedule
Update on Book Return Interior Bin Adjustment
Policy and Associated Trustee Essential

Adjourn (Next regular meeting: December 8, 2025)

Motion to adjourn meeting at 8:04 pm.

Motion: Lynn Rausch Second: Lori Brattset Motion carried.

*All matters listed under the consent agenda are considered to be routine and will be acted on in one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless discussion is desired by a member of the board, in which case the item will be removed from the consent agenda and such item will be considered separately.

Any persons who has a qualifying disability as defined by the Americans With Disabilities Act that required the meeting or materials at the meeting to be in an accessible location or format must contact the Library at 608-643-8346, 615 Phillips Blvd, Sauk City, Wisconsin, at least 24 hours prior to the commencement of the meeting so that any necessary arrangements can be made to accommodate each request.

SAUK CITY - PRAIRIE DU SAC

George Culver Community Library seeks budget growth to meet community needs

Sauk City, Prairie du Sac work on their budgets throughout September

By Joe Block

The Sauk City Village Board learned from Administrator Heidi Koch at their September 9th meeting that Sauk County is planning a green space park-like area where the Wisconsin River Recreational Bridge will come ashore. Items may include a shade sail, benches, and a water fountain. A site plan will come before a future Plan Commission.

At their September 30th meeting there was a discussion regarding traffic concerns between Phillips Street and Mound Street. Several residents have expressed concerns about pedestrian safety and have requested a sidewalk in the area. The board considered sidewalks in either side. On the west side—the McDonald's side-space constraints and existing infrastructure make fitting a sidewalk problematic. On the east side, while adding a sidewalk is more feasible from a construction standpoint, the primary challenge is the elimination of street-paring, which has been a long-standing feature of the street for over 60 years. Interestingly, Board Member Amy Krumenauer noted she travels the section of roadway frequently and rarely sees pedestrians.

George Culver Community Library Director Kylee Bear presented the draft budget at the same meeting. Bear proposed a \$24, 230 increase to the budget, writing "we appreciate the Village's continued support, and acknowledge that we are requesting a large increase in

funding. We hope you will agree that continuing to invest in the Library will allow us to provide the programs and services our community has grown to expect, expand and diversify our services, and invest in the future growth and funding needs of the Library." She identified areas, like utilities, where the library had been underbudgeted historically, and also noted that funding since 2019 has been reduced. Citing a need to pay staff better and ease their heavy workload by adding a half time Youth Services Librarian, Bear provided further data showing the Library's high circulation numbers but low operational budget compared to neighboring libraries.

"It is imperative that the Village continues to invest in the Library, a resource that our community values so highly, and continue to bring our budget further in line with our peer libraries to ensure we are receiving our deserved portion of county reimbursements," wrote Bear in her budget report.

For a simple comparison, the Ruth Culver and George Culver Libraries have similar, if not nearly identical, circulation numbers, at 79,832 for Prairie du Sac and 77,811 for Sauk City in 2024. Yet Prairie du Sac's library has an operational budget of \$683,194, while Sauk City's is \$450,181, over \$200,000 lower in those

George Culver Community Library's budget relies on so-called County Reimbursements, where Sauk and the neighboring counties fund the library to compensate for users in their respective areas. These reimbursements are awarded based on the ratio of expenditures to circulation. What this means is the larger the library budget, the more reimbursement it receives from the County.

So Prairie du Sac and Sauk City's libraries both with nearly the same circulation, differ in County Reimbursement by nearly \$50,000, because Prairie Du Sac's has a higher operational budget.

Bear paid special attention to utilities, writing in her budget report: "There is a large increase in our Utilities budget for 2026, increasing to \$12,000 for the year. This is because we have actually been allocated well below to the actual cost for this expense in prior years. She continued, "In 2024, our total expense on utilities (electricity, water, sewage) was \$12,500, but our budget was only \$8,100. The Library is a designated heating and cooling location for the community, and so it is critical that we are appropriately accounting for the current energy and utility costs to be able to serve as this important community safe-haven."

Bear wrote that "an ongoing goal for the Library Board and Director is to invest in staff wages to be able to continue attracting and maintaining high quality staff to serve the residents of our community." She continued. "We have budgeted for a 5% increase for all staff members, to keep up with inRuth Culver seeks 3 percent increase

By Joe Block

Fall signals budget time in smalltown Wisconsin, as the elected officials of villages and townships tirelessly meet and hash out, in nearly the same way, a forecast for the municipality's next fiscal year. The budget process is a painstaking task. But without fail every fall each major department in a municipality will make its way before a committee to pitch their budget ask.

The Village of Prairie du Sac, to its credit, gives the public good warning and organizes these individual budget presentations to perfection. And so this year came Ruth Culver Community Library Director Lauren White's budget presentation at an October meeting before the Prairie du Sac board.

First, some facts about the library in terms of the most recent data available, 2024, 80,000 library visits, 48 percent of residents registered as users and a total of 4,226, nearly 80,000 items in circulation-50 percent of them children's items. The Library boasts 50,000 physical items in circulation and 200,000 electronic. That includes 90,000 audio materials. With 145,000 individual WiFi sessions and 5,000 individual uses of the computers, the library is an internet hub for the com-

For 2024, there were 327 programs total, 213 children's, 32 young adult, and 82 adult/other. Attendance of those programs totaled over 8,000, with 5,618 children attended, 409 young adults, and 2,090 adults.

The Library is requesting \$492,000 from the Village, a three percent increase over the previous year's ask. White said the increase could be attributed to wages and benefits for employees, and her report showed those items making up nearly \$24,000 of the \$32,000 increase. The Library's total operating budget is \$738,000, with County Reimbursement making up a projected \$241,000 of that. The Village is tasked with the remaining funds.

flation rates as well as moving beyond to close the gap between wage differences of Sauk City and Prairie du Sac library employees. Our library is well loved and heavily used, which often leads to our staff being stretched thin to offer the services our community desires and needs."

Noting how busy the library is, she wrote: "For the last two years, we have had the highest numbers in Sauk County for number of patron visits and number of physical circulations per Staff FTE [full-time equivalent] and these numbers are increasing in 2025. Our circulation is up by 6% and our visits are up by 15% year-to-date in 2025, while our staff FTE has only increased from 5.78 in 2024 to 5.88 in 2025."

When asked by a board member about using the Library's Memorial funds for operational expenses, Bear explained they cannot be used for that purpose, and doing so would negatively affect circulation numbers, which affect County Reimbursements.

Finally, throughout the past few meetings the Board has discussed their input to WisDOT for the parking and crosswalks at the Water Street 2027 project. Executive Director Tywana German conducted a public survey on the question of slanted versus parallel parking and found a mixed response, with no preference dominating. The board after much discussion ultimately decided on maintaining diagonal parking (although it was unclear how much say they had) while working to fine-time several pedestrian crossing bump outs. They felt the loss of a few spaces to ensure crossing safety was worth the sacrifice.

AT THE LIBRARY



GEORGE CULVER COMMUNITY LIBRARY

www.saukcitylibrary.org • 608-643-8346

The George Culver Community Library is located at 615 Phillips Blvd. and is from 9:00 a.m.- 8:00 p.m., Friday from 9:00 a.m.- 5:30 p.m. and Saturday from 9:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. The phone



number is 608-643-8346.

Stay up-to-date with all of open Monday - Thursday the library's events by liking our page on Facebook



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or Instagram at @SaukCity-Library or by checking our website at saukcitylibrary.

BOOKS & BEYOND: TODDLER STORYTIME Mondays at 10:00 a.m.

Toddlers and their caregivers are invited to join storytime for stories, songs, and quired. For Ages 1-2. 20-25 minutes.

activities. No registration re-

BOOKS & BEYOND: PRESCHOOL STORY-

See Library, continued on page 14

2025 LOCAL AUTHOR FAIR Friday, November 7 • 6:00pm Held at Black Earth History Center

1022 Blue Mounds St. • Black Earth An evening of readings by local authors, a Q&A session, refreshments and the opportunity to purchase books by our guest writers!

Tamara Dean
"Shelter and Storm"

David Stanfield editor
"A People's History of

Negril, Jamaica"

Dee Miller Dear Father



608-767-4905

Andrea Noien
"Lincoln's Counterfeiters"

Sue Berg "Driftless" & "Dirty

Christine Wenc

Funny Because It's True"

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