

PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 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: Barbara A. Escobar, Vice-Chair; Barbara Blake; Edward Buster; Lorraine Marquez Eiler; John Halliday; Maria Iannone; Craig Kleine; Mary Ann O’Neil; and Betsy Shepard
- Absent: Elizabeth Soltero, Chair
- Also Present: Amber Mathewson, Library Director; Michelle Simon, Deputy Director; Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director; Kate DeMeester-Lane, Library Services Manager; Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager; and Ken Zambos, Workforce and Economic Development Manager
- Guests: None

1. CALL TO ORDER: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Barbara Escobar and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Barbara Escobar read PCPL’s Land Acknowledgement Statement.

2. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No members of the public spoke.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING’S MINUTES

Edward Buster moved and John Halliday seconded approval of the November 3, 2022 minutes. Motion carried.

4. INTRODUCTIONS

Marissa Alcorta was introduced as the newest Deputy Director. She is from Tucson, has worked for PCPL fourteen years, and was most recently the Branch Manager of Quincie Douglas Library.

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 thanked Director Mathewson for sending the Urban Libraries Council’s (ULC) Declaration of Democracy, finding it strong and timely. He also congratulated Edward Buster on his recent election to the Vail School Board.
- Edward Buster informed that he was voted onto the Vail Unified School District’s Governing Board, and thanked the Library Board for all of their support.

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

Director Mathewson informed that the previously scheduled agenda item on the Community Engagement Division was postponed due to Deputy Director Prechtel-Altman's absence.

8. LIBRARY REPORTS

A. COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT

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

Holly read an email received from a customer in Ajo about his gratitude for the Library's support and services, specifically Wi-Fi, which were needed to keep his business alive during the pandemic. He also expressed his appreciation for the continued services the Salazar-Ajo Library provides in Ajo's isolated community.

B. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Karyn Prechtel-Altman, Deputy Director of Community Engagement, was not in attendance, and there were no questions about her report.

C. PUBLIC SERVICES REPORT

Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director of Public Services/Customer Experience, highlighted and/or added to her written report:

Deputy Director Alcorta informed that the Encuentro Internacional Sobre Comunicación Frontera y Movimientos Emergentes event was coming up on Friday and Saturday at the Sam Lena-South Tucson Library. It is a community event, is free and is centered on emerging trends at the borderlands. It is a partnership between PCPL, the University of Arizona Mexican American Studies Department, and the Universidad de Sonora. Many presentations will be bilingual.

D. SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT

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

Deputy Director Simon informed about the various facilities projects happening regarding furniture installment and those related to safety.

- Service desks have been installed at many branches, to allow for more staff safety.
- Some staff areas were also reconfigured to help with efficiency.
- Carpet installations are happening at various locations.
- A new sidewalk is getting installed around the Nanini Library so people can walk safely to the Library.

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- Valencia Library's parking lot was completely redone, a perimeter fence was installed, and had an exterior book drop installed.
- The northwest parking lot of the Joyner-Green Valley Library is getting redone.
- The irrigation system at the Nanini Library was fixed, and trees and plants were replaced. The grass is being replaced with artificial turf because watering it damaged the stucco, which had to be fixed.
- Kirk-Bear Canyon Library had their outdoor area evaluated for outdoor seating.
- The Martha Cooper Library is closed for 16 months. Bookmobile stops will be scheduled nearby, and Murphy-Wilmot Library, Columbus Library and Himmel Park Libraries are within a two mile radius.
- The celebration for the naming of the Richard Elías-Mission Library and the unveiling of the concept design will be on December 16th at 3:30. The architects will work on completing the construction documents, which will take about 8 or 9 months. Construction won't begin until late 2023.
- The Himmel Park Library will be getting a 5,000 sq. ft. expansion and an architect will be onboard next fiscal year to create a design. They will work with the Himmel Park Neighborhood Association on putting in a community garden.
- Land has been purchased for the Southwest Library and the design process is being worked on. It will be very close to the current location.
- Next fiscal year's budget is in process.

John Halliday asked what the process was for selecting an architect. Deputy Director Simon responded that first a Request for Qualifications goes out, which asks if they have ever built a public library, if they understand how a public library works, and questions about their prior projects. After a panel reviews all the proposals and in-person presentations, the top three are interviewed. The process can take 6-7 months to choose an architect.

E. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

Director Mathewson informed that PCPL has been doing a lot of hiring, with 80 people being hired so far this year. In addition to Deputy Director Alcorta, five Library Services Managers (LSMs) have been hired, which are positions below Deputy Directors. Librarian III positions will be going out soon, followed by the Librarian II positions in January. Program Manager positions will be posted later, and Librarian I positions are being posted as open and continuous. PCPL's Accounting Department is down to one person, and should have three or four. A trainee position has been opened up in that department, which allows people without qualifications to apply and be trained.

Director Mathewson talked about the Urban Libraries Council's Declaration of Democracy, and how Deputy Director Simon recently went to the ULC forum in Washington D.C. to discuss the real purpose of public libraries, which is to be able to provide for opportunities for people to be ready to participate in a democratic society. Libraries are one of the few organizations that are really focused on helping to ensure that there is a democratic process in the United States, and that people have access and understand how the process works. PCPL has been working hard on ensuring equity in all the things we do. Deputy Director Simon's staff has been working on collection development and looking at the collection to make sure all the information is available for all of the communities served,

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and that the collections are well balanced. The collection is being looked at in a way that hasn't been done before. Deputy Director Prechtel-Altman is working with staff on policies and procedures, and some of those will be coming to the Library Board. Right now, the Code of Conduct is being looked at with an eye to equity, as is extending the restorative practices to adults that are currently used for youth. Again, to ensure that people have access and are treated equitably. For example, when fall asleep in the library, we want to be sure we're equitable and treating people who are experiencing homelessness the same as those who are not. We are also looking at the Spanish Collection in branches to see if they are where everyone can find it, and if there are any other barriers.

Director Mathewson requested that the Library Board look at things with that in mind, such as website, branch visits, program attendance—to see if they are accessible to everyone, and to let us know when things aren't working well. She encouraged talking with staff and seeing if there is anything coming up for them when visiting a branch.

Barbara Escobar asked if there were any safety or security updates. Director Mathewson responded that El Pueblo Library has been doing better with the presence of Sheriff's Deputies, but the Library can't afford to do that all the time. A lot of other entities are experiencing the same thing, and businesses have described the vandalism and fires they're experiencing at a recent Board of Supervisors meeting.

Deputy Director Simon added that PCPL has also put up fences, added security cameras, has been changing service desk configurations, badge access, and installed bullet resistant film on doors with windows. Damage to buildings is most problematic. Issues tend to crop up in libraries first and are indicative of what is happening in the community.

Director Mathewson recently attended a webinar and heard that many libraries are experiencing the same thing. She also heard that many libraries don't have a Code of Conduct, also don't have real procedures in place for staff. PCPL has had one in place for several years.

Betsy Shepard commented that she has noticed that the Spanish Collection has improved a lot. She has visited several libraries and has seen a big difference.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Edward Buster moved and Craig Kleine seconded adjournment of the meeting. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Next Meeting: January 5, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.

Submitted by:
Judy Moses
Senior Special Staff Assistant