

## MINUTES

### **Kansas City Public Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting – November 19, 2024**

The Board of Trustees of the Kansas City Public Library, pursuant to official notification, met Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. at the Central Library, 14 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, Missouri.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pete Browne, President  
Reid Day  
Laura Dominik  
Claudia Oñate Greim  
Susan Kenney  
Michelle Smirnova  
Elizabeth Warwick  
India Williams

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Jonathan Kemper

STAFF PRESENT: Abby Yellman, Chief Executive  
Teresa Bolton, Director of Central Library Operations  
Melissa Carle, Director of Information Systems  
Courtney Christensen, Philanthropy Department Administrator and  
Project Specialist  
Carrie Coogan, Deputy Director of Public Affairs and Community  
Engagement  
Trina Duncan, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer  
Misty Eytcheson, Public Affairs Director  
Crystal Faris, Deputy Director of Youth and Family Engagement  
Kim Gile, Branch Services and Engagement Director  
Sharla Harris, Administrative Officer  
Joel Jones, Deputy Director of Library Services  
Heather Pedersen, Executive Assistant / Manager of Executive Services  
Deborah Stoppello, Director of Library Collections  
\* Full list of staff in attendance available by request

Browne called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m.

**Motion by Dominik to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2024, Regular Board Meeting.  
Second by Smirnova. Approved unanimously.**

(Note: As a matter of Board convention, the Chair votes only when his/her vote would affect the outcome of the vote. In all "recorded" votes, the vote for the Chair appears only when it has actually been cast and when it has had an effect on the disposition of the motion. Notations of "approved unanimously" mean all members, other than the Chair, voting affirmatively.)

**Request by Dominik to consider the Consent Agenda.**

**Motion by Dominik to consider items 3.1 and 3.2 separately.**

Discussing the authorization of expenditures (LBM 4726), Yellman highlighted two items: the payment to Isom Collective for a desk at Waldo, teen furniture at Southeast, and signage at Central; and a \$63,370.00 payment for replacement and installation of two HVAC units at Southeast.

Discussing the financial reports (LBM 4727), Yellman gave a brief overview of the financial statements. The current year property tax revenue will not be received until December, at which point we will start to know whether our projections will be confirmed. Salary and benefits expenses are trending over budget, due to timing and some significant payouts related to retirements, and staff will continue to closely monitor.

Yellman shared that the new Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Qun Fang, will begin on December 16. Siragusa has been serving as part-time (CFO) and will stay on for a while to support the transition. Yellman expressed gratitude to Siragusa for her contributions as acting CFO.

**Motion by Dominik to approve the Consent Agenda items before the Board. Second by Day. Approved unanimously by the voting Board members, Oñate Greim recused herself from the vote for LBM 4726.** The following items were approved as part of the Consent Agenda:

**Move approval of the recommendation of the Chief Executive to authorize the following expenditures for October 2024: Payroll (10/3/24 net cash \$384,667 plus taxes \$134,606), (10/17/24 net cash \$383,668 plus taxes \$133,462), and (10/31/24 net cash \$525,057 plus taxes \$223,935) total amount of \$1,785,395; General Expense Payments including Checks (#15110-15416) in the amount of \$1,650,141. (LBM 4726)**

**Move approval of the recommendation of the Chief Executive to accept the attached financial reports for October 2024. (LBM 4727)**

Browne introduced Bolton, who presented an overview of the Seed Library. Highlights included:

- The Seed Library celebrated its 10th anniversary of service in 2024.
- Having grown significantly, the entire meeting room is now dedicated Seed Library space with a large collection of seeds, books on homesteading and gardening (in English and Spanish), increased programming, and strong buy-in from staff throughout the system.
- Seeds and supplies are also available through the Bookmobile and kits at lobby stops.
- Staff promote the Seed Library to patrons and current and potential partners, giving out copies of the Missouri Native Plants coloring book (funded by IMLS Environmental Literacy Grant).
- Ruiz has outdoor space dedicated to a native wild-flower garden, which is maintained by volunteers and used as demonstration and as a place to stay and enjoy.
- The next steps involve creating more system-wide programming to offer additional opportunities for staff and public engagement while reducing duplication.

Discussing the Director's Report (LBM 4728), Yellman introduced Coogan, who provided highlights of the 2024 Heartland Book Festival:

- Total door count for the Festival was 1,806 attendees
- Livestream views of the events has been strong, current numbers: Stacey Abrams at 477, Sarah Chapelle at 295, and Tommy Orange & Deborah Taffa at 367
- Survey responses showed overall ratings of 70.7% as excellent, 24.4% as good, and 4.9% as neutral; and 92% said they learned something new

Browne expressed gratitude to Coogan for her efforts in establishing the Heartland Book Festival, Maya

Angelou Book Award, and Writers for Readers programs.

Coogan invited everyone to attend the Writers for Readers event, featuring author Gillian Flynn, at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 21 at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Noting the significant role of the Philanthropy Department in securing funding and that many fundraising efforts require collective organizational effort, Yellman announced that the Library received a \$250,000 Capacity Building Grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation for our 2025 strategic planning process. The Library will focus on the Strategic Planning process before completing the Comprehensive Facilities Plan so allow time include robust community engagement as part of identified strategic priorities can inform the Facilities Plan. It takes time to critical for it to in the strategic planning process. Yellman noted that the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Strategic Plan is scheduled to be issued in January 2025, followed by the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the Facilities Plan in February 2025.

Browne noted that the staff will hire a consultant for the Strategic Plan and another for a Comprehensive Facilities review, with both selections to be presented to the Board for approval.

Yellman updated the Board on her recent meetings and activities, including meeting with City Manager, Brian Platt and attending the Urban Libraries Council Annual Forum in Philadelphia.

Yellman thanked the three finalists for the Chief Operating Officer (COO) position. No offers have been made and the Library plans to reopen the interview process after the first of the year.

**Motion by Dominik to adjourn. Second by Williams. Approved unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:44 p.m.

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Secretary

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Date