

PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 7, 2023 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: Mary Ann O’Neil, Chair; Maria Iannone, Vice-Chair; John Halliday; Craig Kleine; Mariana Padias; Rebecca Téllez Peralta; and Elizabeth Soltero
- Absent: None
- Also Present: Amber Mathewson, Library Director; Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director; Paulina Aguirre-Clinch, Library Services Manager; Em DeMeester-Lane, Library Services Manager; Kate DeMeester-Lane, Library Services Manager; Vicki Lázaro, Library Services Manager; Beth Matthias-Loghry, Library Services Manager; Sharla Ronstadt, Library Services Manager; and Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager
- Guests: Bonnie Bazata, Ending Poverty Now Program Manager; and Nicole Fyffe, Senior Advisor to County Administrator

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

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

2. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Bill Forbes commented that the hours PCPL was open was when people were working, and it would be useful if evening hours could be extended later for working people and students.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING’S MINUTES

John Halliday moved and Maria Iannone seconded approval of the November 2, 2023 minutes. Motion carried.

4. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made around the room.

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:

- Maria Iannone spoke with a constituent from District 1 who contacted the Library Board to share his concerns that libraries should be open for longer hours. She supported Director Mathewson’s explanation that the Library is working to create more accessible hours, and the hope is to have increased hours in the new year.
- Elizabeth Soltero commented that she attended Día de Los Muertos at El Pueblo Neighborhood Center. The Library had an outreach table and there was a second annual

community altar. She also commented that she and Rebecca Téllez Peralta will meet with Supervisor Grijalva's office next week.

- John Halliday thanked Holly Schaffer for the Savannah emails he gets regularly. He finds them to be very informative. He used the list she sent out on recommended books for children for his grandchildren.

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

No members were in attendance, but Director Mathewson informed that the Pima Library Foundation made a nice pamphlet to give out to donors, and it has inserts so that different groups can be targeted.

Director Mathewson also read a letter that Wendy Dresang from the Friends of the Arivaca Library had written to Supervisor Sharon Bronson before her retirement from the Board of Supervisors. She asked Supervisor Bronson to request that constituents who wanted certain books removed from the Library's shelves not request the Board of Supervisors directly, but follow procedures in place by going to their library and having a discussion there.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Prosperity Initiative Presentation—Bonnie Bazata, Ending Poverty Now Program Manager

Bonnie Bazata presented information about Pima County's Prosperity Initiative Highlights included:

- The Prosperity Initiative is an effort to reduce generational poverty and improve community wealth.
- Low-income children, women, single parents, and people of color are most impacted by poverty and were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.
- Pima County has a high poverty rate.
- Tucson's ranking for Child Opportunity is one of the lowest 10 metro areas in the country.
- Investing in children is the strongest return on investment.
- Intergenerational persistence of low-income status differs sharply by race.
- There is a strong association between growing up in a single-parent family and low-income status in adulthood in the U.S.
- The Prosperity Initiative is an opportunity to be "architects of change for the next generation."
- The Prosperity Initiative's mandate was to work regionally to develop a set of policies that guide long-term efforts to create community wealth by addressing generational poverty and improving opportunity.
- Using community and expert input, the four policy areas of focus are education, critical family resources, asset building and infrastructure priorities, and cross policy strategies.
- Next steps are to scan, analyze and realign, develop metrics to measure impact, and to continue and expand partnerships.

Mary Ann O'Neil asked what Library staff has been involved and was told that Deputy Director Prechtel-Altman has been involved in all the meetings, and at times, Kendra Davey and Deputy Director Simon.

B. Discussion about Revising Library Board Bylaws—All

Mary Ann O’Neil stated that Library Advisory Board Bylaws was on the agenda to discuss the possibility of changing the current quorum requirement of having six members attend, regardless of the number of positions that are filled. If they are revised, they will need to get approved by the Board of Supervisors.

John Halliday commented that the Library Board struggles to meet the quorum because of the vacancies. He looked into what another County did, and their quorum was based on the number of positions also. He’d then wondered if this Library Board was more in line with Arizona State than we knew, and if the Bylaws should remain unchanged to avoid possible future challenges. Mary Ann O’Neil thought that based on what the County Attorney said during the Open Meeting Law training, the definition of quorum could still be modified. She thought that more research would still be useful. John Halliday agreed to look at Bylaws with her.

8. LIBRARY REPORTS

A. COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT

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

The Annual Report will feature an email from a patron about how the Library affected his life, and Holly Schaffer read it to the Board. The Annual Report will be out by the next meeting.

B. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Karyn Prechtel-Altman, Deputy Director of Community Engagement was not in attendance. There were no requests for updates.

C. PUBLIC SERVICES REPORT

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

Deputy Director Alcorta provided a brief hiring update. Placements for the new Library Technical Associate Supervisors are being determined. Interviews for Librarian II and Librarian III positions will be happening soon.

Discussions have begun on shifting branch hours. The last Public Services meeting was in person, and they brainstormed on how to offer more accessibility for the community. They looked at potentially more evening hours and some Saturday hours. They are still finalizing the plan and the goal is to start mid to late January.

Team members from the Many Nations Team partnered with the Pima County Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office to help create an event for celebration of Native American Heritage Month that was held last month. It was a great celebration that highlighted some of PCPL’s indigenous staff. The Land Acknowledgement Statement was read and Lindsey Curley read a beautiful poem. She was also invited to share it at the Board of Supervisors meeting this month. The event was the first of its kind for the County and highlighted how Library staff is working to create inclusive environments.

D. SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT

Michelle Simon, Deputy Director of Support Services, was not in attendance.

Director Mathewson said that this would have been Deputy Director Simon's last meeting as December 31st is her last day with the Library. She has moved into her new office as Director of Digital Inclusion. She will be missed greatly. Kendra Davey will also be resigning in January.

E. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

Director Mathewson reported that they are looking for Deputy Director Simon's replacement. They have had a robust number of applicants, and interviews will start soon. There are also some positions in Ajo to fill.

The Library continues to work with the Health Department. The Health Department has successfully had mobile units come to several of the libraries over this past year, and will continue to do so in the new year.

PCPL is working with County Communications to help Pima Animal Care Center (PACC) make connections with Spanish-speaking community at the libraries.

The Library is also working with the University of Arizona Extension to have a farmers market at Valencia Library every Wednesday starting in January. The farmers at that market will be refugee farmers.

John Halliday asked if there was anything new with staff compensation and Director Mathewson responded that the County moved through Phases 1 and 2, and Phase 3 is how they determine how people will continue to move through pay grade as time goes on. There is no information on that yet, but is probably coming soon. The departmental appeals have been completed, individual classification appeals have been completed, but they still have about 300 pay reviews that may not have been done correctly because of years of service or some similar issue. Hopefully they will all be completed by the end of the month.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Maria Iannone moved and John Halliday seconded adjournment of the meeting. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

Next Meeting: January 4, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

Submitted by:
Judy Moses
Administrative Specialist III