

MINUTES

Kansas City Public Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting – May 20, 2025

The Board of Trustees of the Kansas City Public Library, pursuant to official notification, met Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. at the Central Branch, Annex Board Room, 14 West 10th Street, Kansas City, Missouri.

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

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Susan Kenney
Jonathan Kemper

STAFF PRESENT: Abby Yellman, Chief Executive
Candice Butler-Titus, Executive Services Senior Manager
Courtney Christensen, Philanthropy, Administrator / Project Specialist
Carrie Coogan, Deputy Director for Public Affairs & Community Engagement
Margaret Perkins-McGuinness, Deputy Director for Philanthropy
Trina Duncan, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer
Qun Fang, Senior Director of Finance / Chief Finance Officer
Crystal Faris, Deputy Director of Youth and Family Engagement
Pritha Hariharan / Assistant Director / Chief Operating Officer
Sharla Harris, Administrative Officer
Joel Jones, Deputy Director of Library Services
Kaite Stover, Director of Reader's Services
* Full list of staff in attendance available by request

Browne called the meeting to order at 4:38 p.m.

Motion by Dominik to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2025, 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 of 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 4762), Yellman noted that there were no items to highlight and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Discussing the financial reports (LBM 4763), Yellman invited Fang to discuss the financial reports for April. Fang reported that the tax revenue totaled \$31.2 million and other revenues totaled \$1.6 million (77% of the total budget); this includes two payments received: \$82,760 from the State Library and \$80,000 for the Athletes and Entertainers (A&E) Tax. The total operating revenue was \$32.8 million and exceeded the budget by three percentage points.

Expenditures included \$15.4 million for salaries and benefits (83%), and \$2 million for Library materials (85%). Fang reported that gifts and grants brought in \$1.6 million (87%), and that the parking garage fund earned \$518,000 (86%). Fang announced the launch of ACH payment processing and noted that a new 'Potential Vendor' page has been added to the Library's public website. The page includes a form for individuals or organizations interested in conducting business with the Library.

Dominik asked if reaching 100% of the budget is feasible, given that gifts and grants are 87%. Fang responded that the Library is close to meeting its budget. Perkins-McGuinness noted she is confident that the Library will meet the goal and stated that there is \$900,000 to \$1.1 million in documented pledges and commitments. Yellman shared that the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) will release 50% of previously withheld funds to the States. Day asked about additional State funding allocations, which were discussed later in the meeting as part of the Director's Report.

Approved unanimously by the voting Board members. 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 April 2025: Payroll (4/3/25 net cash \$382,886 plus taxes \$132,996) and (4/17/25 net cash \$381,262 plus taxes \$132,484) in the total amount of \$1,029,628; General Expense Payments including Checks (16412-16636) in the amount of \$1,065,741. (LBM 4762)

Move approval of the recommendation of the Chief Executive to accept the attached financial reports for April 2025. (LBM 4763)

Discussing the Contract with Modern Litho (LBM 4764), Yellman provided an update on the Modern Litho contract, stating that the Library issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) in November 2024, with only one response received. Staff did not have concerns with services provided by Modern Litho and recommended authorizing the contract.

Motion by Dominik to approve the recommendation of the Chief Executive to Authorize a Contract with Modern Litho for Print and Mail Shop Services. Second by Warwick. Approved unanimously. (LBM 4764)

Faris and Stover provided an update on the Summer Reading and Learning Program, noting that this is the Library's largest system-wide program, attracting more than 15,000 registrations and continuing to grow since the COVID pandemic. This year's Kansas City Public Library Summer Reading Program theme called *Color Our World*, will emphasize the importance of reading. Upon registration, participants

select a free book to keep, and after reading five books, a completion prize will be received based on the age group.

The Summer Reading team acquired about 11,000 books for children and teens, along with over 7,500 books for adults. To enhance language accessibility, they included Spanish titles for all age groups, as well as Arabic and Haitian Creole books for children. Large print editions were also provided for adults to support broader accessibility.

Yellman noted that the Executive Team reviewed the kickoff dates for the branch locations and recommended adding invites to the Board of Trustees calendar to give Board members the opportunity to view the events and potentially attend. Yellman emphasized that staff would greatly appreciate the Board's presence at these events.

Discussing the Director's Report (LBM 4765), Yellman highlighted several events, including National Library Week, the *Free for All* documentary screening, and the Urban Hike in collaboration with Missouri Valley Special Collections (MVSC). She then asked Duncan to provide an update on BRIDGE. Duncan shared that the group is evolving beyond its initial focus specifically on racial equity to embrace a more inclusive approach, aimed at creating a welcoming space in the Library. While racial equity continues to be a key priority, the group's broader mission now includes promoting intercultural dialogue and empowerment. Reflecting this shift, the group has rebranded itself from the Racial Equity Team to Building Relationships through Intercultural Dialogue for Growth and Empowerment (BRIDGE).

Hariharan provided an update on the Strategic Plan, including the selection of Margaret Sullivan Studio as the vendor and the engagement of various stakeholders. The Strategic Plan process includes virtual one-on-one interviews with Board members, community celebrations, and focus groups to gather input and feedback. Hariharan noted that executive leadership will meet with Margaret Sullivan four (4) times, twice with the executive team only and twice with the staff early adopters' group.

Christensen sent forms inviting self-nominations to join the group and is seeking between twenty (20) and thirty (30) members from across the organization. Hariharan also reminded everyone that Yellman sent an email encouraging individuals to sign up for one-on-one virtual interviews with Margaret Sullivan Studio and reminded those who haven't signed up to be sure to do so.

Hariharan shared that the virtual interviews will be held from May 27 to May 30, and again from June 2 to June 6. The Library anticipates that Margaret Sullivan Studio will be able to attend the July 22 Library Board meeting. The Community focus groups are scheduled for August 18 to August 22. The input gathered during these sessions will be synthesized to help shape the final draft of the Strategic Plan, which is tentatively scheduled for December 16.

Browne noted the July Library Board meeting will offer a chance for more input on early findings. Margaret Sullivan Studio is requesting feedback, and Christensen added that as community engagement begins, the Library will need help spreading the word to encourage broad participation. Yellman requested that Board members send her the list of community contacts for cross reference, and the Library will keep the Board members informed on community engagement sessions.

Yellman reported that the Comprehensive Facilities Plan Request for Quote (RFQ) received eleven (11) submissions, which will be reviewed by an internal review committee with cross-departmental involvement. Regarding Organizational Culture, Jami Hrenchir, Chief People Officer, is finalizing a draft of the Comprehensive Classification and Total Rewards Study, covering pay and benefits. The

Request for Proposal (RFP) will launch in June, with findings presented at the October Library Board meeting. Yellman stressed the study’s importance and the need for transparency throughout the process.

Yellman provided an overview of the Missouri Legislature, noting the passage of 67 bills, including the 16 budget bills, and the ability for consolidated Library districts, and did not include the Urban Public Library districts, to adjust their fiscal years have passed. Perkins-McGuinness noted that House Bill Two included a \$1 million appropriation for planning and design of the Bluford Branch, championed by Senator Barbara Ann Washington. The Governor has until June 30 to approve the bill or veto the line item, and if approved, the funds are expected to arrive in early fall.

There was no old business for discussion.

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Motion by Dominik to adjourn. Second by Oñate Greim. Approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Secretary

Date