

2026 Budget Summary

Public Hearing – August 21, 2025, 5:00 pm, Marvin Auditorium 101C

Zoom Meeting: <https://tscpl.zoom.us/j/82451801227?pwd=PugNVZ1MRiVbouSJMlzwGFyBDxfEJP.1>

Meeting ID: 824 5180 1227

Overview

The Board of Trustees and Library management have developed a budget review and preparation process that is based on a comprehensive assessment of operational and strategic needs. The process involves two extensive Board Budget Work Sessions which are held in June and July. In May of 2025, the Board elected to invite the community to a Budget Listening Session to facilitate opportunities for participants to share their thoughts for the pending budget. This is a logical and responsible progression for funding, and more importantly accomplishing, the initiatives within strategic, community and facilities plans, as well as fulfilling Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library's (TSCPL's) mission and goals. This methodology will be particularly important as the Library implemented a new strategic plan in 2024 and makes decisions regarding prioritization of projects in the multi-year Facilities Master Plan. Further, the Library's past success has been accomplished by wisely using its resources and maintaining a stable mill levy rate.

As a result, the Library has progressed in the implementation of its strategic plan for the benefit and betterment of the community, including being chosen as the 2016 *Library of the Year* in the United States and Canada.

TSCPL Trustees and management have practiced very good stewardship in use of tax resources with a fluctuation of only 2.235 mills in the past eleven years (high to low) and a fluctuation of only 1.877 mills for the past five years' actual rates. The use of additional strategic and financial tools to anticipate and plan for needs will enhance this pattern of excellent stewardship.

Please refer to Schedule A which provides a graphical depiction of mill levy rates for the three funds with taxing authority for the past 10 years, as well as the 2026 proposed budget. Schedule B provides a graphical depiction of expenditures for the three funds with taxing authority for the past 10 years, as well as the 2026 proposed budget.

TSCPL has crafted a 2026 budget that decreases the total mill levy and actually expands services including a reconfiguration and expansion of library spaces to better accommodate the needs of 21st century customers and their usage of the building. The TSCPL 2026 "Budget Summary", published in the August 5, 2025 edition of the *Topeka Capital Journal*, is proposed with these goals:

- Fund the 2026 budget year operations, including several of the design projects on the Facilities Master Plan in accordance with the strategic plan, within the resources provided at the revenue neutral rate of 7.563 which is below the 2025 mill levy rate of 7.909. The decrease in the mill levy rate is based on increased property valuations in Shawnee County.

Due to the retirement of the debt service in 2019, a resolution to increase the 2020 mill levy rate was passed by the Board of Trustees prior to the publication of the budget. The Board resolved to increase the budget levy for 2020 and following years to not exceed 9.786 mills, which equals the 2019 budget and bond levies. This requirement applies to local taxing authorities in which a majority of governing body members vote to set a budget which increases ad valorem property taxes beyond the prior year, adjusted by certain types of valuation increases and the *Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers*. There was no opposition to the mill levy increase. The proposed budget is less than the amount of ad valorem property tax allowed by a total budget levy of 9.786 mills.

- Slightly modify the split of the total mill levy between the General and Employee Benefit funds.
 - *Debt Service Fund* - The elimination of the debt service in 2019 will result in the bond levy rate to be allocated to the General Fund.
 - *Employee Benefit Fund* – In recent years, a greater proportion of the total mill levy had to be allocated from the General Fund to the Employee Benefit Fund due to increasing employee benefit costs, including KPERS rate increases required by Kansas law. Employer benefit costs have stabilized so the split of the total mill levy will remain generally the same.
- Effective with the 2025 plan year, the Library's experience rating period has changed from August 1 to July 31 to June 1 to May 31. This change allows Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) to accurately calculate the next year's health insurance premiums by July 1 of each year. This is the first year to accurately budget health insurance premiums instead of using an estimate. The premiums will increase 5.8% for the 2026 plan year per the renewal documents from BCBS.

The dental plan is expected to increase 6% for the 2026 plan year.

- Maintain prudent and sufficient cash balances to: (1) fund next year operations before tax revenues are received; and (2) allow for unforeseen situations.
- Continue the design concept projects on the Facilities Master Plan in phases in accordance with the specific funding matrix and timeline. Infrastructure projects are expected to be funded by the General Fund and the Capital Improvement Fund (not a budgeted fund) if needed. The available balance in the Capital Improvement Fund as of July 31, 2025 is \$7,047,151.
- Use existing resources with a focus on supporting strategies and tactics for implementation of the library's strategic plan. The library's new 2024 – 2029 strategic plan was approved by the Board of Trustees in January 2024. The plan was developed using information from more than 1,750 Shawnee County residents' responses to a community survey along with focus groups and stakeholder meetings of hundreds of individuals who shared what matters to them about the future of the library. It is a working plan that focuses on areas of connection, learning, space, joy, and people that will benefit the community.
- Lead and fund technological advancements, including electronic materials, to support the expectations and requirements of customers and the community, and to demonstrate how technology can enhance learning and living.

The total ad valorem tax to be levied is proposed to be \$17,873,785 to fund expenditures in the General (operating) and Employee Benefit funds. Assessed valuations as of July 1, 2025 will produce \$102,423 more per mill above the 2025 final valuations. At a combined levy of 7.563, which is the revenue neutral rate, revenue decreases by \$5,074 for the two taxed funds

Motor/commercial/watercraft vehicle tax and fees, in lieu of taxes and revitalization rebate estimates provided by Shawnee County are \$4,857 more than 2025.

The published budget also includes the State Aid Fund whose source is from the State of Kansas.

When comparing 2026 and 2025 total budgeted expenditures, the increase appears to be about \$2.5 million. However, municipal governments are allowed to include a fund balance carry forward, categorized as a "miscellaneous expenditure" or "cash basis reserve" (for debt service) in the proposed budget. This balance is necessary to fund payroll, debt service and other operating expenditures in the new year, before tax revenues are distributed in mid to late January or any delay in receipt of revenues, as well as any significant post-budget increased costs like the medical plan premiums. The fund balance carry forward for the two taxed funds includes \$2,050,000.

Expenditure authority increase – Budget Summary	\$4,003,600
Add difference in cash transfer amount from General Fund to Capital Improvement Fund in 2026	0
Less portion in 2026 expenditures for cash carry forward	<u>(2,050,000)</u>
Adjusted increase from 2025 to 2026	<u>\$ 1,953,600</u>

Expected 2025 expenditure savings or increases from budgeted:	
Medical insurance cost decrease	200,000
Other employment benefits increase	(4,500)
Other operating cost decrease	424,600
State Aid increase to actual	<u>(9,500)</u>
Total 2025 Adjustments	\$ <u>610,600</u>

2026 changes in expenditure authority from 2025:	
Increase Facilities Master Plan projects using <i>one-time</i> funding	550,000
Net decrease employee benefits	(34,000)
Net increase contracted digital services	624,000
Net increase in salaries	146,000
Net increase in library materials	64,000
Net decrease operating expenditures from 2025	<u>(25,000)</u>
Total 2026 Net Increase in Expenditure Authority	\$ <u>1,325,000</u>

Total Change from 2025 Estimate to 2026 per Budget Summary	<u>\$ 1,935,600</u>
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Please refer to the enclosed Schedule C "Key to 2025 and 2026 Comparison-Notice of Budget Hearing" to assist with understanding TSCPL's budget year-to-year.

Additionally, the reported 2025 revenues represent the latest estimates (since the approved budget), including: (1) other fee and reimbursement revenue adjustments based on 2024 actual and to-date in 2025 (\$1,785); (2) increase in interest earnings (\$100,000); (3) a 2% uncollectible tax revenue allowance (\$389,652-); and (4) increase in State Aid revenues to actual (\$9,561).

These revisions are important to the 2026 budget to recognize cash transfers to other funds and carry forward cash available to apply to budget year expenditures, instead of finding new-year revenue, but gives the appearance of a larger change between 2025 and 2026 budgets.

Schedule D provides revenue source definitions to help with understanding that portion of the budget. Neighborhood revitalization rebates are a reduction of expected tax revenues and are projected to decrease (increase total revenue) by about \$16,188 in 2026.

TSCPL is a library district and was established under Kansas law (K.S.A. 12-1261) as a municipal corporation. Unlike most libraries in Kansas and other states, it is a stand-alone municipality. It is not under the umbrella of another government. TSCPL must have its own staff for services that in many other libraries are provided free-of-charge and whose costs are not allocated for accounting or operational purposes. Examples of these services include, but are not limited to, accounting, procurement, payroll, human resources, events management, security, motor pool, information technology, clerical support, marketing and communications, janitorial, building and grounds maintenance and support, capital improvements, mailroom, utilities, telephone and internet services. Thus, this difference in governmental structure and accounting for all costs must be taken into consideration when comparing the TSCPL budget to other Kansas and out-of-state libraries. Support costs not paid or allocated to a library can be very significant.

How Was the 2026 Budget Accomplished and Will this Continue Every Year?

- The continued use of data-driven, process improvement techniques and the objective review of each vacant position have stabilized the amount of the budget spent on salaries, without a sacrifice in the quality or quantity of customer services. This is now a standard and proven practice at TSCPL with tangible benefits and should provide budget flexibility in the future as retirements and opportunities occur.
- Process improvement will be even more important as technology drives the use of the Library and the needs of its customers.
- The entire budget is proposed to carefully use one-time funding sources for one-time expenditures so the mill levy remains stable. When a budget includes one-time expenditures, it can be difficult to compare the current and prior years' base budgets.
- Overall, expenditures for the three budgeted funds increase from the 2025 *approved* budget by \$1,325,159 and provides funding for: (1) \$1,550,000 in projects on the Facilities Master Plan, if needed; (2) an increase of \$486,387 in digital services support which includes the purchase of CISCO switch/blade replacement; (3) an increase in salaries to include staff merit pay increases of 3% -5% and to fund several vacant positions (\$146,317); and (4) an increase in library materials (\$64,000). This increase is mostly funded by expenditure savings in other areas, such as increasing shrinkage and not funding eleven part time (not eligible for benefits) and five full-time positions.
- Budgeted employee benefit costs decrease by \$32,249, primarily due to the previously explained change in how health insurance premiums are now budgeted. Historically, an *estimated* increase has been budgeted for health insurance because renewal costs were not known when the budget was prepared. The policy rating period has been changed so health insurance costs are known by July 1 and are accurately included in the budget. A 5.8% increase in health insurance and a 6% increase in dental insurance are budgeted. To retain employees in

the health savings accounts, the employer contributions will remain the same for at least 2026. The retiree health premium subsidy by TSCPL will also remain at \$300 monthly, regardless of coverage.

- The shrinkage concept, to anticipate expected salary savings in advance for budget reallocation, was piloted in 2014 with no adverse effects (actual turnover seems to be in alignment with expected turnover). A shrinkage factor of 1.85% was applied to 2026 gross salaries, allowing about \$166,056 to be directed elsewhere in the budget. This is possible due to several retirements of professional level staff who will likely be replaced with lower paid staff.
- The 2026 budget includes some atypical issues, but much of these can be controlled and anticipated through careful and prudent financial management planning, use of the Facilities Master Plan and other initiatives funding matrices, and the benefit of increased property valuations. As the Board of Trustees and staff work to be more strategic, the development of budget forecasts continues to improve and issues are better anticipated.

What does the Community Receive for its Funding Dollars?

- The Library's beautiful and spacious facility is normally open 78 hours per week to provide a multitude of services to customers of all ages with varying expectations and needs.
- The Facilities Master Plan was updated in January 2025 and continues to guide the library's commitment to ensuring the building effectively serves the community for the next decade. The projects within the Plan are expected to optimize people space, customer experience and service, enhance wayfinding and the amenities within the building, meet the expectations and requirements of 21st century library users, and optimally maintain the facilities.
- The front entryway renovation was completed in 2017 providing additional, attractive public space and important enhancements to public safety including zero-entry curbs, improved lighting, an under-sidewalk, ice melt system for winter weather conditions and beautiful planters that also serve as building and pedestrian safety barriers from all forms of wheeled traffic.
- The first phase of the interior renovation/remodel projects was completed in 2017 providing eight collaborative work rooms with technology equipment in each and a new entryway between the Millennium Café and New Books/Media area.
- Phase II of the Facilities Master Plan for interior renovation/remodel projects was completed in 2020. These projects include the renovation of the Circulation Plaza and Learning Center and the installation of new flooring in the rotunda, the main library corridor and in the east and west hallways. Claire's Courtyard was also completed and includes an exterior patio space, a three season pavilion space for small group meetings and an amphitheater for outdoor education.
- Several projects, including renovating the public restrooms and café, demolition of the Hearing Aid building, and paving and landscaping of the area at 1001 Garfield were completed in 2021.
- Technical Services Department has been relocated from the second level to a renovated space in the lower level of the Library. The project to reconfigure this second floor space for the public was completed in 2022. Other projects completed in 2022 include the fire panel replacement, meeting room audio/visual upgrade, phase 1 of the wayfinding project (library signage),

redesigning the Movies and Music area, replacing the air conditioning chillers and replacing the boilers. The projects to improve browsing, seating and collection organization for the adult materials, resurfacing the parking lot and dock drive; and phase 2 of the wayfinding project were completed in 2024.

- The renovation of the Kids Library, replacement of the Automated Material Handling (AMH) System, and redesign of staff spaces began in 2024 and will be completed in 2025.
- The staff restrooms are being remodeled in the main library and in the 1020 Washburn building in 2025. There are also parking lot improvements and an elevator modernization project planned for 2025.
- The 2026 Facilities Master Plan includes replacing the boilers and air conditioning unit at 1020 Washburn, renovating The Edge space, space redesign in Digital Services, Youth Services and Bookmobile staff areas, an elevator upgrade and meeting room/team room updates.
- An extraordinary Kids' Library has transformed into an engaging space just for kids. The redesign, completed in early 2025, includes front facing book shelving that encourages independent browsing, a new dynamic space for story time and programs, and a redesigned collection and activity areas for teens. Families also were given the opportunity to check out passports to the Kansas Children's Discovery Center and the Topeka Zoo to enhance learning with an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, art and math.
- The Learn and Play bus provides two-hour stops at two locations in the County. This is thanks to a joint funding effort between the Library and The Library Foundation. The bus serves pre-school aged children and their families by allowing a remote physical location in which programming and learning can occur within customers' neighborhoods.
- 43% of all households in Shawnee County have an active library cardholder.
- With the help of The Library Foundation and the United Way of Kaw Valley, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is available in our community to distribute one book per month to the homes of all children ages 0-5. There are over 5,600 children enrolled, which represents 54% of Shawnee County's children under the age of five. This program provides the opportunity for an economical way to scale services community-wide in support of the goal that every child is ready for kindergarten.
- During 2024, about 455,000 visitors came to the building, including almost 51,000 attending events and over 38,000 attending The Sabatini Art Gallery.
- Countless visitors used the public computers more than 88,000 sessions to search and apply for jobs, research, learn and correspond.
- Over 1.85 million print and digital books, periodicals, music CDs, movies and games were borrowed by Library customers in 2024.
- Last year, over 268,000 reference questions were answered by Library staff through various formats including in person or by telephone, text, email and online chat.
- The Digital Branch welcomed about 660,000 visitors, of which 330,000 visits were to the catalog. A new catalog was implemented which has many new features including one-click hold

requests, the ability to create lists, a summary of items checked out and on hold, and the ability to view borrowing history.

- Over 701,000 digital downloads of movies, ebooks and audiobooks occurred in 2024; an increase of 6.8% over 2023. Digital downloads accounted for 37.9% of all checkouts.
- Social media continues to expand with about 22,000 people who like us on Facebook, over 3,600 Instagram followers, about 259,000 YouTube views, and about 6,800 people who follow us on Twitter. The new catalog also provides a social media feature that allows users to connect with others regarding all types of materials in all types of formats.
- Bookmobiles visited 18 locations during the day and evening throughout the city and county. Program specialists brought Classroom Connections programs to all elementary school classes that requested them. Storytellers visited 75 preschool classrooms throughout the year. In 2024, both outreach programs shared programs and stories to 8,510 students in Shawnee County. Red Carpet serves 50 facilities, as well as over 100 individuals, to provide library services to elderly and homebound customers.
- Although COVID-19 impacted traditional Bookmobile services, new services were launched to reach our community. In addition to the 18 Bookmobile stops, TSCPL@Home, a new home delivery service began in August 2020. About 41,000 items were checked out with TSCPL@Home in 2024.
- Summer Learning continues to be an essential time for students and even parents to do some recreational reading. Students and parents read 1,015,000 minutes as part of the Summer Reading challenge. The Alice C. Sabatini Gallery welcomed 23,007 visitors to enjoy *The Floor is Lava* summer children's exhibit.
- The Library at Work service, in which materials are brought to and picked up from the workplace, has 24 participating work sites.
- Existing services continued their success: (1) library programs, including computer services, at the city community centers; and (2) checkout of materials via the Smartlockers located inside the Oakland Community Center and the Fairlawn Plaza. Parents can opt-in to have their student receive a library account with the TSCPL@School initiative. All five public schools are offering this opportunity to families. Another partnership was formed with the Topeka Housing Authority to open a training center and improve access to digital learning at the Deer Creek Community Center.
- The community can share in, and be proud of, the honor of its Library being chosen the 2016 *Library of the Year* in the United States and Canada. Although the designation is only for one year, the community will always have the distinction of having a Library that received this prestigious award.

Understanding the Budget Document

There are four funds that are required by Kansas law to be budgeted; General, Employee Benefit, Debt Service and State Aid funds. All except the State Aid Fund have ad valorem property tax as their main source of revenue.

The General Fund is the source for the majority of operational expenditures (gross salaries, information technology equipment and maintenance, utilities, internet and telecommunications, vehicle costs, supplies, insurance, professional service contracts, special projects, marketing, printing, postage, library materials purchased for customer checkout, etc).

The Employee Benefit Fund is used to pay the employer-paid portion of benefits for employees, most of which are mandatory (social security, Medicare, state retirement (KPERS), medical and dental insurance, workers compensation insurance, unemployment insurance, the administration of the cafeteria benefit plan and the employee assistance program.)

The Debt Service Fund is used to pay the principal and interest on the bond issue for the building expansion project (opened in January 2002). The 2026 budget includes a cash transfer from the Debt Service Fund to the General Fund to close out the fund; the debt payment concluded in 2019.

State Aid is provided from the Kansas State Library, but is not a guaranteed revenue source.

General Fund Budget (pages 6, 6a)

Page 10 shows the estimated tax rate for the 2026 General Fund budget is 6.094 mills; a decrease of .261 mills from the actual 2025 General Fund tax rate of 6.355 mills. The net total mill levy decreases between 2024 and 2025 for the three taxing funds.

Revenues

- Ad valorem property tax (net of revitalization rebates) is 88.7% of the total projected revenue for 2026; 88.8% in 2025.
- Vehicle taxes are 8.5% of the total projected revenue for 2026; 8.4% in 2025. (Estimates are provided by Shawnee County.)
- In lieu of taxes are .36% of total revenues in 2025.
- Tax revenues represent the amount if 100% is collected, but historically there is an uncollectible amount of less than 5%. However, this can range from a few thousand dollars to a few hundred thousand dollars so careful review occurs during the year.
- Other revenue sources from fines, fees, reimbursements and interest are 2.4% of the total projected revenue for 2026. The decision to no longer charge overdue fines on children and young adult materials reduces projected fee/fine revenue but will benefit customers.

Expenditures

The total General Fund budgeted expenditures for 2026 are \$20,374,895 (including an allowable fund balance carry forward of \$1.655 million classified as "miscellaneous expense"). This is a 0.071% increase (\$1,349,408) from the 2025 adopted budget of \$19,025,487 (including fund balance carry forward).

The "miscellaneous expense" of \$1.65 million for fund balance carry forward represents the amount needed to carry over into the beginning of 2027, to pay expenses prior to tax revenues being received the third week of January or for unexpected cost increases or emergencies. The fund balance carry

forward and miscellaneous lines in the budget cannot be more than 15% of the total General Fund expenditure budget. TSCPL's combined percentage is 8.1%.

K.S.A. 12-1268 allows the Board of Trustees to direct a transfer annually from the General Fund not to exceed 20% of the money credited to the fund. There is no cash transfer planned from the General Fund to the Capital Improvement fund (non-budgeted) in 2026.

Gross Salaries (Employer-paid benefits are budgeted in the Employee Benefit Fund.)

The budget includes 222 full-time and part-time employees (this does not represent an actual FTE position count, but rather a count of positions in which each represents one, regardless of the percentage of time assigned). The 2025 budget also included 222 full-time and part-time positions. At any given time, approximately 185 positions are usually filled due to turnover and seasonal staffing.

- Salary expenditures comprise 50.4% of the expenditure budget in 2026; 53.1% of the expenditure budget in 2025; (or 54.8% and 58.2% respectively, when fund balance carry forward is subtracted from total expenditures.)
- The careful consideration and review of every vacant position, as well as seven retirements in 2024 and at least three in 2025, have kept gross salaries starting about \$146,000 less than those budgeted for 2025 (with the annualization of 2025 merit pay, but before any 2026 merit raise).
- Merit pay ranges were adjusted from 1% - 3% to 3% - 5% effective with the 2023 budget. The budget is created using a 4.8% increase on each employee's job anniversary date. Increases are granted strictly based on performance and no increase is guaranteed. The cost of the pay increases to be paid in 2026 is estimated at about \$254,000.
- The shrinkage concept, which in previous years funded 98.15% of the gross salaries and related percentage-based fringe benefits for regular staff, has been continued for 2025 as a way to anticipate savings and better plan/fund library operations and the funding matrix initiatives to fulfill the strategic plan. It will also assist with avoiding last minute, end-of-year spending decisions and projects or the one-year delay or budget amendment required to obtain authority to spend the savings.
- For the 2026 budget, a 1.85% shrinkage reduction from gross salaries allows savings of \$166,056 in gross salary to be budgeted elsewhere.
- At the end of 2024, at least 46 employees were eligible to accept KPERS full or reduced retirement so salary savings should be expected.

Information Technology (Digital Branch) Plan and Expenditures

Information technology is vital to keep pace with the ever-changing world and the expectations of a 21st century library, the use of the Digital Branch, content and materials, and the relevancy of the Library to its constituency.

- The Contracted – Digital Services and Digital Services Support line items contain funding for projects, annual support and maintenance costs and hardware and software that change from year-to-year, but for which the base budget generally funds. The Contracted line item increases by \$137,180 and will fund: (1) annual SmartLocker lease; (2) staff training software; and (3) co-

managed IT services. The Support line item increases by \$486,387 and will fund: (1) 80 replacement computers on the regular 4-year cycle; (2) new security camera server; (3) replacement parking lot and building security cameras; (4) Team Room AV equipment; and (5) CISCO/switch blade replacement. This budget line item fluctuates from year to year as equipment is purchased and new purchases are planned.

- The 80 computer replacements allow staff and public computers to offer current technology, including larger screens.

Strategic, Community and Facilities Plans

The 2026 budget supports the implementation of the new strategic plan, which is focused on connection, learning, space, joy and people. This is a logical and responsible progression for funding the approved initiatives in the strategic, information technology and facilities plans, as well as fulfilling the Library's mission and goals.

Please refer to Schedule E for funding matrices for Facilities Master Plan projects for 2026. This document reports all funding sources, including funds from The Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library which are critically important to completion of these projects.

- The Facilities Master Plan was updated in January 2025 and continues to guide the library's commitment to ensuring the building effectively serves the community for the next decade.

The Plan encompasses both infrastructure needs and building remodeling and renovations to ensure relevancy and to support the way in which customers need to use the Library now, as well as support the strategic plan.

- The Special Projects line item is almost solely for the design concept phases on the Facilities Master Plan and includes the following projects. This funding is from expenditure savings in the operating budget.

These design projects are planned for 2026:

- Regrade Amphitheatre drainage, \$50,000
- Erosion control, replace overhead door seals and joint sealant, \$27,000
- Renovate The Edge, \$550,000
- Elevator upgrade, \$150,000
- Replace A/C unit (1020 Washburn), \$175,000
- Replace boilers (1020 Washburn), \$60,000
- Staff space redesign (Bookmobile), \$125,000
- Staff space redesign (Digital Services/Youth Services), \$175,000
- Meeting Room/Team Room updates, \$60,000
- Other, including Staff hallway paint, PA system upgrade, Johnson Control upgrade, architectural fees, \$228,000

Total Special Projects line item for all funds is \$1,550,000. Other portions of these projects may be funded from The Library Foundation, Friends of the Library or State Aid funds. Infrastructure projects can be funded by the non-budgeted Capital Improvement Fund.

- The Furniture and Equipment budget increases by \$19,000 and is comprised of: (1) public chair replacement (\$20,000); (2) snow removal machine (\$17,500); (3) replacement book box returns (\$16,500); and (4) base for overall Library needs (\$15,000). Most furnishings will be part of the Facilities Master Plan.

- An \$8,000 line item for the purchase of art for the Gallery was restored in 2015 and continues in the base budget. The 2026 budget has been increased to \$10,000.
- The Contracted Facilities budget decreases by \$30,00 (based on projections starting with 2024 actual expenditures). The Facilities Master Plan encompasses most of the infrastructure costs and can be paid by the Capital Improvement Fund. This line item includes all the support contracts for the major building systems and allows for cost increases for renewals, as well as any type of professional repair and service, such as snow removal, pest control, trash disposal, fire alarm testing, etc.
- The Contracted Office Equipment budget increases by \$5,900 (based on projections starting with 2024 actual expenditures). This line item is primarily for public and staff copies and related maintenance and fees, and postage and mailing equipment leases. Service professionals will be called when needed for one-off needs.
- The Contracted Professional Services budget decreases by \$27,500 (based on projections starting with 2024 actual expenditures). The Library is using more professional consulting services for specialized issues in order to become fully educated before spending resources on major projects. This ultimately saves money. However, some changes have occurred that have resulted in savings.
- Professional service needs in 2026 include: (1) continuation of digitation and preservation of special collections; (2) expenses anticipated for job postings and drug testing; (3) aquarium maintenance fees; and (4) a \$25,000 placeholder for unexpected professional needs.

Other expenditures paid in this line item are credit card processing and bank fees, new hire and employee testing, courier service between libraries, and notary fees.

Library Materials

- The 2026 budget for library materials has increased by \$64,000. The materials' budget represents 11.1% of the total General Fund budget (and 12.1% without Special Projects) but drops to 8.8% of the four budgeted funds.
- The library materials budget for 2026 reflects the library's response in providing high quality, diverse physical and digital library collections. There continues to be a budget shift from physical to digital collections.
- If the State Library's funding to public libraries declines, TSCPL needs to plan for continuation of databases that are currently paid and made accessible by the State Library. They can provide access statewide at a substantial discount. State Library staff have confirmed that database funding is intact for this year. It appears that the State Library can continue to provide this service for another year. However, for forthcoming budget years, sufficient budget should be maintained to continue to fund databases without the State Library subsidy.

Other Expenditures

- Cataloging and interlibrary loan service database costs increase by \$3,600 based on communications from the vendor (OCLC) and 2025 year-to-date actuals.

- The Conference budget line item is increased by \$24,900 in 2026. Training needs exist for many staff, both those in the librarian profession and in other professions needed to support the Library. Managers submitted specific proposals for conferences for 2026 and the CEO requested funds for Trustees to attend national conferences. Several staff serve on national councils and boards and must attend the conferences. The Public Library Association conference is held every other year and 2026 is a conference year.
- By Kansas statute, TSCPL is required to support 50% of the budget requests for the libraries in Rossville and Silver Lake. This line item remains flat in 2026 at \$165,941.
- Marketing is increased in 2026 to add two Orangeboy marketing campaigns. Total increase from 2025 is \$29,010.
- Printing and Programming budget line items remain flat in 2026.
- A decrease of \$6,100 is budgeted for postage/shipping, per actual 2024 expenditures and 2025 expenditures to date.
- Staff training budgets increases by \$1,500 to fund the Ryan Dowd training subscription which is no longer funded by the State Library.
- Supplies decrease by \$28,464 based on 2024 actual expenditures and 2025 expenditure to-date. A base for the replacement of staff office chairs and gallery/office supplies continues.
- Telecommunication costs remain flat in 2026.
- Vehicle repair budget line item remains flat in 2026. The base budget for vehicle fuel decreases \$9,081 and is based on 2025 actual expenditures to-date.

Debt Service Fund Budget (page 7)

Reserve Fund

The debt incurred with the bond issue was paid in full in September 2019. A one-time cash transfer has been budgeted in 2025 from the Debt Service Fund to the General Fund in the amount of \$10,010 to close the fund. This amount includes the 2024 projected cash forward and an estimate for delinquent taxes which may be received. This amount also includes estimated interest earnings. Because residual back taxes continue to be deposited to the Debt Service Fund, another transfer of \$18,241 is budgeted in 2026. This transfer will be from the Debt Service Fund to the General Fund.

Employee Benefit Fund (page 7)

Page 10 shows the estimated tax rate for the 2026 Employee Benefit Fund budget is 1.469 mills; a decrease of .093 mills from the 2025 rate of 1.554. The net total mill levy decreases slightly between 2024 and 2025 for the three taxing funds.

As previously described, the experience rating period has been changed which allows Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) to accurately calculate the next year's health insurance premiums by July 1 of each year. The premiums will increase 5.8% for the 2026 plan year per the renewal documents from BCBS. The dental plan is expected to increase 6% for the 2026 plan year.

Revenues

- Ad valorem property tax (net of revitalization rebates) is 87% of the total projected revenue in 2026; in 2025 it was 87%.
- Motor/commercial/watercraft vehicle taxes and fees are 8.4% of the total projected revenue in 2026; in 2025 they were 8.7% of the total projected revenue. (Estimates are from Shawnee County.)
- Reimbursements from the Friends of the Library, the Library Foundation, Shawnee County and retiree premium payments in 2026 are 2.8% of the total projected revenue; in 2025 they were 2.9%.
- The changes in the *Group Health Care Benefits for Qualified Retirees* policy approved by the Board in April 2015 allow for a medical premium subsidy by the Library that will continue at \$300 per month. However, the policy also requires all Medicare-eligible retirees leave the plan and enroll in Medicare supplemental insurance, or when the qualified retiree reaches the age of 65.

Expenditures

The total budget for 2026 is \$5,503,381 (including fund balance carry forward "Miscellaneous Expense" of \$400,000). This is a decrease of \$34,249 or .06% from the 2025 adopted budget of \$5,537,630 (including fund balance carry forward).

The "miscellaneous expense" of \$400,000 for fund balance carry forward represents the amount needed to carry over into the beginning of 2027, to pay expenses prior to tax revenues being received the third week of January or for unexpected cost increases or emergencies. The fund balance carry forward and miscellaneous lines in the budget cannot be more than 15% of the total Employee Benefit Fund expenditure budget. TSCPL's combined percentage is 7.3%.

- FICA and Medicare - Rates (6.2% and 1.45%, respectively) will remain the same in 2026 as in 2023.
- Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERs) – The 2026 employer rate will be 10.59% compared to 9.71% in 2025. The rate for death and disability insurance benefits will continue at 1.0%. The net increase in KPERs rates for 2026 is .88%.
- KPERs Working After Retirement - The 2018 Kansas Legislature passed a bill that impacts those employees working after retirement (WAR). The Library currently has three WAR employees. The intent of the legislative changes is to simplify the rate and earnings limit structures for KPERs retirees who return to work for the same or a different KPERs employer but retain some punitive costs for employers. Employees will no longer be subject to the \$25,000 earnings limit cap and will continue to not pay into the plan. Instead, employers will now pay rates of 10.59% on all wages up to \$25,000 and 30% on all wages over \$25,000.
- Workers Compensation Insurance – Ratings continue to be low and no increase is expected in 2026.
- Unemployment Compensation Insurance – The rate is set by the State of Kansas and has been budgeted at .10% of gross wages which is the same as 2025.
- Health/Dental Insurance – Health insurance premiums will increase 5.8% in 2026 and dental rates are projected to increase 6%. This line item also includes another year of employer contributions to Health Savings Accounts, based on about 59% of eligible employees enrolling in the qualified high-deductible health plan. The goal remains to contain the cost of health care benefits, yet retain a quality, accessible health plan for employees.
- Shrinkage - A 1.85% reduction from gross salaries allows savings of \$30,455 in related percentage-based fringe benefits to be budgeted to fund other cost increases.

State Aid Fund (Page 8)

Grants-in-aid to libraries, K.S.A. 75-2556, is revenue received from the Kansas State Library. The State Librarian determines the amount of the grant-in-aid for which each eligible local public library is to receive based on the latest population census figures. Actual 2026 revenues are expected to be about the same as those received in 2025 based on recent trends. Due to the uncertainty of these funds, they are not used for continuing operating expenditures and instead are only used for one-time projects. In 2026, this will be a Special Projects line item.

Non-Budgeted Funds (Page 9)

Only the actual revenues and expenditures for 2024 are required to be reported.

- (1) Capital Improvement Fund:** A special accruing fund established under K.S.A. 12-1268 which provides for an amount, not to exceed 20% of any annual General Fund budget prepared, published and approved by the Board of Trustees, to be set aside in a special fund for major capital improvements or major equipment purchases. A cash transfer from the General Fund to the Capital Improvement Fund has not been budgeted in 2026. Some infrastructure projects on the Facilities Master Plan may be paid from this fund. They are projected over 10 years at which time additional monies may be placed into the fund. Thus, cash flow is projected to be sufficient and sustainable.
- (2) Other Special Revenue:** Funds received that are restricted for a specific purpose. These funds originate primarily from the Friends of the Library and The Library Foundation and a couple of small federal and state grants.
- (3) Permanent Funds:** Endowment funds under which TSCPL can spend the interest received on the funds but cannot spend the principal. Enacting documents establishing the endowments specify the restrictions on the use of these funds and that they be retained by the Library instead of the Library Foundation. One permanent fund that had been previously reported on the Library's financials for many years was legally determined to actually belong to The Library Foundation and has been removed from the Library's reporting.

Budget Summary (Page 10) and Certificate (Page 1)

These documents establish the maximum expenditure authority for the budgeted funds for 2026. Only estimated mill levy rates are presented. The TSCPL Board of Trustees sets the budgeted expenditures but does not establish the actual mill levy rates. The actual tax rates will be determined by the County Clerk based on a Revenue Neutral Rate formula which includes the total assessed valuation as of July 1 for the TSCPL District and the amount of ad valorem tax generated.

Allocation of MV, RV, 16/20M, Commercial Vehicle and Watercraft Tax Estimates (page 2) and 2026 Neighborhood Revitalization Rebate (page 11)

These pages simply provide an allocation between the three taxing funds of revenue estimates and revenue reduction estimates (rebates) provided by Shawnee County.

What does the TSCPL 2026 budget proposal mean to a residential taxpayer in Shawnee County?

The following table displays the annual cost of the TSCPL total mill levy of 7.563 for property at various values. The formula is provided so that property taxes in support of TSCPL can be calculated based on specific property values.

Total Assessed Valuation for 2026 Budget Purposes per the Shawnee County Clerk:
\$2,363,319,455 (value of one mill = \$2,363,319)

Impact of Mill Levy on Residential Properties**

		\$50,000	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$300,000
7.563	Total Proposed Mill	\$43.49	\$86.97	\$173.95	\$260.92
Formulas:					
Amount of Property Tax / Value of one mill = Mill Rate					
Value of Home X .115 = Assessed Value; Assessed Value X Mill Rate / 1,000 = Total Tax					

Total Assessed Valuation for 2025 Budget Purposes per the Shawnee County Clerk:
\$2,260,326,084 (value of one mill = \$2,260,326)

Impact of Mill Levy on Residential Properties**

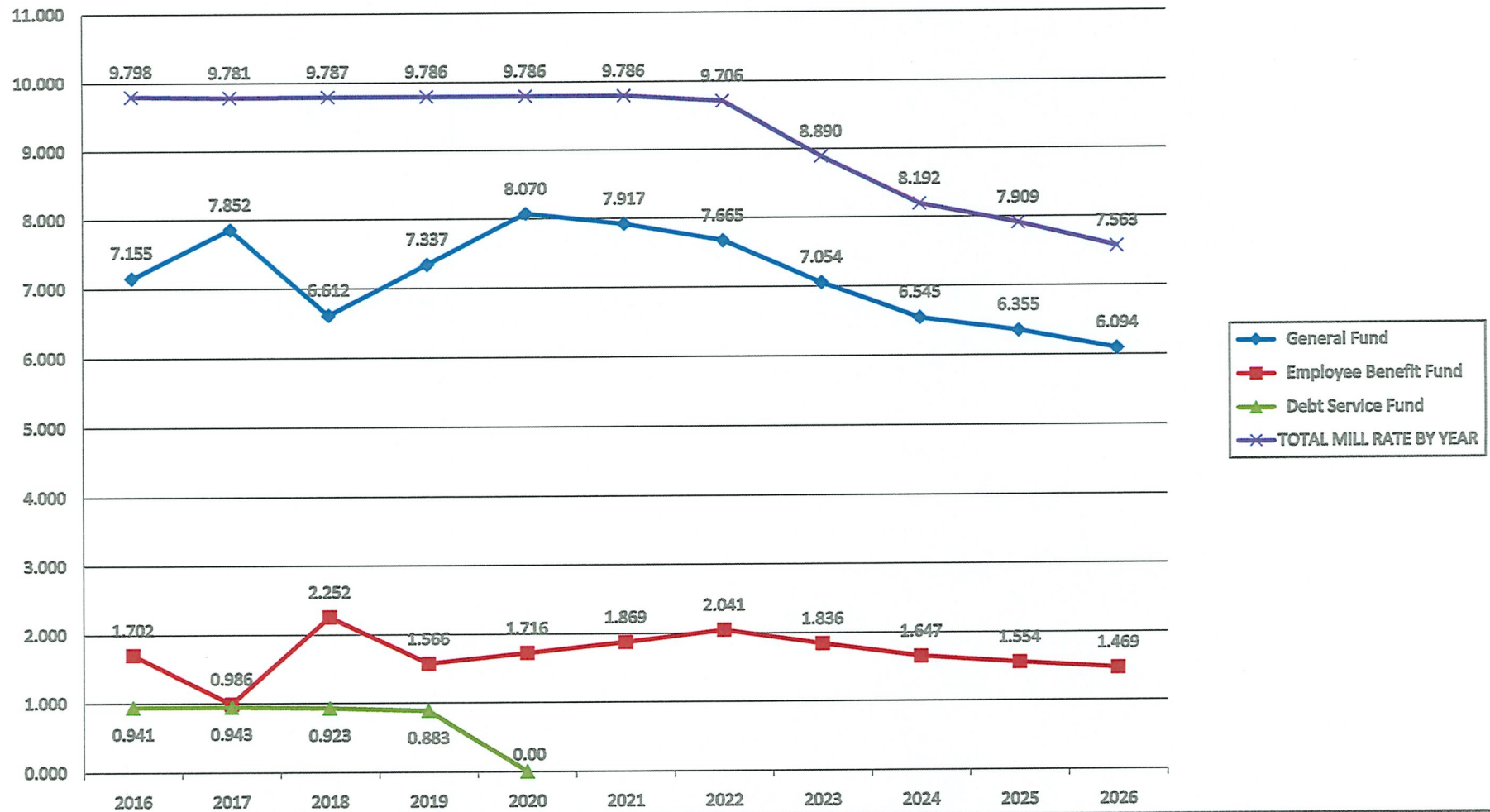
		\$50,000	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$300,000
7.910	Total Proposed Mill	\$45.48	\$90.97	\$181.93	\$272.90
Formulas:					
Amount of Property Tax / Value of one mill = Mill Rate					
Value of Home X .115 = Assessed Value; Assessed Value X Mill Rate / 1,000 = Total Tax					

** Residential properties are assessed at 11.5% of value pursuant to K.S.A. 79-1439(b)(1)(A). Commercial, industrial, railroad and improved ag land properties are assessed at 25% of value pursuant to K.S.A. 79-1439(b)(1)(F).

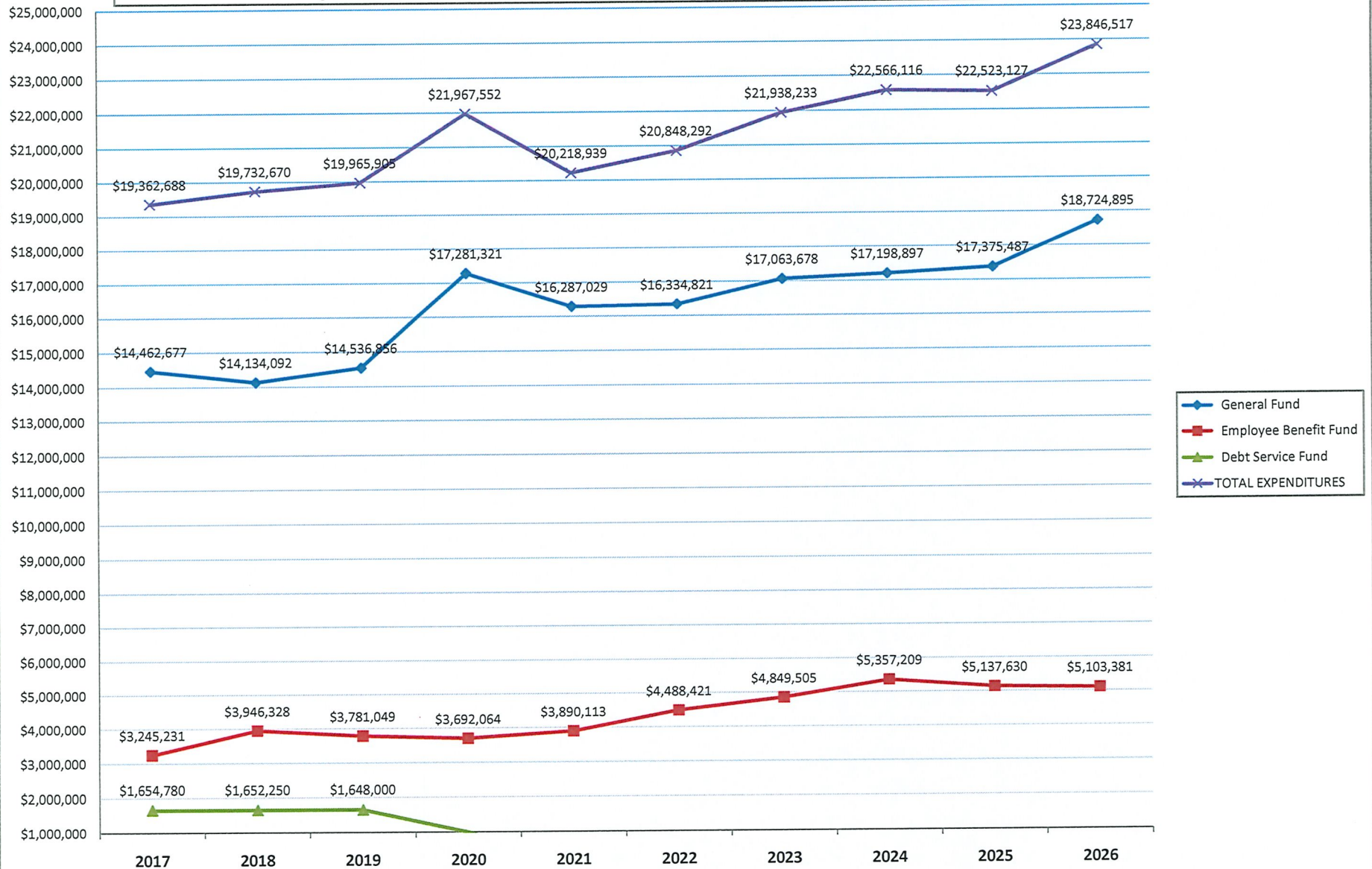
Enclosures:

- Schedule A - Graph of TSCPL Levy Rates – 10-year Retrospective and 2026 Proposed Budget
- Schedule B - Graph of TSCPL Expenditures – 10-year Retrospective and 2026 Proposed Budget
- Schedule C - Key to Understanding the “Notice of Budget Hearing”/”Budget Summary”
- Schedule D - Revenue Source Definitions
- Schedule E - Funding Matrices for 2026 for Facilities Master Plan projects

TSCPL 10-Yr Retrospective - Actual Mill Rate Values with Proposed 2026 Budget - Schedule A



TSCPL 10-Yr Retrospective - Budgeted Expenditures with Proposed 2026 Budget - Schedule B



**Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library
Key to 2025 and 2026 Budget Comparison
2026 Budget - Public Hearing - August 21, 2025**

Has the amount of tax requested increased or decreased? *Increased;*

1 - Actual Tax Rate 2025	7.909	
2 - Estimated Tax Rate 2026	<u>7.563</u>	<i>RNR is 7.563</i>
Net Change	-0.346	

Ad valorem tax dollars by year.

3 - Total Amount of 2025 (2026) Budget Ad Valorem Tax	\$ 17,873,785
4 - Total Tax Levied 2025	<u>\$ 17,878,859</u>
Total Decrease in Annual Ad Valorem Tax Revenues	\$ (5,074)

Did the Library ask for this additional revenue? No

7 - Assessed Valuation - 2026	\$ 2,363,319,455
8 - Assessed Valuation - 2024 (final)	<u>\$ 2,260,895,667</u>
Total Increase in Assessed Valuation	\$ 102,423,788
Increased Value of One Mill	\$ 102,423
Increased Revenues based on Budgeted Valuation	\$ 810,064
Decrease due to Final Valuation & Setting of 2025 Mill Levy by Cty Clerk	\$ 2,567
Increased Revenues When Budgeting at Flat Mill Levy (7.909)	\$ 812,631

Why does the Library need an over \$20 million budget?

5 - Net Expenditures 2025	\$ 21,944,901
Add Back Revisions to 2025 Estimates for 2025 Budget:	
General Fund - salary decrease	\$ 400,000
General Fund - other estimated cost decreases - net	\$ 24,672
Employee Benefit Fund - 2025 health plan cost decrease	\$ 200,000
Employee Benefit Fund - 2025 workers compensation increase	<u>\$ (4,456)</u>
Original 2025 Expenditure Authority - excluding cash carry forward and transfers	\$ 22,565,117
6 - Net Expenditures 2026	\$ 25,940,276
Less Cash Carry Forward/Reserves classified as "Expenditures":	
General Fund	\$ (1,650,000)
Employee Benefit Fund	<u>\$ (400,000)</u>
2026 Actual Authority for Expenditures	\$ 23,890,276
Actual Increased Expenditure Authority in 2026	\$ 1,325,159
% Increase in Expenditure Authority in 2026	5.87%
Actual Decreased Taxes Due to Budgeting at the RNR	\$ (5,074)
% Increase in Ad Valorem Tax Revenues in 2026	-0.03%

NOTICE OF HEARING TO EXCEED REVENUE NEUTRAL RATE AND BUDGET HEARING

The governing body of

Topeka and Shawnee County Public LibraryShawnee County

will meet on August 21, 2025 at 5:00 pm at 1515 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, KS for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of tax to be levied.

Detailed budget information is available at <http://www.tscpl.org> or hardcopies from TSCPL and will be available at this hearing.

SUPPORTING COUNTIES

Shawnee County (home county)

BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget 2026 Expenditures and Amount of Current Year Estimate for 2025 Ad Valorem Tax establish the maximum limits of the 2026 budget. Estimated Tax Rate is subject to change depending on the final assessed valuation.

FUND	Prior Year Actual for 2024		Current Year Estimate for 2025		Proposed Budget Year for 2026		
	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate*	Budget Authority for	Amount of 2025 Ad Valorem	Proposed Estimated Tax
General	15,595,668	6.545	16,950,815	6.355	20,374,895	14,401,098	6.094
Debt Service			10,010		18,241		
Employee Benef	3,942,746	1.647	4,942,086	1.554	5,503,381	3,472,687	1.469
State Aid	48,744		52,000		62,000		
Non-Budgeted F	614,571						
Totals	20,201,729	8.192	21,954,911	7.909	25,958,517	17,873,785	7.563
<i>Revenue Neutral Rate **</i>				1		3	7.563
Less: Transfers	0		10,010		18,241		
Net Expenditure	20,201,729		21,944,901	5	25,940,276	6	
Total Tax Levied	17,710,807		17,878,859	4	xxxxxxxxxxxxx		
Assessed Valuat	2,162,283,640		2,260,895,667		2,363,319,455		
			8		7		

Outstanding Indebtedness,

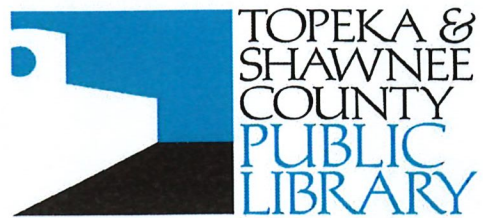
Jan 1,	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
G.O. Bonds	0	0	0
Revenue Bonds	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0
Lease Pur. Princ	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0

*Tax rates are expressed in mills.

**Revenue Neutral Rate as defined by KSA 79-2988

Hannah Uhlig

Secretary



Revenue Source Definitions

Ad Valorem Property Tax – Tax on all taxable tangible property in Shawnee County, excluding the Townships of Rossville and Silver Lake. The amount approved by the Library's Board of Trustees to fund the budget is converted to mills by the County Clerk when final property valuations are known (end of October).

Delinquent Tax – Taxes unpaid after the date when the penalty for non-payment begins. These are not budgeted because collection is uncertain.

Motor Vehicle Tax – Tax is based on the value of the vehicle and the previous year's county-wide average levy. It is paid when the vehicle is registered.

Recreational Vehicle (RV) Tax – Tax is assessed by weight of the RV, rather than the value of the RV, and is paid when the RV is registered. It is based on the levies in the previous year's budget.

16/20 Vehicle Tax – Tax is assessed like the motor vehicle tax when light trucks with a weight of 16,000 to 20,000 pounds are registered. The tax is collected like an ad valorem tax, in December and June.

In Lieu of Tax – Tax received from businesses that have issued industrial revenue bonds. These businesses do not pay taxes, but may be assessed an in lieu of tax amount to help pay for services.

Watercraft Assessments – K.S.A 79-5501 was amended by 2014 House Bill 2422, effective January 1, 2014, to change the calculation on watercraft to be based on the county average tax rate rather than being assessed like other personal property in the taxpayer's taxing unit. Because these are not specifically based on the Library's mill levy, they are budgeted based on estimates provided by the County. However, when collected and distributed to the taxing authorities, they are not separately identified and are paid with the ad valorem tax. Thus, it appears that this line item is always 100% under-budget.

Commercial Vehicle Fees – Collection of these fees began on January 1, 2014.

Reimbursement Foundation, Friends and Shawnee County – The Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library (TSCPL) initially pays the salaries and fringe benefits for employees on loan to The Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library. Occasionally, other small amounts are paid on behalf of these organizations.

New in 2013 was the reimbursement for a technical position as a result of a partnership agreement with Shawnee County Parks and Recreation. This partnership provides computer training and access, as well as programming, in the community centers to best utilize computer facilities, equipment and instructors. This cost-effectively boosts service equity to TSCPL customers without the need to invest in “bricks and mortar.” This agreement ended on December 2023, subject to a two year renewal by Shawnee County, and was renewed in 2024.

The revenues represent the reimbursement of the expected agreed-upon share for which these organizations are responsible.

Fees – TSCPL charges fees for a number of services or for non-compliance with library policies. These fees include: (1) debt collection (recovery of cost to TSCPL for using an outside debt collection service for unpaid debts); (2) interlibrary loan mailing fees; (3) mailing fees for customer-requested items; (4) non-resident library card fees; (5) copies/printing fees; (6) obituary lookup fees; (7) meeting room and/or equipment usage fees; (8) vending machine income and from the purchase of supplies such as headphones and flash drives by customers; and (9) charges for lost and damaged materials.

E-rate Reimbursement – A federal program in which 50% to 90% of approved, actual costs paid by TSCPL for internet and wireless services, as well as some types of communications equipment, are reimbursed.

Miscellaneous – Up to \$5,000 of annual revenues not categorized elsewhere. Due to the infrequency of receipt or small dollar amount per transaction, it is more efficient to lump them in one miscellaneous category.

Investment Income – Interest on invested idle funds not immediately needed for cash flow to pay operating expenditures.

Neighborhood Revitalization Rebates – Neighborhood revitalization districts may qualify for property tax rebates based only on the valuation of new improvements to the property. Since the rebates represent the ad valorem property tax that TSCPL will not receive, these are reported as a revenue reduction.

Schedule E

Facilities Master Plan

2026

Landscaping/Building Envelope

Regrade Amphitheatre Drainage	\$	50,000
Replace Joint Sealant	\$	11,000
Replace Seals on Loading Dock Overhead Doors	\$	6,000
Erosion Control (10th Ave.)	\$	10,000
Sub-Total	\$	77,000

Main Building

Complete Staff Hallway Flooring and Paint	\$	63,000
Elevator Upgrade	\$	150,000
Staff Spaces (DS & YS)	\$	175,000
Team Room Updates	\$	10,000
The Edge	\$	550,000
Upgrade Johnson Control Computer and Software	\$	35,000
Security/PA System Upgrades	\$	50,000
Meeting Rooms Carpet and Paint	\$	50,000
Architectural Fees	\$	75,000
Sub-Total	\$	1,158,000

1020 Building

Replace Joint Sealant	\$	2,000
Replace AC Unit	\$	175,000
Staff Spaces (BKM/BKM Breakroom)	\$	125,000
Water Heater	\$	3,000
Replace Boilers	\$	60,000
Sub-Total	\$	365,000

Total:	\$	1,600,000
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General Fund Budget	\$	1,550,000
State Aid Budget	\$	50,000