

MINUTES

**Kansas City Public Library Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting – October 15, 2024**

The Board of Trustees of the Kansas City Public Library, pursuant to official notification, met Tuesday, October 15, 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  
Jonathan Kemper  
Susan Kenney  
Michelle Smirnova  
India Williams

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Elizabeth Warwick

STAFF PRESENT: Abby Yellman, Chief Executive  
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  
Jami Hrenchir, Senior Director of Human Relations & Employee  
Experience / Chief People Officer  
Joel Jones, Deputy Director of Library Services  
Heather Pedersen, Executive Assistant / Manager of Executive Services  
Margaret Perkins-McGuinness, Deputy Director for Philanthropy  
Deborah Stoppello, Director of Library Collections  
Kaite Stover, Director of Reader's Services  
\* Full list of staff in attendance available by request

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Foley

Browne called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

**Motion by Dominik to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2024, Regular Board Meeting.  
Second by Day. 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 4.1 and 4.2 separately.**

Discussing the authorization of expenditures (LBM 4720), Yellman noted four items: the payment for the annual audit, the second payment to Penguin Random House LLC for the Tommy Orange speaker fee, the second payment for the Margaret Atwood event, and the \$50,050 payment for the building assessment. Additionally, Yellman noted that installation of new front doors on the Bluford Branch has been completed.

Discussing the financial reports (LBM 4721), Yellman provided a brief overview of the Financial Statements, noting that it is too early to observe any significant trends and that there are no concerns regarding revenue and expenditures.

**Motion by Dominik to approve the Consent Agenda items before the Board. Second by Reid. Approved unanimously.** 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 September 2024: Payroll (09/5/24 net cash \$393,870 plus taxes \$141,545) and (09/19/24 net cash \$387,389 plus taxes \$135,838) total amount of \$1,058,642; General Expense Payments including Checks (#14858-15109), in the amount of \$1,523,931. (LBM 4720)**

**Move approval of the recommendation of the Chief Executive to accept the attached financial reports for August 2024. (LBM 4721)**

Discussing the contract with Blue Cross Blue Shield (LBM 4722), Yellman introduced Foley, who gave an overview of the benefits review process and outlined the factors that led the Employee Benefits Committee to recommend staying with Blue Cross Blue Shield. In addition to the current plans, which will see a 16.5% increase in premiums, the new contract would offer two new plan options, having the same benefits under a narrower network and with reduced costs, which would be at a 7.07% increase. Foley noted that the Library's contribution to the premiums covers about 82% of the total cost. The Library will provide benefits information sessions at multiple locations so that staff are able to learn about the plans and ask questions to help them decide which plan option works best for them.

**Motion by Dominik to approve the Chief Executive to contract with Blue Cross Blue Shield Kansas City (BCBSKC) for employee health insurance at a total cost of approximately \$1,953,169 for plan year January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025. Second by Smirnova. Approved unanimously. (LBM 4722)**

Discussing the contract with Delta Dental (LBM 4723), Yellman reported that there was no increase in the cost of dental insurance.

**Motion by Dominik to approve the Chief Executive to contract with Delta Dental for dental insurance at a total cost of approximately \$85,892 for plan year January 1, 2024-December 31, 2024. Second by Day. Approved unanimously (LBM 4723)**

Discussing the Contract with Evergreen Flooring (LBM 4724), Yellman noted that three bids were received. Evergreen, a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) vendor, was selected due to offering the lowest price and best value. Yellman also noted that the carpeting is part of the budget for a larger

refresh project at Waldo which should be finished by the end of the year.

**Motion by Dominik to approve the Chief Executive to contract with Evergreen Flooring for the Purchase and Installation of Carpet at the Waldo Branch. Second by Smirnova.**

**Approved unanimously. (LBM 4724)**

Faris and Stover shared highlights from the 2024 – Summer Reading and Learning Program, including:

- Total registrations were 15,060, a 16% increase in participation compared to 2023
- Southeast and Ruiz saw the largest increase in participation
- A total of 31,805 children and 3,201 teens attended programs
- The Adult Kick-off event was very successful
- Total of 60 interns and members of team digital participated in learning-based projects
- The Association for Library Services to Children (ALSC) has asked Kiesha Collins and Marcus Brown to record their presentation from the MLA Conference, which had the highest ratings from participants, so that it can become part of their knowledge bank.
- After the Summer VISTA Program was sunset, Philanthropy secured funding for five part-time summer staff members who worked with Outreach to grow the Pop in at the park series, allowing the sessions to include programs and sack lunches every day.

Discussing the Director’s Report (LBM 4725), Yellman shared updates on recent community meetings, including the Kansas City Police Department, Chief Graves, Urban Libraries Council CEO Brooks Rainwater, the LINC meeting, and a meeting of the Kansas City Metro Area Library Directors. She attended the Missouri Library Association Annual Conference held here in Kansas City. Yellman has meetings scheduled with Kristin Smithson and Dr. DeAngela Burns-Wallace of the Kauffman Foundation, Deputy City Manager Dr. Kimiko Black Gilmore, and Gwen Grant of the Urban League of Greater Kansas City.

Yellman shared three big priorities for 2025:

- Facilities Comprehensive Plan
- Organization Health and Culture
- Strategic Plan

Yellman shared that an offer has been extended for the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) position, with the anticipated start date in early December 2024. The Library is in the final stages of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) search.

Noting the recent article in the *KC Star* about the challenges in the Prospect Corridor, Kemper suggested that the Library provide as much notice as possible to the Trustees when there are notable articles or other media pieces about the Library.

Kemper recommended the Library and Board consider planning a Board Retreat soon to discuss strategic priorities and setting a regular process of holding Board development retreats. Yellman agreed regarding the importance of input and buy-in from stakeholders of all levels to the strategic planning process. She noted that having the consultant for the Comprehensive Plan in place is key to helping the Library walk through the strategic process.

Browne congratulated the Public Affairs and Philanthropy teams for their outstanding work in organizing the successful Heartland Bookfest and developing the invaluable partnership with Missouri Humanities.

Coogan shared information about upcoming events, noting that the October 24<sup>th</sup> event with Sharon McMahon has been moved to Unity Temple on the Plaza since the event already passed 400 registrations.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date