

PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 7, 2024, 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;
Mariana Padias; Craig Kleine; Elizabeth Sotero; and Sharon Foltz

Absent: Rebecca Peralta

Also Present: Amber Mathewson, Library Director; Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director; Karyn
Prechtel-Altman, Deputy Director; Jessica Thornburg, Deputy Director; Kate
DeMeester-Lane, Library Services Manager; Beth Matthias-Loghry, Library
Services Manager; Sharla Ronstadt, Library Services Manager; and Em
DeMeester-Lane, Library Services Manager

Guests: None

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

The 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

No members of the public spoke.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING’S MINUTES

Sharon Foltz moved, and Maria Iannone seconded approval of the February 1, 2024, 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:

- Craig Kleine indicated that he was looking forward to the Tucson Festival of Books.
- Mary Ann O’Neil reported having attended the Career Online High School graduation at the Wilmot Library of February 17th, indicating that the event was well attended and fabulous!
- Sharon Foltz acknowledged that District 3 Supervisor Dr. Sylvia M. Lee attended the Career Online High School graduation as well.

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

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Director Mathewson shared that the Pima Library Foundation contributed funding to support the library venue at the Tucson Festival of Books and would have PL Foundation board members at the Nuestras Raíces tent throughout the festival to talk with festival attendees.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Library Board Retreat— Director Mathewson and Library Board

Chair O'Neil asked the board to share ideas for the annual Library Board retreat. Director Mathewson suggested that the date Saturday May 4th, 2024, be set for the retreat and that the venue be the new Tortolitta Room at the Joel D. Valdez Main Library. Director Mathewson also suggested that a sharing of the new areas of focus for the library's strategic plan would be a good place to start to help the Library Advisory Board, Foundation and Friends Groups to align their planning with Library initiatives. Discussion ensued, with the following topics suggested:

- Library strategic planning
- Updates on policies regarding collection development, book challenges and computer access for children and teens.
- Safety and security in PCPL libraries
- Roles of volunteers and advocates in supporting library initiatives and challenges

Director Mathewson indicated that staff will provide an outline for the day at the next board meeting.

8. LIBRARY REPORTS

A. COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT

Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager shared the following highlights in addition to the written report:

- A recent Savannah email that was for the Bedtime Stories group with the subject of Cats elicited a 485% open rate! Indicating that individuals opened it multiple times and shared the email with others. In addition, there were 800 click throughs for that email.
- Holly recommended the moving blog post written by the Career Online High School Valedictorian, Annette Hernandez-Carbajal: [Community spotlight: The education of Annette Hernandez-Carbajal | Pima County Public Library](#) .
- Also recommended is the Kanopy curated items for Women's History Month.
- PCPL has an open the call for submissions from local musicians from February 15, 2024, and running through March 15, 2024. This will make local music available for free to the public with a small stipend for musicians. [Pima County musicians: Your work could be part of the Library's new streaming service | Pima County Public Library](#).
- Library Closures: Richard Elías Mission Library will have its last day open to the public on Friday March 8th. The library will undergo a major renovation to be completed by summer, 2025. Chair O'Neil asked if there had been community feedback on the closure, and it was indicated that while community members will miss the library, they are excited about the renovations.
Golf Links has an upcoming brief closure for workflow improvements in the staff area.
- Sharon Foltz asked if there had been a positive response to expanded hours. Schaffer indicated that many responses came in praising expanded hours and asking questions regarding future library hours expansion.

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- Holly highlighted the Annual Report that was provided to the Board members attending the meeting and will be mailed to those absent from the meeting.

B. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Karyn Prechtel-Altman, Deputy Director of Community Engagement highlighted or added to her written report:

Deputy Prechtel-Altman indicated that Visual Marketing Manager, Renee Bibby's report would now be incorporated with Holly Schaffer's Community Relations Report as they work in the same area/department.

A flyer providing information on Pima County's Summer Youth Worker program was distributed. Karyn indicated that youth ages 14-18 can apply to work in many different areas of the County. Many youth workers from the path have become permanent library employees are some are now part of Library Leadership. Sharon Foltz asked if it was okay to post this information on "Next Door" and it was indicated that sharing this information with any community groups and individuals would be very helpful. [Summer Youth Employment Program | Pima County, AZ](#)

A Library Services and Technology Act grant (LSTA) has been submitted to potentially engage a consultant to help the library determine what programs, services, and partnerships the library might begin to address the needs of those individuals in our community struggling with houselessness, addiction, hunger, and poverty. It is hoped that the outcome will be a recommendation on how to fill the gap left by the absence of the Library Nurse Program. The grant requests about \$60,000. This money is provided to Arizona Libraries through the Arizona State Library from the Federal Government through the Institute of Museums and Library Services.

Sharon Foltz asked if the library has worked with community health workers. Deputy Director Prechtel-Altman shared information on the library's collaborations with the Pima County Health Department on initiatives, information sharing and referrals, as well as our work with Street Physicians from El Rio Health Center who frequent our libraries. One example of multi-agency collaboration was the recent Pima Animal Care event at the Richard Elias Mission Library as part of the "Return Home" campaign. This event was intended to get the word out to the Spanish speaking community on what to do when finding stray animals and to provide food and pet care items to individuals. Both the Pima County Health Department and the Pima County Public Library participated in this event which was well attended by the community.

A question regarding the reallocation of temporary staff hired by the County to help with the Casa Alita's center would be redeployed when the funding for asylum-seekers ends March 31st. Those permanent Pima County employees will continue with their regular assignments. There is no current information regarding the plan regarding temporary workers engaged in this work.

C. PUBLIC SERVICES REPORT

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

Deputy Director Alcorta indicated that the library has completed the hiring for 6 Librarian II positions, the individuals will be starting by the end of the month. Two of the positions were filled by individuals outside the library system (one is a returning staff member).

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Progress has been made in looking at minimum qualifications for library positions from the library staffing taskforce and more recently with the help of Library Services Managers. Sharon Foltz asked about courses at Pima Community College, and Director Mathewson indicated that Pima Community College does have some introductory Library related courses and that the University of Arizona has one bachelor's degree, five master's degree programs and a PhD offered through the School of Information. Craig Kleine asked if the courses prepare students for work in libraries. Staff indicated that the I-School often invites public library staff to present to students, however public libraries are not the only focus for the school. Ms. Alcorta shared information on the Knowledge River program that recruits for students eager to work in Latino and Native American and underserved populations – which is a cohort-based experience that does help prepare students for real life career experience.

Library openings and closings:

- Mission Library closing March 9 – Summer 2025
- Golf Links brief closure for workflow improvements.
- Himmel Library in planning stages for a renovation to happen next year.
- Martha Cooper Library is set to reopen mid-late June following a major renovation.

Final Highlight shared: Arivaca Library and community are hosting the Annual Turkey Vulture Festival on March 23rd. This is an event not to be missed and will include a Vulture-inspired Art Show and music! John Halliday, who attended last year, indicated that it was a delightful event.

Chair O'Neil indicated her praise for the reports submitted by branches and finds them very informative.

John Halliday asked about the new data tracking mentioned in the report from Ken Zambos. Marissa described that Ken and a team of managers have set up a pilot to capture data on how individuals are using our libraries and how staff are engaging in different ways that are not captured in our current data collection. It is hoped that this will help to inform staffing, budgeting and advocacy relating to library services and needs. Board member Halliday indicated that this might be good information to share at the 2025 retreat when the outcomes from this survey are known. This project is one that was a grassroots effort from the library branch managers.

D. FINANCE AND FACILITIES REPORT

Jessica Thornburg, Deputy Director of Finance and Facilities:

Deputy Director Thornburg introduced herself, sharing that she is four weeks into her new position. Ms. Thornburg comes to the library from her most recent position at the University of Arizona where she was the Senior Director of Strategy and Special Projects. Future Library Board reports will contain some information previously listed under Library Support Services.

E. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

Director Mathewson shared her excitement to welcome Jessica Thornburg into the role of Deputy Director!

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It was also reported that the director's assistant, Judy Moses, had her official last day of work 3/1/2024. While she will be missed, the Library Administration is happy to welcome Laura Lopez into the position on Monday 3/11/24. Ms. Lopez is coming to the library from the County Communications department, having worked in the Library Department previously.

Director Mathewson indicated what changes will be made to the Library Advisory Reports in the Board packet.

It was reported that hiring is going well. Director Mathewson did share the overall County budget deficits and how that might affect the library. Working on making strategic decisions regarding hiring so that if there is a hiring freeze the effects would be minimal.

A board member asked about money recently allocated from the County to Tucson Medical Center. Director Mathewson indicated that would be a question to the Supervisors.

Chair O'Neil asked how much of the Library Department funding is provided by the secondary property tax. Director Mathewson indicated that the Library Department does not receive money from the County General Fund; the bulk of the funding is from the secondary tax and then there is about \$450,000 annual contributions from the Friend's groups, the Library Foundation, and individual donations. A brief history of library funding was provided for the benefit of new board members.

A reminder was given to attend the Tucson Festival of Books!

9. ADJOURNMENT

John Halliday moved, and Sharon Foltz seconded adjournment of the meeting. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

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

Submitted by:
Amber D. Mathewson
Library Director