

PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 1, 2021 4:00 p.m.

Meeting was conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams

- Present: Nancy Puckett, Chair; Nubia Valentino, Vice-Chair; Beverly J. Bannon; Edward Buster; Barbara A. Escobar; John Halliday; Maria Iannone; Cheryl Langer; Betsy Shepard; and Elizabeth Soltero
- Absent: All were present.
- Also Present: Amber Mathewson, Library Director; Karyn Prechtel-Altman, Deputy Director; Michelle Simon, Deputy Director; Kate DeMeester, Library Services Manager; Beth Matthias-Loghry, Library Services Manager; Amy Rusk, Library Services Manager; Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager; Kendra Davey, Literacy Initiatives Program Manager and Jodi Ohlson, Caviglia-Arivaca Library Manager
- Guests: Kylie Walzak, Senior Special Staff Assistant, Board of Supervisors-District 2; and Anthony L. Young, Pima Library Foundation Board President

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Nancy Puckett and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were in attendance.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES

Edward Buster moved and John Halliday seconded approval of the March 4, 2021 minutes. Motion carried.

4. INTRODUCTIONS

Kylie Walzak, Senior Special Staff Assistant, Board of Supervisors-District 2, was introduced.

5. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS BY LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS

Board members updated on library related activities they have been doing since the last meeting. Some of the responses included:

- Nubia Valentino joined the Board of Supervisors meeting for the approval to rename the Richard Elias-Mission Library.
- John Halliday attended the online Global Arts Spotlight that was co-sponsored by Arizona Public Media and PCPL. He thought it was outstanding and thanked anyone who was part of planning it. <https://about.azpm.org/p/community/2021/3/25/191961-global-arts-spotlight/>

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- Edward Buster was happy that libraries were reopening, and gave kudos to Director Mathewson and staff for successfully making it through the challenging year. The Friends of the W. Anne Gibson-Esmond Station Library is doing a membership drive. Sahuarita Library is also making a lot of progress and he is impressed with the donations that are coming in for the outdoor performance space. He also thanked Nancy Puckett for working to get donations for the W. Anne Gibson-Esmond Station Library.
- Beverly J. Bannon recently visited the Wheeler Taft Abbett, Sr. Library and reported that the community is thrilled about the library reopening, also noting that the staff appeared very happy about it as well, and were busy filling shelves.

6. FRIENDS GROUPS AND LIBRARY FOUNDATION REPORTS ON EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES ON BEHALF OF THE PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Anthony L. Young, Pima Library Foundation Board President updated on activities of the Pima Library Foundation.

- The Foundation has almost reached halfway of their fundraising goal to support the outdoor pavilion space at Sahuarita Library.
- They continue to support Career Online High School.
- The Foundation's Executive Director, Deborah Jassem, has retired and the Foundation is seeking a replacement. The position has been posted on their website.
- Author Salons will resume in the fall.

7. LIBRARY REPORTS

A. COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT

Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager, highlighted and/or added to her written report:

- The survey has gone out to the community regarding Sahuarita Library naming. After two weeks, there have been about 1,000 responses, and will be closed soon.
- Writer in Residence Gregory McNamee will be holding another writing workshop on April 10th. <https://pima.bibliocommons.com/events/5ff75275f07222a108f784d9>
- In partnership with the University of Arizona Center for Middle Eastern Studies, two films have been selected for viewing on Kanopy. Facilitated discussions will follow. <https://pima.bibliocommons.com/events/search/q=film%20screening>
- Holly encouraged viewing the Explore page on the website, which can be filtered for desired results. <https://www.library.pima.gov/explore/> Jen Maney recently updated the Birth to Five page (found under the "Audience" tab): <https://www.library.pima.gov/explore/?audience=birth-to-five>

B. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Amber Mathewson, Library Director, highlighted and/or added to her written report:

Director Mathewson informed that the results from the survey for the Sahuarita Library name will be reviewed and organized so the Library Board could make a recommendation at next month's meeting, which will then go to the Board of Supervisors. Nancy Puckett asked about the approximate 1,000 responses received, and if that was a good number. Director Mathewson responded that it was a great response, and even more than expected. The responses will be organized in a table as was done with the Vail survey.

Director Mathewson reported that the Pima Library Foundation recently made a donation of \$50,000 for Career Online High School.

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The Welcome to America team put on the Global Arts Spotlight that John Halliday mentioned previously. It had a stunning violin performance and a cooking segment by a staff member. More events like this are being planned.

Libraries will be opening soon and most staff have had the first vaccine, with many almost ready for their second. An article from the CDC recently stated that even the first one provided 90% protection.

Edward Buster asked how long Director Mathewson thought the mask mandate would stay in effect. Director Mathewson informed that Dr. Cullen in Pima County's Health Department has said that lifting the face mask practice is probably the last thing a community should do., and doesn't think it will be recommended for some time. The community needs to be closer to herd immunity, which is about 80% of the population. The County is at around 30% right now. [201221 COVID-19 Public Health Advisory DRAFT \(00862850.DOCX;4\) \(pima.gov\)](#)

C. PUBLIC SERVICES REPORT

Karyn Prechtel-Altman, Deputy Director of Public Services & Community Engagement, highlighted and/or added to her written report:

Deputy Director Prechtel-Altman informed that staff are actively preparing to open again soon for computer use and browsing. The Bookmobile, which has been on hiatus because of Covid-19, will start providing services to the Tohono O'odham Nation, Pascua Yaqui Tribe, and other areas.

The Books on Wheels program has started up again. Volunteers take books on bikes to homebound customers. The volunteers can help pick out books, place them on reserve and spend a little time with the homebound customers. At this time, this service is coming from Joel D. Valdez Main Library, but will be expanded to other locations eventually.

Discussions with Friends groups to discuss reopening bookstores are planned for May, but will see how reopening the libraries goes over the next few weeks.

A lot of staff have been anxious about reopening, and it is challenging to invite people back into the buildings, particularly since not all staff are vaccinated. Staff are aware that the community needs libraries to be open, but there has already been pushback about having to wear masks and they are concerned about having to deal with angry individuals. Staff are being supported as best as possible during this challenging time.

In the statistics report, Sandy White highlighted Brainfuse, a Homework Help program. Deputy Directory Prechtel-Altman pointed out that tutors are available through Brainfuse to help students. Students can use Brainfuse on a phone and don't have to have a computer. Subjects such as physics, algebra, biology, and chemistry are supported by the tutors. Cheryl Langer, referencing the statistics report, asked how many people contacted Brainfuse. Deputy Directory Prechtel-Altman said she would get an answer for her.

Edward Buster asked how the Library will respond to the mask issue, particularly since Tucson Police Department and Pima County Sherriff's Department numbers are low right now and their responses are slower as a result. In order to keep staff and customers safe, how will the Library handle this? Deputy Directory Prechtel-Altman responded that staff have been getting training on different types of de-escalation techniques, and how best to talk with people who don't want to wear masks. They had a special training with Ryan Dowd, who wrote *The Librarian's Guide to Homelessness* on how to deal with people who don't want to wear masks. The Library also uses a buddy system to support each other.

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Staff are also encouraged to call 911 if someone is becoming threatening or violent, and to use those words, “threatening and violent”, not making it about wearing a mask. Guards are also being put back into libraries but VetSec is also having capacity issues.

Edward Buster then asked if the Bookmobile would be going out to events, and Deputy Directory Prechtel-Altman responded that any invitation will be considered.

Elizabeth Soltero asked if there would be additional conversations or trainings with VetSec to make sure their approaches are in alignment with PCPL’s. Deputy Directory Prechtel-Altman responded that security guards were given a training last year, and there will be more. They have access to the Ryan Dowd guide on homelessness, but since they are contracted out, it is challenging to train them properly.

Nancy Puckett asked if the active shooter preparedness training conducted at the Oro Valley Public Library would be held at other branches. Deputy Directory Prechtel-Altman said that Oro Valley Public Library had asked for the training, but that it can be provided to any library that wants it. Only Oro Valley Public Library had requested it this year.

D. SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT

Michelle Simon, Deputy Director of Support Services, highlighted and/or added to her written report:

Deputy Director Simon posted a link to Pima County’s most recent public health advisory: https://webcms.pima.gov/UserFiles/Servers/Server_6/File/Health/Alerts/FINAL%20210326%20Public%20Health%20Advisory.pdf and a link to the Arizona Daily Star article about why Pima County is sticking with the mask mandate: https://tucson.com/news/pima-county-will-continue-its-mask-mandate-despite-gov-duceys-orders/article_5e47a1ef-c44c-53fd-b4b2-04ab73847a69.html. Staff will be provided with a handout with specific wording that explains why the County is allowed to have a mask mandate, which is because of the Health Department’s authority during the pandemic.

In preparation of opening libraries, staff are being encouraged to set up their environment so that customers can be successful. For instance, benches near the entrance can be marked so no one thinks it is acceptable to sit there, or can be removed entirely to avoid having to have a conversation about why someone can’t sit there. Other things to consider are where temperature-taking stations are placed, or whether individuals are only needing to use a restroom, and not the library proper.

Signs posted about wearing masks will also state why the resolution is allowed to stay in effect. Staff are also being provided with tools for handling specific situations so that conflict can be minimized. VetSec guards will play a supporting role, and will also be provided with this information.

Three book locker systems have been installed and when ready, will allow people to pick up their material at any time. They have been installed at Oro Valley Public Library, Nanini Library, and Murphy-Wilmot Library. The next three libraries to get them will be W. Anne Gibson-Esmond Station Library, Sahuarita Library, and Joel D. Valdez Main Library.

PCPL is beta testing the ability to do self-checkout through PCPL’s phone app. People will be able to use the app to check out their own material starting in July. The app can also be used at Barnes and Noble. Scanning the ISBN code will allow the user to see if the book is in the collection, and can then be put on hold.

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Update on construction projects:

- The W. Anne Gibson-Esmond Station Library is now open, and this is the first time the community has been able to go into the new building.
- The goal is for the Sahuarita Library to open in July, if things go as planned. It is going from 3,000 square feet to over 17,000 square feet, and will have an outdoor performance space.
- The Martha Cooper Library is in the design phase for an expansion, and community and staff have provided input.
- There is a public art project happening at the Kirk-Bear Canyon Library, which is being funded by the Friends of the Kirk-Bear Canyon Library.
- An outdoor patio project is happening at the Oro Valley Public Library, funded by Friends of the Oro Valley Public Library.
- The property transfer just went through for the Richard Elías-Mission Library, so the expansion will be able to start there. The architect has been chosen.
- The County is working on purchasing land for a new location for the Southwest Library and will be adjacent to a Sheriff's substation.

Nancy Puckett asked about the renovation happening on the 4th floor of the Joel D. Valdez Main Library. Deputy Director Simon responded that the area where Technical Services, the Collection Department, and Communications and Systems Office were was reconfigured to better accommodate staff and to make more appropriate use of the space. The conference and training rooms were combined and small huddle rooms will be available. On the administration side, adjustments will allow Human Resources to be in a singular space, one office will be added, and flooring will be updated.

Anthony L. Young informed that Southern Arizona Legal Aid can be used as a resource for information and advice, and will affirm the Library's mask wearing requirements.

Director Mathewson added that a Board member had asked about continued virtual meetings, and said there would be an item on next month's agenda to discuss future meetings. Nancy Puckett noted that there wasn't a retreat last year, and there probably can't be one this year as there would be too many people to meet socially distanced. She thought that having a virtual retreat would not be ideal.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Edward Buster moved and Nubia Valentino seconded adjournment of the meeting. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

Next Meeting: May 6, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. Meeting will be held virtually, with instructions on the agenda.

Submitted by:
Judy Moses
Senior Special Staff Assistant