

MINUTES

Kansas City Public Library Board of Trustees Regular Meeting – May 19, 2026

The Board of Trustees of the Kansas City Public Library, pursuant to official notification, met Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. at the Central Branch, Annex Board Room, 14 West 10th Street, Kansas City, Missouri.

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

MEMBERS' NOT
PRESENT: Jonathan Kemper
Reid Day

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
Sage Lore, Administrative Officer
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
Jerry Houchins, Director of Operations
Kaite Stover, Director of Reader's Services

* Full list of staff in attendance available by request

Browne called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

Motion by Dominik to approve the minutes of April 21, 2026, Regular Board Meeting and May 13, 2026, Finance & Audit Committee 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 Dominik to consider the Consent Agenda. Motion by Dominik to consider items 3.1 and 3.2 separately.

In discussing (LBM 4841), Fang noted that there were no vendor payments to highlight, and all payments were made according to the budget.

In discussing (LBM 4842), Fang reported that the Library has received approximately \$28.4 million in tax revenue (93.5%) which is \$2 million below the budget and \$3.5 million below last year's number. Jackson County has begun processing commercial property tax refunds to business owners; therefore, the Library did not receive any tax deposits from Jackson County in the month of April. As a result, this is expected to reduce the Library's tax revenue by approximately \$1 million for the fiscal year, and the total tax revenue is forecast to be below budget. Other revenues that include final fees, interests' income, room rental and other incomes are at \$1.7 million, bringing the total revenue to \$30.1 million (93%) of the budget.

On the expenditure side, salaries and benefits totaled just over \$16.3 million (78%). Library materials expenditure was approximately \$2 million (68.7%) and is expected to increase to be close to budget. General operating expenses were \$3.6 million (71%), which is lower than projected. Building maintenance expenses were \$2.68 million (80%), and Capital Outlay totaled \$706,000 (53%) and will increase with the pending computer purchases. In total, expenditures to date are \$25.3 million (76%).

Fang reported that gifts and grants revenue exceeded the budget with just over \$1.7 million, which includes \$300,000 investment income with Swanson Fund. On the expenditure side, the Library has spent \$1.26 million exceeding the budget due to accelerated spending to meet obligations as well as grant spending on building maintenance. A budget amendment may be forthcoming after the fiscal year closes. Parking garage revenue totaled \$482,000 (72%), with \$562,000 in expenditure (71%), which includes the garage repairs of \$140,000. Cash on hand totaled approximately \$45.5 million, including \$27 million in the UMB checking account, \$11.6 million in the UMB investment account with a 4.2% interest rate, and \$6.8 million in the Swanson Fund. Fang also highlighted contributions and grants: Elizabeth Tom's Trust (\$19,321), State of Missouri AmeriCorps (\$42,389) and the second payment from State Aid to Public Libraries (\$82,803).

Motion by Dominik to approve the Consent Agenda items before the Board. Second by Warwick. 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 2026: Payroll in the total amount of

\$1,615,544.25 and General Expense Payments in the amount of \$1,197,457.94. (LBM 4841)

Move approval of the recommendation of the Chief Executive to accept the attached financial reports for April 2026. (LBM 4842)

In discussing the adoption of the CBIZ Compensation Study (LBM 4843), Yellman thanked the CBIZ team, Finance and Audit Committee, and the Executive team for their work on the compensation study and invited Hrenchir to provide an overview. Hrenchir explained that CBIZ was selected through an RFP process to conduct a comprehensive review of the Library's compensation and benefits with a goal to develop recommendations that improve employee retention, recruitment, professional development and internal equity. Hrenchir noted that the study was based on employee feedback from the organizational climate survey and is intended to serve as a long-term compensation framework.

Ed Rataj, Sr. Managing Director of Compensation Consulting at CBIZ summarized the study process, which included leadership interviews, analysis of employee and position data, market comparisons of pay and benefits, and the development of revised job descriptions and career levels to support internal equity and career advancement. Rataj reported that the Library's compensation philosophy is to be market competitive targeting the 50th percentile of pay, and that while lower-paid positions generally align with market rates, some higher-level positions lag the market. Rataj presented a proposed grade-based pay structure and preliminary recommendations to address minimum pay, compression, and internal equity issues, with an estimated implementation cost of approximately \$654,280, noting that the Library's benefits package remains a significant component of total compensation. Rataj has also noted that CBIZ is committed to providing recommendations to this structure over the next five years to ensure the Library remains competitive over time based on economic conditions in the future.

Fang provided a high-level summary of the Library's long-range financial outlook, noting that by FY2027 projected expenditures are expected to exceed revenues. The forecast included the estimated costs of implementing the compensation study and annual merit increases. Yellman emphasized the importance of careful timing and phased implementation to maintain long-term financial sustainability. Trustee Williams asked how employees whose salaries exceed the proposed maximums would be treated. Yellman explained that one option under consideration is to freeze base salaries for above-maximum employees while providing lump-sum payments in years when general increases are awarded. Fang further noted that if the compensation study and annual merit increase are fully implemented, the Library's fund balance reserve would decline significantly over time. Yellman concluded by recommending Board adoption of the study, noting that implementation would be highly intentional and guided by a clear revenue strategy.

Motion by Dominik to approve the recommendation of the Chief Executive to adopt the CBIZ Compensation Study, directing Library Administration to draft an updated pay structure and present the proposed structure, implementation plan, and funding

recommendations as part of the FY26–27 Preliminary Budget in June 2026. Second by Kenney. Approved unanimously. (LBM 4843)

In discussing the Directors' Report (LBM 4844), Hariharan noted that the foundational work completed on Staff Enrichment Day was successful. The implementation team (Mohammed Ahmed, Melissa Carle, Pritha Hariharan, and Amanda Quance) conducted a two-hour inventory exercise which was the official launch of the strategic plan implementation. Departments responded to three prompts regarding core responsibilities, recurring work, and additional or ad hoc tasks, resulting in over thirty submissions and fifty posters. The implementation team is entering this information into a database and evaluating coding and analysis tools to develop datasets for use by staff advisory groups in assessing alignment with strategic priorities. She added that the Philanthropy team has begun pursuing grant funding to support implementation efforts and provide budget relief for existing initiatives.

Yellman highlighted organizational culture work, noting that a second organizational climate survey and retention and recruitment strategy are planned for the Fall. Yellman also discussed Staff Enrichment Day, where Trustee Williams asked how leadership followed up on sensitive feedback, particularly from LGBTQ+ staff. Yellman stated that leadership provided written responses to all questions and conducted targeted follow-up conversations where concerns were directed to specific leadership and issued a clarifying message to staff after miscommunication about legislation. Yellman emphasized that the Library is committed to belonging, transparency, and learning from staff feedback.

Yellman also reported that while major property tax changes did not advance this year, the issues will certainly return given their prominence with residents and legislators. Other bills such as the restroom bill, reconsideration bill, and sales tax bill for libraries did not pass. Yellman added that leadership is proactively planning should these bills pass next legislative session and thanked Senator Patty Lewis and Representative Sean Pouche for their support to advance fiscal year flexibility for the urban public library district, although it did not pass during the session.

There was no old business for discussion.

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Secretary

Date