

PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

September 1, 2022 4:00 p.m.

Meeting was held both at Joel D. Valdez Main Library, 4th Floor Boardroom, 101 N. Stone Ave, Tucson, Arizona and virtually via Microsoft Teams

- Present: Elizabeth Soltero, Chair; Barbara Blake; Edward Buster; Lorraine Marquez Eiler; John Halliday; Maria Iannone; Craig Kleine; and Mary Ann O’Neil; and Betsy Shepard
- Absent: Barbara A. Escobar, Vice-Chair
- Also Present: Amber Mathewson, Library Director; Michelle Simon, Deputy Director; Amy Rusk, Library Services Manager; Kate DeMeester-Lane, Library Services Manager; Beth Matthias-Loghry, Library Services Manager; Sharla Ronstadt, Library Services Manager; Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager; and Stephanie Mitchell, JDC Librarian
- Guests: Tom Cashman, Pima Library Foundation

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

2. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Sheila Soto, College of Public Health at the University of Arizona, informed that they offer free mobile health screenings to people in Southern Arizona. The screenings include blood pressure checks, glucose checks, and physical measurements. They slowed down since Covid, and are reaching out to the community to start up again, and hope to start visiting libraries again.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING’S MINUTES

Edward Buster moved and Barbara Blake seconded approval of the August 4, 2022 minutes. Motion carried.

4. INTRODUCTIONS

No introductions were made.

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:

- John Halliday attended events for the 20th anniversary celebration of the Oro Valley Public Library. The events were well-attended, and many members of the public were in attendance. He congratulated everyone who worked on this successful event.

Library Advisory Board Minutes

- Betsy Shepard visited the Frank De La Cruz-El Pueblo Library recently, and the atmosphere felt different than her previous visit. There were more people visiting, and lots of families with their children.
- Elizabeth Soltero also went to Frank De La Cruz-El Pueblo Library to look at the space for her Foundation, and saw the new fencing that was recently installed.

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

There were no updates from Friends or Foundation groups.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Update on the Library Program in Detention—Stephanie Mitchell, JDC Librarian

Stephanie Mitchell has been a Librarian Substitute for 12 years, and works at the JDC. They work to encourage literacy, both while they stay at the center, and when they leave.

When a new youth arrives at the facility, she educates them about what the Library can do for them. There are usually around 27-28 kids, and at one time, there used to be over 100. They get to pick a giveaway book, and they get a welcome binder, which includes a library card application. For many, it is the first time they are introduced to the Library.

They are currently working on an exciting project with Marge Pellegrino to create two volumes of guided journals, or field notes. Every youth will be issued these when they arrive and will help with their social and emotional progress. It is going through the design process, and should be rolled out by October or November.

Presenters used to be able to come on site, but were not allowed with the pandemic and outside visitors are still not allowed. They are working on developing virtual programs, which is hard to do without computers. They are looking at how Maricopa County has managed using tablets.

Barbara Blake mentioned reading an article in the Green Valley News about a Cox collaboration with the Food Bank where they provided computers. Director Mathewson noted that one of the issues with computers is that due to safety factors, Juvenile Detention has to be careful about what is allowed, and don't even allow hard cover books. Stephanie Mitchell said they would see how Maricopa County made it happen.

Mary Ann O'Neil asked what Marge Pellegrino has planned. Stephanie Mitchell responded that she was brought on for the specific purpose of creating the journals, and added that her experience working with children who have had adverse childhood experiences is substantial.

John Halliday asked why the average number of youth has gone down from as high as 100, and was told that while Covid did bring the numbers down, the court system has also been using diversion programs that allow services to be provided, but not in an incarcerated environment.

Library Advisory Board Minutes

Elizabeth Soltero asked who oversees JDC, and what shifted from being considered a branch vs. being a program. Director Mathewson responded that the JDC falls under Pima County Superior Court, and the school is under the Pima County School Superintendent. Stephanie Mitchell added that the JDC isn't a branch, books are not catalogued. They can't have a library card, and that this is a program because it is a transient environment. The average stay is 20 days. An important component to the program is the support the library provides after they are out.

Holly Schaffer shared this article Stephanie Mitchell wrote last year about the JDC: <https://www.library.pima.gov/blogs/post/we-are-helping-them-forge-a-better-path/>

8. LIBRARY REPORTS

A. COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT

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

- September is "Sign up for a library card" month. Encourage anyone you know who doesn't have one, to get one. <https://www.library.pima.gov/blogs/post/sign-up-for-a-library-card-in-september/>
- Annual Worlds of Imagination art contest is happening for teens and tweens. The deadline to submit work is September 24. <https://www.library.pima.gov/news/annual-worlds-of-imagination-art-contest/>
- The Biblio Lotus team has produced a lot of great content on the website, and just published the first of a series on mastering a new language. The first one is about learning Chinese, with Korean and Japanese to follow. <https://www.library.pima.gov/blogs/post/mastering-a-second-language-chinese/>

B. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- PCPL is still working on filling many positions, but unfortunately the Library keeps losing people to other County departments, or places around the country.
- The County is working on the salary study for the entirety of the County. Every member, over 7,000 people, had to fill out a job survey. Staff had until August 29 to complete the questionnaires, and then supervisors review them. A private company will then review all of them, and the project will probably take a year to complete.
- The Board of Supervisors will be considering some new incentives for staff. There is a proposal for more vacation and sick leave being available sooner. They may eventually move away from vacation and sick leave, and move towards accumulated time. Educational reimbursement has already been approved.

C. PUBLIC SERVICES REPORT

Karyn Prechtel-Altman, Deputy Director of Public Services & Community Engagement, was not in attendance, and there were no questions for her.

D. SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT

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

Library Advisory Board Minutes

Deputy Director Simon informed that for the month of September, in coordination with the Health Department, twelve Library branches, will be participating in passive distribution of Covid test kits. The federal government will no longer be offering free test kits.

<https://webcms.pima.gov/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=575060>

Mary Ann O'Neil asked about the status of Martha Cooper Library and Deputy Director Simon informed that the County completed revamping the estimate and the paperwork is currently with the Procurement Department. She anticipates that that solicitation will go out mid-September. The last open day to the public will be November 19, and they will be closed for approximately 16 months.

Tom Cashman asked how usage differs in branches located in malls, like Dusenberry-River and Kirk-Bear Canyon, and if they were safer. Deputy Director Simon responded that they have higher circulation than others, and weren't necessarily safer. Those locations have a high number of people who place material on hold, and use electronic resources. Director Mathewson added that PCPL has considered moving out of the malls, but noted that in doing so, it would change the population they serve.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Maria Iannone moved and Edward Buster seconded adjournment of the meeting. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Next Meeting: October 6, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.

Submitted by:
Judy Moses
Senior Special Staff Assistant