



High Plains Library District Friends & Foundation Board of Directors

Regular Session

February 2, 2026

District Support Services

Virtual Option: <https://meet.goto.com/842411693>

1. OPENING OF MEETING

- 1.1. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance
- 1.2. Approval of Agenda (Action)
- 1.3. Approval of November 3, 2025 Minutes (Action)
- 1.4. Public Comment

2. ITEMS FOR ACTION/INFORMATION

- 2.1. Nomination of Officers (Action)
- 2.2. Board Icebreaker (Information)
- 2.3. Nomination of Committees (Action)
- 2.4. Volunteer Background Check Policy (Action)
- 2.5. 2025 Friends & Foundation Summary (Information)

3. FINANCE REPORT Natalie Wertz-Finance Manager

4. FOUNDATION REPORT Niamh Mercer-Foundation Director

5. BOARD COMMENTS



High Plains Library District Friends & Foundation Board of Directors

Regular Session

November 3, 2025

LINC

1. OPENING OF MEETING

Meeting Opened At: 4:03PM

1.1. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Chair Wailes, Vice Chair Taylor, Director Evans, Director Epperson (arrived at 4:05pm)

Present via voice conference: Secretary/Treasurer Forland, Director Schnirel, Director Amodio

Excused: Director Starr

Staff present: Executive Director Matthew Hortt, Foundation Director Niamh Mercer, Lisa Varra (via voice conference), Carolyn Valencia, Rita Kadavy, Finance Manager Natalie Wertz, Development Coordinator Christina Hardman, Mallory Pillard (via voice conference), Rebecca Libersat (via voice conference), Amber Greene, Tripp Letterman (via voice conference), Melissa Beavers (via voice conference)

1.2. Approval of Agenda (Action)

Motion: Vice Chair Taylor

Second: Director Evans

Vote: Unanimously approved, 6;0

1.3. Approval of August 4, 2025 Minutes (Action)

Motion: Director Evans

Second: Vice Chair Taylor

Vote: Unanimously approved, 7;0

1.4. Public Comment

No public comment.

2. ITEMS FOR ACTION/INFORMATION

2.1. Board of Directors Icebreaker (Information)

The Board of Directors shared how they plan on supporting their library this giving season.

2.2. 2025 Board Designated Fund Reports (Information)

Staff presented on the results of their programs and events that were fully or partially funded by the Board Designated Fund from 2025.

2.3. 2026 Board Designated Fund Recommendations (Action)

Foundation Director Mercer presented the Finance Committee's recommendation of a total of \$33,023.75 in Board Designated Funds be designated HPLD programs in 2026.

Motion: Director Epperson

Second: Vice Chair Taylor

Vote: Unanimously approved, 7;0

2.4. 2026 HPLD Friends & Foundation Budget (Action)

Foundation Director Mercer gave overview of changes for the 2026 budget.

Motion: Director Evans

Second: Director Amodio

Vote: Unanimously approved, 7;0

2.5. HPLD Friends & Foundation Funding Priorities (Action)

Foundation Director Mercer presented the Strategic Planning Committee's recommendation for updated Funding Priorities.

Motion: Director Taylor

Second: Director Evans

Vote: Unanimously approved, 7;0

2.6. 2026 Meeting Schedule (Action)

Motion: Director Evans

Second: Secretary/Treasurer Forland

Vote: Unanimously approved, 7;0

At 6:00pm, Director Amanda Schnirel and HPLD Executive Director Dr. Matthew Hort left the meeting.

3. FINANCE REPORT Natalie Wertz-Finance Manager

Finance Manager Natalie Wertz provided an updated report on the Friends & Foundation's financial status to the Board.

4. FOUNDATION REPORT Niamh Mercer-Foundation Director

Foundation Director Niamh Mercer shared current Friends & Foundation news, including the success of the 2025 Innovation Luncheon and fundraising plans for next year.

5. BOARD COMMENTS

Secretary/Treasurer Forland stated she enjoyed being part of the Finance Committee and she is impressed with the new Funding Priorities.

Director Amodio was impressed with the staff presentations on their BDF programs and events. She appreciates the hard work that everyone puts into the Board Designated Fund process.

Director Evans stated how impressed he was with the Foundation's impact. He looks forward to assisting in planning the 2026 fundraiser.

Director Epperson expressed appreciation for HPLD staff.

Vice Chair Taylor expressed joy at the impact of the Board Designated Funds. She appreciated the work from the Strategic Planning Committee on the Funding Priorities and criteria.

Chair Wailes expressed appreciation on witnessing the impact of the Board Designated Fund process.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Vice Chair Taylor

Second: Director Epperson

Vote: Unanimously approved, 6:0

Meeting Closed At: 6:19PM

HPLD FRIENDS & FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMUNICATION

Meeting date: 2/2/26
Type of item: Action
Subject: Nomination of Chairs
Presented by: Niamh Mercer, Foundation Director
Recommendation: Staff recommend that the Board vote to approve the slate of nominees.

Background

Chair: Michael Wailes

Vice Chair: Lisa Taylor

Secretary/Treasurer: Matthew Starr

Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Board vote to approve the slate of nominees.

HPLD FRIENDS & FOUNDATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMUNICATION

Meeting date: 2/2/26
Type of item: Information
Subject: Board Ice Breaker
Presented by: Chair

Background

What books are on your TBR (to be read list) this year?

HPLD FRIENDS & FOUNDATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMUNICATION

Meeting date: 2/2/26
Type of item: Action
Subject: Nomination of Committees
Presented by: Chair
Recommendation: Staff recommend that the Board vote to approve the slate of nominees.

Background

2026 Committee Nominations

- Bylaws and Policy: Michael Wailes and Clark Evans
- Finance: Julie Forland, Dr. Sara Amodio,
- Strategic Planning: Matthew Starr, Dr. Sara Amodio, Clark Evans
- Friends: Lisa Taylor, Annie Epperson, Mandy Schnirel
- Nomination/Selection: Michael Wailes and Lisa Taylor

Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Board vote to approve the slate of nominees.

HPLD FRIENDS & FOUNDATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMUNICATION

Meeting date: 2/2/26
Type of item: Action
Subject: Volunteer Background Check Policy
Presented by: Chair
Recommendation: Staff recommend that the Board vote to approve the policy.

Background

Current policy requires that background checks are only completed if the volunteer position requires the applicant to work alone with an at-risk population. As a result, none of our volunteers have received background checks. This change is occurring to align with best practices, decrease liability and protect staff, patrons and volunteers. Recent State Library standards and Colorado Legislation (SB21-088) also necessitate this change.

This policy has been reviewed by legal counsel and the bylaws and policies committee.

Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Board vote to approve the policy.



DRAFT: Volunteer Background Check Policy

Summary:

High Plains Library District Friends & Foundation (the Foundation) is concerned about the safety of its volunteers while on duty (whether on or off premises), the safety of its constituents (staff, community, etc.) and the protection of its assets and reputation. To reduce these risks, prospective and, as applicable, current volunteers of the Foundation will undergo a criminal background check that complies with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA). Volunteers are treated as applicants under the FCRA though their credit score will not be impacted by their background check.

This policy sets forth guidelines for performing such background screens. The Foundation has selected an approved background screening provider. All facilities and affiliates are required to use this approved provider for background screens and must comply with the provisions of this policy.

Scope:

This policy applies to all prospective and current volunteers

Guidelines:

Applicants and current volunteers will be informed that selection and retention are subject to meeting the requirements of a background screen. In addition, all applicants will be required to complete a Disclosure and Authorization form, which requests information that the approved background investigation provider requires to conduct the background screen. **Applicants must have a Social Security number to complete and pass the required background check.** Applicants and current volunteers may pay for their background check through the Foundation's approved screening provider if they would like to support the Foundation. However, this is not required. The Foundation will pay for all background checks that applicants and current volunteers elect not to pay for.

Access:

Volunteer background checks will be conducted by the Foundation's approved screening provider. Private information provided for the background check will not be stored by the Foundation or High Plains Library District (District). Foundation and District Staff will only have access to a summary of the background check indicating if the applicant passed or did not pass sections of the background check.

Checks to Be Conducted:

The following reports will be obtained for time periods permitted by law for a background screen:

Social Security Trace (SS Trace)

- a) A Social Security Trace uses the volunteer-provided social security number to find all reported address information for an individual over the last 7 years. The trace also finds all names used by the volunteer – the given name as well as any alias/maiden names used. The information returned from the trace is then used to determine the name/court of record combinations that will be searched. Using a Social Security Trace as part of the search package maximizes chances of finding all pertinent criminal history for an individual. The Social Security Trace is not to be used directly to disqualify applicants from volunteering. It is solely a resource to gather information.

County/State Residence Criminal Search (Current)

- a) The address entered during the background check order process is used to determine the county and state of residence (U.S.) for the volunteer. The search should look for any reported criminal history for the volunteer in that county or state at the primary source of information (the state or county courthouse).

County/State Search(es) – 7 Years of Address History

- a) All counties/states in which the volunteer has lived in the last 7 years should be identified. Those counties/states should be searched at the primary source of information (the state or county courthouse) using the name in question and other personally identifiable information.

Nationwide Criminal History Search with Validation

- a) A Nationwide Criminal History search uses the full name and date of birth provided by the volunteer during the order process to search over 900 criminal information data sources from all 50 states. Although this sounds comprehensive, the quality and breadth of data varies by state, and is limited for over 2/3 of the nation's states (defined by limited data sources or stale information updated infrequently). Still, it's a valuable locator tool that helps identify areas outside of address history where criminal history might have occurred – areas where the volunteer has worked, travelled or played. Potential matches found in the Nationwide Criminal History search should always be validated at the primary source of information (county or state courthouses) for criminal history records in compliance with the FCRA.

National 50 State Sex Offender Registry Search (Dru Sjodin/NSOPW)

- a) The National 50 State Sex Offender Registry Search / National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) is a comprehensive 50-state sex offender search – it is the only up-to-date, comprehensive source of sex offender information. While the website is maintained by the U.S. Department of Justice, it is the responsibility of each jurisdiction in the United States to keep sex offender information for their area accurate, up-to-date, and accessible by the NSOPW.

Alias/Maiden Name Search

- a) An alias or maiden name is any name an individual has used at another time, in another place, or in another circumstance, for any reason. An alias/maiden name search should search those names provided during the screening order process as well as those names uncovered through an SSN Trace. An alias/maiden name search should include the National 50 State Sex Offender Registry Search (Dru Sjodin/NSOPW), the volunteer's current county/state of address, and every county/state identified through the last 7 years' address history for each alias and maiden name. Separate searches must be conducted for each of these names because, in the eyes of the courthouse, each name represents a unique individual.

Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) Watch List Search

- a) Also known as the Government Watchlist Search, the Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) search lists those individuals identified as threatening to or ineligible to conduct business with the U.S. Federal Government. It includes Specially Designated Nationals (SDNs) – those individuals and companies associated with specific countries the U.S. considers dangerous or does not want to have dealings with, and those known to be affiliated with terrorism or drug trafficking. It also includes Foreign Sanctions Evaders (FSEs) – individuals who have or have tried to violate U.S. sanctions on various countries. This list includes Iran, Syria, Cuba, Ukraine, and Russia.

Office of the Inspector General (OIG) / GSA

- a) The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) List of Excluded Individuals/Entities (LEIE) / General Services Administration (GSA) searches are used (1) to check individuals applying for volunteer roles in the healthcare sector for suspension, debarment or fraud using the System for Award Management maintained by the GSA, (2) to determine if an applicant is excluded from participation in Medicare, Medicaid, and other Federal health care programs using information provided by the Office of the Inspector General US Department of Health and Human Services.

Motor Vehicle Record Check

- a) A Motor Vehicle Record Check returns driving record information – status of license, accidents, convictions, violations, traffic conviction points, DUIs – for both Commercial and Non- Commercial Driver Licenses. Commercial Driver License reports will contain additional information such as Medical Certificate Information. Reporting varies by state, but typically searches up to the past 3 years for minor offenses and up to the past 5 years for major offenses. Most states report out of state convictions for major offenses. Most states do not report out of state accidents.

Disqualification Criteria:

Staff should review the report and determine if any negative information has a direct connection with an applicant's ability to fulfill the volunteer's duties with competence and integrity, or that might impact safety. Matters that might raise a concern include but are not limited to the following:

- a) Criminal History Search – A criminal conviction will not automatically prohibit an individual from volunteering at the Foundation, but will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. In some cases, statutes dictate the types of offenses that disqualify applicants from volunteering with certain organizations or in certain positions. Those lists will be referenced as well by the Foundation when making a decision regarding volunteer eligibility.

Convictions for the following categories of crimes are generally considered role-related and, therefore, may be considered in making decisions:

- a) Any recent felony conviction—these serious crimes are usually defined by statutory guidelines, and in general, are punishable by more than 1-year incarceration.
 - a. Theft – including burglary, embezzlement, forgery, fraud.
 - b. Violent crimes – including murder, robbery, assault, battery.
 - c. Drug-related crimes – including use, sale, possession, distribution, or manufacture of illegal drugs.
 - d. Sex offenses – including rape and sexual assault.
 - e. Serious motor vehicle offenses – includes driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- b) Arrest information – if while a volunteer of the Foundation, the volunteer did not disclose an arrest to the Foundation within 48 hours pursuant to policy and applicable state law did not protect the arrest from disclosure, failure to disclose is grounds for termination.

Arrests that are disclosed or that are revealed by a search (absent an

omission) will not necessarily result in termination of volunteer status but will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Arrests that are not pending and did not result in conviction should not be considered. Arrests pending disposition that are role-related may be considered subject to state law.

Prior to determining eligibility, the Foundation will validate, using approved identification (e.g. Driver's license), that the background check was run using the same correct information.

Equal Opportunity

The Foundation will adhere to all equal opportunity laws. When reviewing any criminal record information that appears on a background check, the organization shall factor in any known factors relating to:

- a) The facts and circumstances surrounding the offense.
- b) The number of offenses for which the individual was convicted.
- c) The age of the individual at the time of conviction or release from prison.
- d) Evidence that the individual has performed the same type of work, post-conviction, with the same or a different organization, without incidents of criminal conduct.
- e) Any efforts of the application towards rehabilitation.
- f) Employment or character references obtained regarding the individual's fitness for the particular position.

HPLD FRIENDS & FOUNDATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMUNICATION

Meeting date: 2/2/26
Type of item: Information
Subject: 2025 F&F Summary
Presented by: Niamh Mercer

Background

The annual Friends & Foundation summary is an unaudited review of the previous year. This internal document is meant to provide a review of work completed in the previous year.

2025 HPLD Friends & Foundation Summary

An internal summary of the HPLD Friends & Foundation's work during the prior year.
2025 financial data has not been audited.

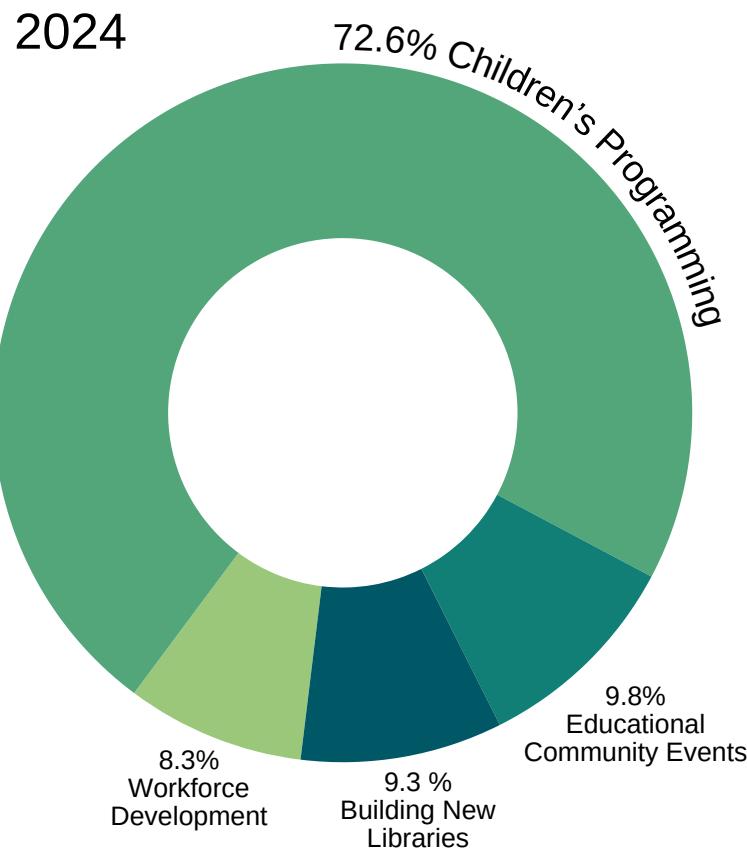
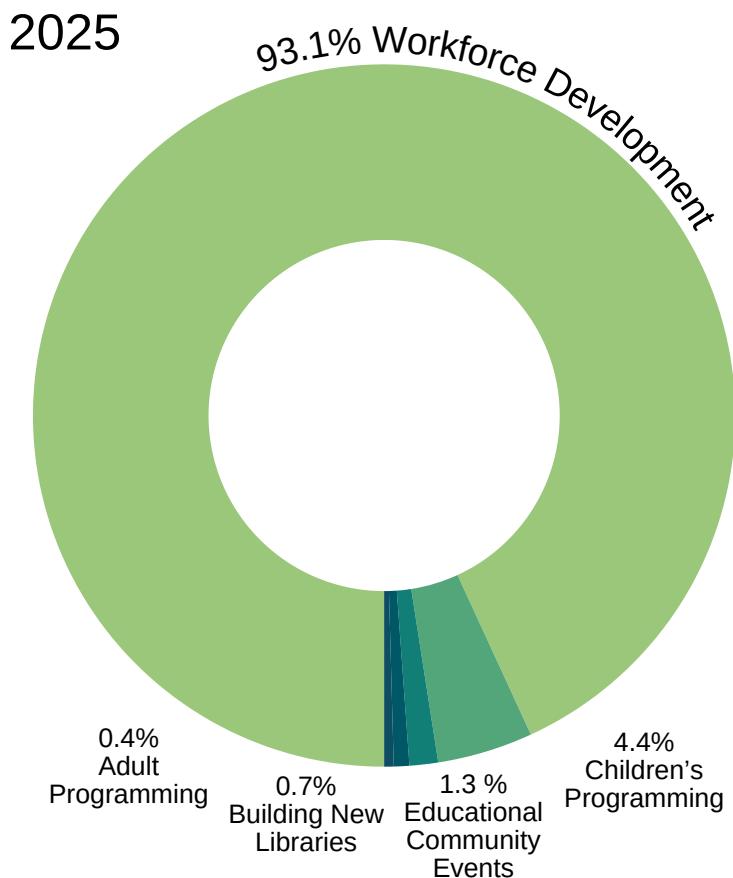
Financial Summary

	Revenue	Expenses	Endowment Assets
2025	\$453,090	\$333,080	\$1,260,811
2024	\$180,417	\$92,054	\$793,640
2023	\$317,792	\$206,940	\$710,826

Our mission is to build a community of library lovers through increased collaboration, philanthropy, volunteer engagement, awareness and advocacy for the libraries for the High Plains Library District.

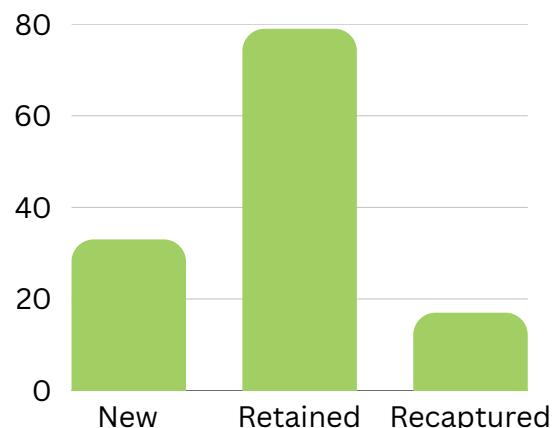


Our Impact



Donor Database

	Records	Gifts Given	Average Gift
2025	2,673	266	\$586
2024	2,623	224	\$99
2023	2,553	369	\$376

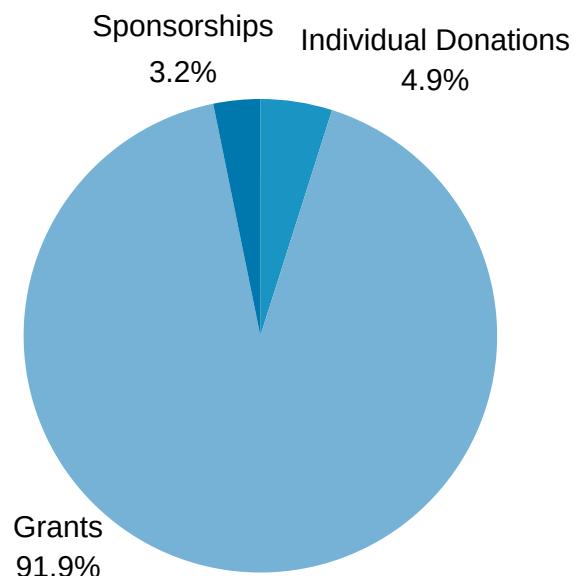


Funding Diversification

Sponsorships
\$20,250

Individual Donations
\$31,036

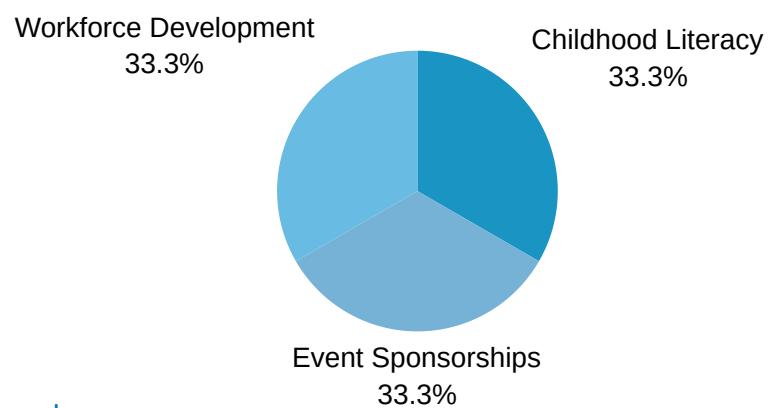
Grants*
\$582,472



Grants

	Funds Granted	Applied
2025	\$846,190	\$847,690
2024	\$32,882	\$48,962
2023	\$106,765	\$109,365

Granted Area of Funding

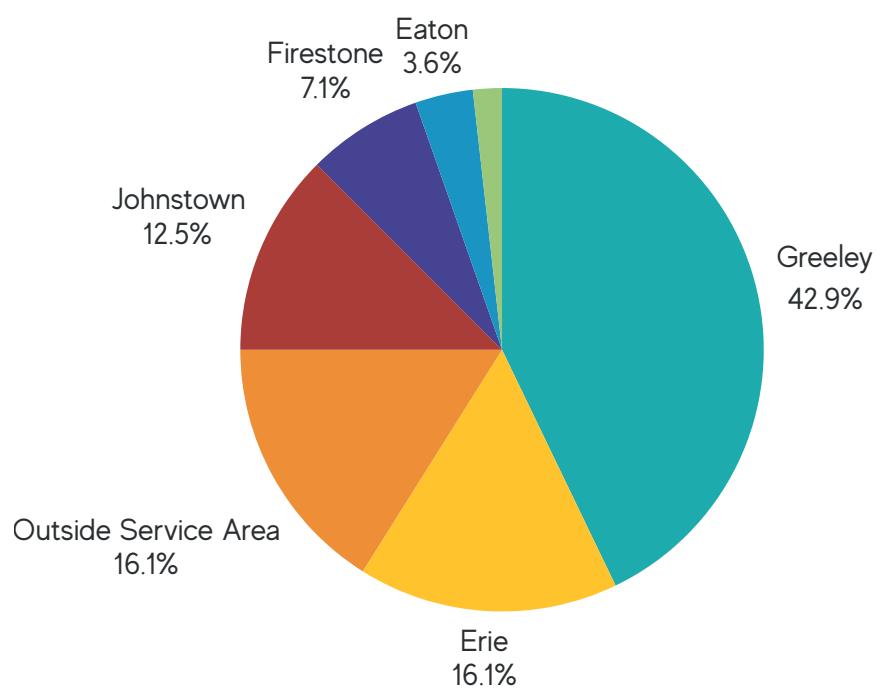


*Remaining granted funds will be dispersed in 2026.

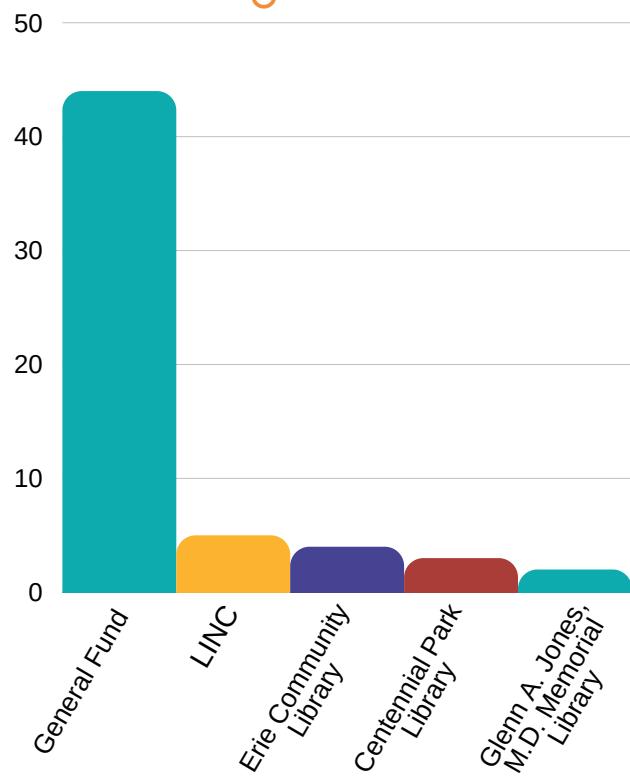
Colorado Gives Day Wrap Up

	Number of Gifts	Net Income	Matching Fund	Average Gift
2025	65	\$11,548.28	\$232.28	\$177.67
2024	52	\$5,659.17	\$118.17	\$98.64
2023	51	\$5,167.22	\$130.24	\$101.31

Gifts by Location



Libraries with Most Designated Gifts



	New Donors	Recurring Donors	Increased Gifts	Recaptured Donors
2025	9	28	19	3
2024	13	62	7	
2023	15	24	10	

End of Year Campaign

Employee Giving



Vacation Donation

\$6,831.27



Paycheck Donations

\$240



Gifts Received

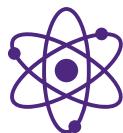
\$8,141.21

Total Revenue

\$15,212.48

Fundraising Overview*

*Gross income used.



Innovation Luncheon

\$22,271



Friends Drive

\$1,855.50



Colorado Gives Day Campaign

\$11,548



Individual Donations

\$61,781



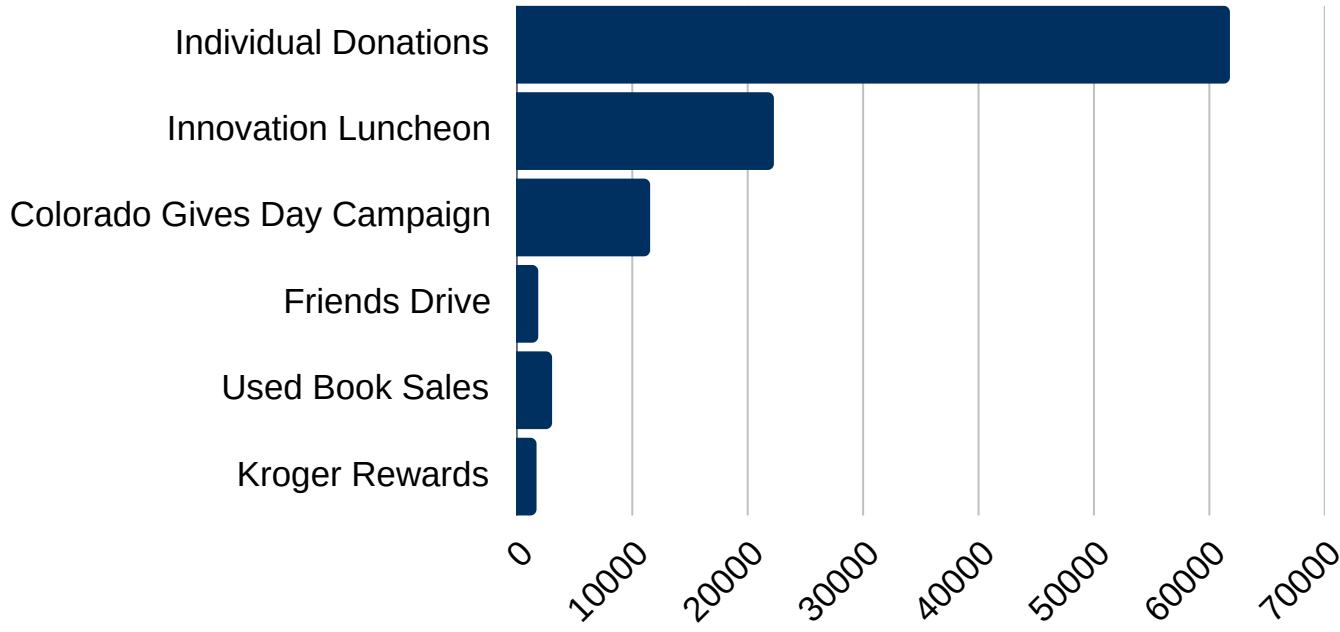
Used Book Sales

\$3,053



Kroger Rewards

\$1,706



Innovation Luncheon

	Gross Income	Expenses	Net Income
2025	\$20,125.00	\$5,521.72	\$14,603.28
2024	\$19,018.73	\$4,814.48	\$14,204.25
2023	\$16,531.63	\$8,549.80	\$7,981.83

2025 Income

Sponsorships

\$18,000

2024 Income

Sponsorships

\$17,424

2023 Income

Sponsorships

\$14,164

Individual Tickets

\$1,560

Individual Tickets

\$1,229

Individual Tickets

\$1,718

Donations

\$565

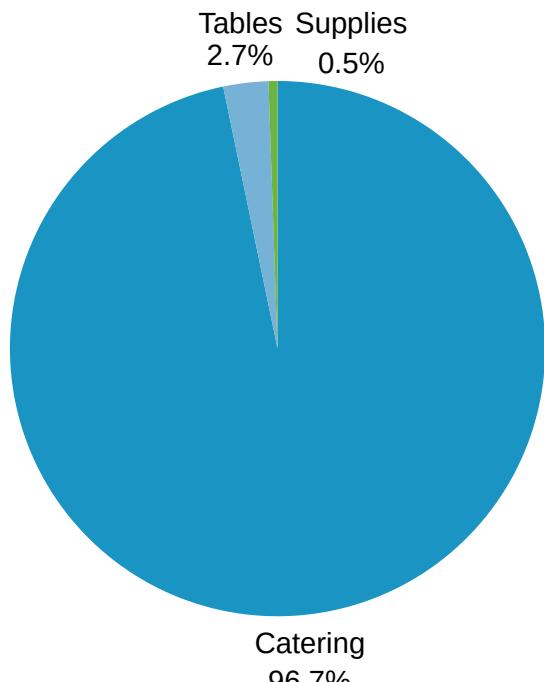
Donations

\$365

Donations

\$650

2025 Expenses



Catering

\$5,341.72

Tables

\$150

Supplies

\$30

District Volunteers



Total Library Volunteers

54



Adult Volunteers



Number of Volunteer Sites

6



Total Hours

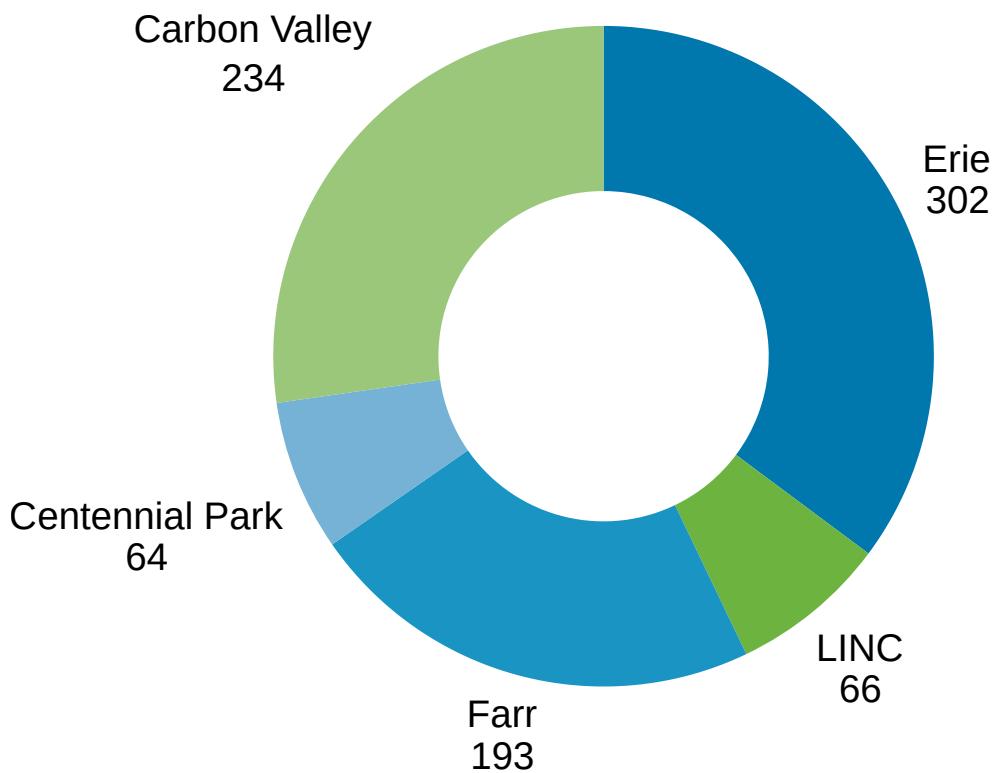
859.24



Teen Volunteers

19

Amount of Hours per Branch



Board Participation

	Board Giving	New & Revised Policies	New Members	Attendance			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2025	\$5,944	0	0	75%	62.5%	75%	87.5%
2024	\$1,315	3	0	71.4%	71.4%	83.3	66.6%
2023	\$750	0	1	100%	85%	100%	85%

Board Designated Funds Total designations: \$29,823.75*

District Programs

\$2,500	
Adults Read On	
Lisa Varra	
\$700	
Community Seed Exchange	
Lisa Varra	
\$4,746	
1,000 Books Before Kindergarten	
Audrey Drake	
\$2,490	
Preserving Community History: Digitizing the Greeley Tribune	
Cindy Welsh	

District Events

\$4,500	
Summer Reading Adventure	
Mallory Pillard	
\$2,500	
YES!fest Sponsorship	
Melissa Beavers	
\$5,000	
READCON	
Rita Kadavay	

District Capital

\$3,387.75	
Nature Play Zone	
Jana Teal	
\$4,000	
Erie Community Library	
Kristin Jardien	

*Funds were dispersed in 2025 for a 2026 spend out.

HIGH PLAINS LIBRARY DISTRICT FOUNDATION
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY
BUDGET TO ACTUAL

For the Period Ended December 31, 2025

75.0%

prepared January 9, 2026

Note: Conditional formatting in the % of YTD Budget and % of Annual Budget is on a red to green scale for revenues and green to red scale for expenses. Green is favorable variance. Red is an unfavorable variance.

	Jan. - Dec.	Jan. - Dec.	Variance	% of	YTD	Annual	Variance	% of
	Actual	Budget	Favorable (Unfavorable)	YTD Budget			Favorable (Unfavorable)	Annual Budget
REVENUES								
Donations - Restricted	11,751	15,000	(3,249)	78%	11,751	15,000	(3,249)	78%
Donations - Unrestricted	46,809	16,000	30,809	293%	46,809	16,000	30,809	293%
Donations - Capital Campaign	-	-	-	#DIV/0!	-	-	-	#DIV/0!
Earnings on investments	105,935	25,000	80,935	424%	105,935	25,000	80,935	424%
Special Events Income	32,610	25,000	7,610	130%	32,610	25,000	7,610	130%
Grant revenue	252,933	27,000	225,933	937%	252,933	27,000	225,933	937%
Other income	3,053	6,000	(2,947)	51%	3,053	6,000	(2,947)	51%
Total revenues	453,091	114,000	339,091	397%	453,091	114,000	339,091	397%
EXPENSES								
Professional Fees	-	5,500	5,500	0%	-	5,500	5,500	0%
Contract Services	17,424	33,000	15,576	53%	17,424	33,000	15,576	53%
Special Events Expenses	4,342	15,150	10,808	29%	4,342	15,150	10,808	29%
Operations	93	600	507	16%	93	600	507	16%
HPLD Foundation Grants	311,222	41,000	(270,222)	759%	311,222	41,000	(270,222)	759%
Travel and Meetings	-	1,750	1,750	0%	-	1,750	1,750	0%
Capital Campaign	-	-	-	#DIV/0!	-	-	-	#DIV/0!
Total expenses	333,081	97,000	(236,081)	343%	333,081	97,000	(236,081)	343%
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	120,010	17,000	103,010		120,010	17,000	103,010	

Statement of Activity
High Plains Library District Foundation
January-December, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Income	
43400 Donations	11,751.19
43450 Restricted Donations	39,977.89
43451 UnRestricted Donations	6,831.27
43452 Vacation Donations	\$58,560.35
Total for 43400 Donations	\$58,560.35
47000 Sales	3,052.59
47008 Book Sales - Foundation	\$3,052.59
Total for 47000 Sales	\$3,052.59
47200 Special Events Income	21,147.20
47210 LINC Event	11,462.27
47250 Colorado Gives Day	\$32,609.47
Total for 47200 Special Events Income	\$32,609.47
47400 Grants	252,933.28
47401 Operating	\$252,933.28
Total for 47400 Grants	\$252,933.28
47500 Earnings on Investments	42,049.29
47600 Interest and Dividend Income	63,885.80
Total for Income	\$453,090.78
Gross Profit	\$453,090.78
Expenses	
62100 Contract Services	15,383.84
62110 Accounting Fees	1,040.00
62140 Legal Fees	1,000.00
62150 Outside Contract Services	\$17,423.84
Total for 62100 Contract Services	\$17,423.84
62800 Special Events Expense	4,341.72
62892 LINC Event	\$4,341.72
Total for 62800 Special Events Expense	\$4,341.72
65000 Operations	82.67
65040 Supplies	10.00
65050 Bank Charges	\$92.67
Total for 65000 Operations	\$92.67
65400 HPLD Foundation Grants	311,222.03
Total for Expenses	\$333,080.26
Net Operating Income	\$120,010.52
Net Other Income	
Net Income	\$120,010.52

Statement of Financial Position
High Plains Library District Foundation
As of December 31, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Assets	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
10000 FirstBank	2,000.00
11000 Investments	
11001 Stifel Nicolaus	642,832.71
11002 Colotrust	615,978.78
Total for 11000 Investments	\$1,258,811.49
Total for Bank Accounts	\$1,260,811.49
Accounts Receivable	
Other Current Assets	
Total for Current Assets	\$1,260,811.49
Total for Assets	\$1,260,811.49
Liabilities and Equity	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Other Current Liabilities	
21000 UnEarned Revenue	347,160.66
Total for Other Current Liabilities	\$347,160.66
Total for Current Liabilities	\$347,160.66
Total for Liabilities	\$347,160.66
Equity	
30000 Opening Balance Equity	703,277.78
32000 Unrestricted Net Assets	90,362.53
Net Income	120,010.52
Total for Equity	\$913,650.83
Total for Liabilities and Equity	\$1,260,811.49