

**Manhattan Public Library
Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees
November 24, 2025**

The November meeting of the Manhattan Public Library Board of Trustees was called to order at 4:01 p.m. by President Linda Cook. Present were board members Sarah May, Lucas Loughmiller, Tara Coleman, Mayor Karen McCulloh, and Melissa Wooden. Also, present were Library Director Eric Norris, Business Manager Jennifer Lund, Assistant Director Teri Belin, and Assistant Director Rhonna Hargett. Kendra Kuhlman and Tanya González were absent.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Lucas Loughmiller made a motion to approve October 27, 2025, minutes as presented. Melissa Wooden seconded, and the motion passed.

Financial Statement and Bills

November 2025 expenses:

Tax Fund/General Operations.....	\$ 235,974.22
Tax Fund/Employee Benefits.....	62,555.90
Grants, Fees, and Interest.....	38,700.89
Endowment Account.....	9,162.32
Capital Improvement.....	85,871.63

A lot of staff attended KLA this year since it was in Manhattan. It purchased some staff computers. All other expenses were routine.

Lucas Loughmiller made a motion to approve the November 2025 financial statements as presented. Melissa Wooden seconded, and the motion passed.

Committee Reports

Building and Grounds

No report.

Legislative

No report.

Finance

No report.

Policy and Planning

No report.

North Central Kansas Libraries

No report.

Manhattan Library Association

Eric Norris reported that MLA is planning the book sale at the end of February. Also, the president is going on sabbatical with her husband and will be gone for 6 months, the vice president will step up in her absence.

Manhattan Library Foundation

No report.

Director's Review Committee

No report.

Director's Report

- Items for Discussion:

- Library Safety and Security Issues: Creation of a New Position on Staff
- Bug Hounds Inspection

"Perhaps no place in any community is so totally democratic as the town library. The only entrance requirement is interest." – Lady Bird Johnson, environmentalist, businesswoman, political activist.

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- Library Security Issues: As I have reported recently, we have been experiencing a significant increase in patron incidents as the community continues to face more people experiencing homelessness. We are also seeing increased cases of visitors experiencing various levels of mental health conditions, which is putting a lot of stress on staff and using up valuable work hours. Rhonna and I have been working to give the staff guidance, and I plan to give a more concise report to the Board once the issue and potential resolutions have been fully explored.
 - Mitten Tree Kickoff, December 1: I am inviting both the MPL and MLA Boards to join us on Dec. 1 to help with the opening of the annual Mitten Tree donation drive. We will be asking members of each board who wish to bring a donation of winter hats, scarves, or mittens, the morning December 1 for a photo opportunity to share on our social media outlets announcing the start of the month-long drive. This is just a notice; more detailed information will follow soon by email.
 - Tree Removal by the City: The two trees in the parking lot were removed by the city, it was a quick and easy affair, and they did a great job cleaning up after each removal.
 - HR Manager Interviews: Interviews for the HR Manager position are to begin on Wednesday, November 19. We had a pretty strong pool of candidates to choose from, and we are conducting 5 interviews. December is Teri Belin's last month, and she has been a tremendous help with the job search process and setting up the new person in her position for success.
 - Otis #1 Change Order: On October 29, this body voted by email to move forward with the change order to Otis #1 to replace the tube lining the jack hole at an estimated cost of \$36,000. The work has gone well up to this point but is not complete.
 - Basement Move Furniture: We are in conversation with both Circadia and Design Central about furnishing ideas and price quotes for the basement to move both the PR and Programming Departments in the space vacated by NCKLS. Programming is now working out of the space with

a temporary set-up, and the permanent move with both departments will be a total of 6 employee workspaces that include 2 managers. Both managers will need a space with a reasonable expectation of privacy for meetings, and the current space only has one office. We have asked both companies to give us options that include one “office-like” cubicle for either one of manager and use the current office for the other; or to include two new spaces for both managers and keep the current office a meeting room, similar to the Boardroom or McCormick.

Meetings & Events

- Oct. 28: Meeting with Salina PL Director and Head of Security.
- Oct. 30 NCKLS Board Meeting.
- Nov. 4: Election Day.
- Nov. 4 Security Team Meeting.
- Nov. 5-7: KLA Conference.
- Nov. 12: MLA Executive Meeting.
- Nov. 13: Disruptive Patron conversation with Hale.
- Nov. 14: America 250 Meeting at Chamber.
- Nov. 16: Bug Hound.
- Nov. 17 Directors Community of Practice.
- Nov. 27-28: Library Closed for Thanksgiving.
- Dec. 1: Mitten Tree Kickoff.
- Dec. 2: Decorating Breakfast.
- Dec. 4: Domestic Science Club Meeting.
- Dec. 24-25: Closed for Christmas.
- Jan. 1: Closed for New Years Day.

Collection Management

- We weeded adult 900s and children’s JPs.
- The magazine and newspaper count ran. They help us determine in-house use of our periodicals.
- We decided to hide online resource records from the online catalog and started the process of hiding them, with IT’s help. We’ll evaluate early in 2026 if we should add them back in or delete them. We’re working to direct patron directly to the online resources instead, for a more accurate view of what’s available to them.
- We moved Playways into their cases on the shelves to free up space behind the Circulation Desk for video games. We also updated Playaway call numbers.
- Working with IT, we rearranged the filters on the catalog. We also did audience cleanup on records so that audience filtering will work correctly.
- Corey met with the Museum of Art + Light, and Crystal and Corey met with the Innovation Lab.
- Baker & Taylor, our former primary vendor, decided to cease operations entirely. We had already started ordering from Ingram early this year, so this will cause minimal disruption to us directly, but books are taking longer to come in as Ingram adjusts to an increase in demand.

	Oct 2025	Oct 2024	2025 YTD	2024 YTD
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Collection				
Total size	133,400	136,560		
New items added	896	1,102	10,085	11,132
Purchase requests filled	85	85	896	988
Items finished	753	832	7,464	9,385
Items mended	138	83	1,507	1,697
Items withdrawn	1,838	1,406	12,699	11,223
Circulation				
Physical circ	35,765	36,227	372,290	395,123
Sunflower circ	12,691	12,009	129,727	129,489
Hoopla circ	2,658	3,208	29,387	36,006
Kanopy circ	496	530	7,209	8,681
Flipster circ	98	365	1,552	3,250
Database usage	25,217	24,649	229,914	179,798
Interlibrary Loan				
ILLs lent out	146	157	1,638	1,881
ILLs borrowed for us	277	346	3,109	2,910

Human Resources and Facilities

- Interviews are taking place for a Human Resources Manager and two Adult Services Library Assistants. Applications are being accepted for a Technology Trainer.
- The Director's Evaluation process is finalized at the November meeting during executive session. Board members received the summary report the Director's Evaluation Committee prepared and Eric's updated goals for 2026. Eric will have the opportunity to read the summary and revised goals prior to the board meeting.
- At the November meeting and in executive session, the board and Eric will discuss the summary and goals. After the public meeting is reconvened, a motion needs to be made to accept the summary report and approve Eric's 2026 goals. A second motion needs to be made to approve the merit-based salary increase. The cap this year is 2%. The board can decide any percentage up to 2%. (All employees receive a 2% COLA on January 1).

IT Activity Report

- In September, the IT department received 157 help-desk tickets and closed 158.
- We continue partnering with departments across the library to design and implement new technology-supported workflows. These improvements aim to increase efficiency, reduce staff workload, and ensure smoother daily operations for both employees and patrons.
- October marked the first month of our new advanced IT training initiative. The goal is to broaden team members' technical skill sets beyond their regular duties, building a more versatile and resilient department.
- This month's focus was on an introduction to SQL and how Polaris uses its backend database to generate reports. These sessions will continue each month, so staff are increasingly prepared to troubleshoot more advanced issues and provide higher-level support.

- We completed the annual inventory of both general library equipment and technology-specific assets. This ensures accurate resource tracking, informs future budget planning, and helps us identify equipment nearing end-of-life before it becomes a service disruption.
- Teri Barton plays a central role in preparing the Winter Reading program for its December 1st launch. She develops and configures the program in Beanstack and ensures all necessary systems are ready for a smooth experience for both patrons and staff, aligning with the needs of the Winter Reading committee.
- New computer systems have been delivered and are being prepared for deployment. Over the next several months, we will focus on upgrading both staff and public computers, as well as key servers. These upgrades help improve reliability, support newer software, and extend the life of our infrastructure.
- We are continuing our work with Directors, Managers, and Supervisors to integrate Microsoft 365 tools more fully into library operations. This includes training, migration support, and helping departments transition their workflows, which will ultimately improve collaboration, document management, and communication across the organization.

Public Services

Children's Programs & Activities	Target age	Total Events	Attendance
Baby Rhyme Time	0-1	7	175
18 Months & Up Storytime	0-5	10	415
3 & Up Storytime	3 & up	3	76
Saturday Storytime	All Ages	3	92
Zoofari Tails Storytime: Bugs	3 & up	1	52
"Creepy Carrots Party"	Pre K-5th	1	52
Chess Night	8 & up	2	28
Crafternoon	PreK-5th	1	23
Lego Club	K-5th	1	23
Pawsitivity Pals	3 & up	1	22
Dance Party	0-11	2	87
Cuenta Cuentos – Bilingual Storytime	K-5th	1	13
Tweens Mario Kart	4th-6th Gr	1	6
Storywalk Indoors "The Gruffalo"	PreK & up	1	65
	TOTAL	35	1,129

Teen Programs	Total Events	Attendance
Teen Anime Club	2	19
Teen Adventuring League	3	26
Teens Mario Kart Tournament	1	8
Tens Game Night: Shadows & Suspicion	1	15
	TOTAL	68

Adult Programs	Total Events	Attendance
Donuts & Danger Book Club	1	16
MPL Book Club: Tell-Tale Heart	1	13
Art Unplugged: Diana Werts & Matthew Regier	1	11
Mental Health Training: Comet	1	7
Community Conversation on AI, w/KSU	1	32
Scary Movie Night: Poltergeist	1	10
TOTAL	6	89

Tours & Outreach	Total Events	Attendance
Camp Leadership	1	112
Boo at the Zoo Outreach	1	713
TOTAL	2	825

Service & Training	Total Patrons Served
TTC Appointments	18
Consults	17
Assistive Tech Appointments	1
Senior Center Drop-In	8
Basic Tech Class	9
TOTAL	53

Additional Services & Statistics

- 1000 Books Before Kindergarten: 3 new participants, 38 active participants.
- Check-up/Check Out: 34 coupons redeemed.
- Teen Zone: 569 visits.
- Enjoy & Share: 147 books to Flint Hills Breadbasket, Airport, Stonecreek Physicians, Jardine, Cat's Cupboard, and Hale Library, and Common Table.
- Homebound: 33 patrons in 17 locations, 240 books delivered.
- Displays: 285 adult books, 43 YA books, 253 children's books checked out.
- Reference Desk: 1,544 questions.
- Book Delivery & Pick-Up Service: 31 items checked out.
- MPL staff also assisted United Way with promotion and address checking for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

Continuing Education & Training

- Rhonna – *Empowered Employees, Exceptional Service* – Govloop Webinar
- Rhonna – *Let's Debrief: Library Incident Support Tools for Frontline Staff* – PLA webinar
- All programmers – *Plan and Assess Library Programs Like a Pro* – Niche Academy article
- All programmers – *Evaluating Library Programming* – Connected Learning Alliance report

Security

- 32 behavior reports, 5 incident reports.

Old Business

- None

New Business

- December 2025 Meeting and Pre-approval of the December bills
 - Traditionally, no meeting is held in December

Lucas Loughmiller made a motion to not have a December 2025 board meeting and to preapprove the paying of the December bills. Melissa Wooden seconded, and the motion passed.

- Set Meeting Dates for 2026
 - Meetings have been held on the last Monday of the month
 - May 25, 2026 (last Monday) is Memorial Day

Melissa Wooden made a motion to keep the board meetings on the last day of the month and to change the May board meeting to June 1st 2026. Tara Coleman seconded, and the motion passed.

- Director's Evaluation and 2026 Goals- Executive Session
 - According to KSA 75-4319, the Board can enter an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters of nonelected personnel.

Lucas Loughmiller made a motion to adjourn to executive session at 5:10 p.m. and reconvene at 5:20 p.m. Melissa Wooden, and the motion passed.

- The meeting reconvened at 5:19 pm.

Lucas Loughmiller made a motion to accept the director's evaluation summary report. Melissa Wooden seconded, and the motion passed.

Lucas Loughmiller made a motion to approve Eric Norris' 2026 goal. Sara May seconded the motion passed.

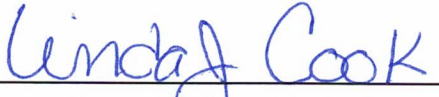
Tara Coleman made a motion to approve a merit increase of 2%, effective December 1, 2025, for the director. Lucas Loughmiller seconded, and the motion passed.

Adjournment


The next regular meeting will be on January 26, 2026, at 4 p.m. in the library auditorium.

Lucas Loughmiller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Melissa Wooden seconded, and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by,



President Linda Cook



Director Eric Norris

