

MINUTES

Kansas City Public Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting – February 17, 2026

The Board of Trustees of the Kansas City Public Library, pursuant to official notification, met Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. at the Central Library, Annex Board Room, 14 West 10th Street, Kansas City Missouri.

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

MEMBERS NOT
PRESENT: Jonathan Kemper

STAFF PRESENT: Abby Yellman, Chief Executive
Pritha Hariharan, Assistant Director / Chief Operating Officer
Qun Fang, Senior Director of Finance / Chief Finance Officer
Candice Butler-Titus, Executive Services Senior Manager
Joel Jones, Deputy Director for Library Services
Crystal Faris, Deputy Director of Youth and Family Engagement
Jami Hrenchir, Chief People Officer
Courtney Christensen, Interim Philanthropy Deputy Director
Coletta Hummel, Interim Public Affairs/Community Engagement Deputy Director
Kim Angotti, Trails West/Sugar Creek Branch Manager
MaShonda Harris, Waldo Branch Manager

* Full list of staff in attendance available by request

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

Motion by Day to approve the minutes of January 20 and January 29, 2026, Regular Board Meeting. Second, by Williams. 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 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 Browne to consider the Consent Agenda.

In discussing the financial reports (LBM 4822), Yellman noted that there were no vendor payments to highlight during the period.

In discussing (LBM 4823), Fang reported that the Library had received approximately \$20.4 million in tax revenue, which is \$5 million less than last year, or effectively \$3 million less after factoring in last year's \$1.7 million tax settlement. Despite the county's shift in accounting timing and the extension of filing deadlines, February revenues are tracking about \$2 million higher than the same period last year, indicating that the Library's budget remains achievable. The total revenue is close to \$21.5 million (67%).

On the expenditure side, salaries and benefits are a little over \$11 million (53%). Library materials expenditure was approximately \$1.5 million (52%). General operating expenses totaled \$3.2 million (60%), reflecting expenses for insurance and consulting fees. Building maintenance expenses were \$1.7 million (56%). Capital outlay expenditures were \$521,000 (39%). In total, expenditures to date are approximately \$18 million (54%).

Fang reported that the Library has exceeded the budget for gifts and grants revenue totaling \$1.6 million with \$722,000 in expenditures (68%). Parking garage revenue totaled \$282,000 (42%), with \$352,000 in expenditures (44%). Cash on hand totaled approximately \$45.1 million, including \$28 million in the UMB checking account, \$10.2 million in the UMB investment account, and \$6.9 million in the Swanson Fund. Fang also highlighted several major grants: Francis Family Community Engagement (\$25,000), Greenwood Society (\$13,700), Judith & Matt Flynn Outreach (\$10,000), UMKC Mellon Project (\$26,205), and KCMO Navigators (\$16,805) and AmeriCorps (\$17,127).

Additionally, Fang provided an update on the Jackson County tax credit, noting that after appeals, the County revised the 2023 residential assessed valuation from approximately \$1.3 billion to just over \$1 billion, representing a 23% decrease. As a result, households are expected to receive approximately \$1.4 million in tax credits for 2023, with a similar amount anticipated for 2024. Jackson County plans to distribute these tax credits over three years, resulting in an estimated \$1 million annual impact on Library revenues during that period. The Library is still waiting for final numbers from the County for both 2023 and 2024 to better assess the full impact. Day asked how the Library might quantify the fiscal effect of these tax credit reductions. Fang explained that because the credits will be applied over multiple years, the Library will likely need to reserve a portion of future recouped revenues to offset the loss.

Motion by Warwick to approve the Consent Agenda items before the Board. Second by Kenney. 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 January 2026: Payroll (1/8/26 net pay \$398,802 plus taxes \$138,530) and (1/22/26 net pay \$394,492 plus taxes \$134,517) in the total amount of \$1,066,341; General Expense Payments (record#123868 -125056) in the amount of \$1,541,093. (LBM 4822)

Move approval of the recommendation of the Chief Executive to accept the attached financial reports for January 2026. (4823)

Yellman invited Margaret Sullivan to present the Library's 2026 Strategic Plan (LBM 4824). In discussing the adoption of the plan, Sullivan explained that a strong strategy should leverage the Library's existing strengths, create space for thoughtful new initiatives for the community, prepare the organization for both certain and uncertain futures, and establish shared language and ways of working across the system.

Sullivan presented the vision, mission, and values as the key elements that will guide the Library's work and community impact. She emphasized that the plan reflects not just leadership priorities, but the input of staff and community members. The plan identifies three strategic priorities: support all learners, foster community pride, and facilitate inclusive experiences.

Under these priorities, major goals include supporting individual growth for resilience and empowerment, serving as a trusted civic convener, and delivering consistent, community-driven services across branches. Sullivan noted that implementation will be iterative and phased, with attention to organizational readiness and alignment with facilities, staff capacity, and community needs. She concluded by outlining how the Board can support the Library to maintain focus on the strategic priorities over time and emphasized that support will be needed from all levels of the organization as it will require a significant mindset shift in how the work is approached moving forward. Feedback from the Trustees was positive, noting the clarity and tightness of the three strategic priorities.

Dominik asked how the goal of consistent services across branches aligns with potential changes to the Trails West branch under the Facilities Master Plan, to which Yellman explained that the strategic plan and facilities plan were intentionally working together using shared community input with the strategic plan setting overall direction and the forthcoming facilities plan determining specific service models and facility decisions by neighborhood.

Motion by Day to approve the recommendation of the Chief Executive to adopt the 2026 Strategic Plan. Second, by Kenney. Approved unanimously. (LBM 4824)

In discussing the Directors Report (LBM 4825), Yellman explained that leadership is focusing on building structure for how major initiatives are communicated. Starting with the Board, then sharing with Directors, followed by staff and community. The Directors and early adopters received the strategic plan in advance of the Board meeting for transparency. Hariharan noted that they will schedule ten in-service meetings throughout the branches for staff to have the opportunity

to ask questions and learn more about the plan. Hariharan also mentioned that at the upcoming Staff Enrichment Day there will be a comprehensive inventory of current work which will feed into three cross-departmental implementation teams, one for each strategic priority.

Yellman presented a revised executive organizational structure intended to flatten the system in response to staff feedback that the current model felt too top heavy and layered. The new structure replaces the Deputy Director model with a smaller executive team which includes a Chief Operating Officer, Chief Impact and Strategy Officer, Chief Public Services Officer, and Chief of Staff. This model reduces the number of direct reports, and each role will embed DEIAB (diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging) responsibilities rather than rehiring a DEI position. Yellman noted that department verticals are not yet finalized, and Directors are being consulted before those decisions are made.

Williams requested clarity on the timeline for rolling out the new organizational structure and expressed support for the DEIAB focus, while emphasizing the need for clear accountability so that DEI efforts include measurable expectations. Yellman noted that it should take about a month to finalize job descriptions, compensation, and internal postings for the new roles, and agreed on the importance of DEIAB accountability, indicating she will work with the Board to define how progress will be evaluated. Dobbels added that equity and cultural considerations should be embedded not only in the Chief Impact and Strategy Officer role but also in positions such as the Chief Public Services Officer, and Yellman assured the Board that DEIAB responsibilities will be included in every executive level job description.

There was no old business for discussion.

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Motion by Kenney to adjourn. Second by Warwick. Approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

Secretary

Date