

**PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

February 6, 2025, 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: **Mariana** Padias, Chair; John Halliday, Maria Iannone, Mary Ann O’Neil and Sharon Foltz

Absent: Craig Kleine, Vice-Chair Rebecca Téllez Peralta(resigned), Anna Sanchez

Also Present: Amber Mathewson, Library Director; Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director; Anthony Batchelder, Deputy Library Director; Em DeMeester-Lane, Deputy Director; Kate DeMeester-Lane, Library Services Manager; Vicki Lázaro, Library Services Manager; Beth Matthias-Loghry, Library Services Manager; Paulina Aguirre-Clinch, Library Services Manager, Ken Zambos, Linde Furman, Library Services Manager; Renee Bibby, Library Services Manager, Holly Schaefer, Community Relations Manager; Lorie Zambos, Library Associate; Carl Murdock, Librarian; Laura Lopez, Assistant to Library Director; Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator; Rod Lane, Director Project Design and Construction; Martyn Klell, Deputy Director Project Design and Construction

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

**2. CALL TO THE PUBLIC: None**

**3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

John Halliday moved to approve December 5, 2024, meeting minutes, Mary Ann O’Neil seconded, motion carried.

**4. INTRODUCTION**

Chair, Mariana Padia shared that Vice-Chair, Rebecca Peralta resigned from the Library Advisory Board.

Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator, introduced himself by giving a short bio of himself.

**5. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS BY LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS**

John Halliday shared the discussion of the meeting he and Maria Iannone had with Supervisor Scott, along with the library director and deputies. John also pointed out the article from the New York Public Library study showing the importance of public libraries.

Mary Ann O’Neil shared that she visits Himmel Branch every week and is happy about the upcoming remodeling for the branch.

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

Pi Polletta, Library Foundation, shared the Foundation’s commitment to

- Funding Career Online High School scholarships
- Providing 25 mobile hotspots per year
- Managing the scholarship program for library staff pursuing a master’s in library and information science degree

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- They have achieved 60% of their fundraising goal
- Penny Moreno, Friends of the Library mentioned they've taken over the bookstore operations from the Friends of Green Valley Library. She also mentions a member sale this week and a community sale next week.

### 7. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discuss proposed FY2025/2026 Budget and comparison of FY2024/2025 Budget – Amber Mathewson and Anthony Batchelder.

A Comprehensive strategy for Providing Excellent Library Service PowerPoint was provided. The library system is actively planning, with a focus on staffing, service expansion and community needs.

### 8. Unfinished Business

- A. Library Planning

Director Mathewson stated the survey went out to the community on January 31. As of Thursday, 2/6, there have been more than 5K responses. She confirmed we are not closing any libraries. We are increasing community engagement and boosting survey participation to guide future decisions. The survey will be up for at least 6 weeks if not longer. We have posters and sharing on social media. A consultant will likely be brought in to facilitate community engagement and long-term planning.

Also mentioned was the possibility of relocating or temporarily moving the Main library, with the Wells Fargo building as a potential location. A formal request to the City of Tucson for repairs to the current building has not been submitted.

Rod Lane, Director, and Martyn Klell, Deputy Director, from Project Design & Construction attended the meeting to provide insights into the cost comparison of repairing versus replacing the Main Library. The board determined that further clarification is needed and agreed to invite Rod Lane and Martyn Klell to a future meeting for additional discussion.

### 9. OTHER NEW BUSINESS

- B. Tucson Festival of Books – Paulina Aguirre-Clinch provided a PowerPoint on:

- March 15 – 16, 2025 at the U of A Mall, will feature over 300 authors.
- Diversity & Representation
- Love in Literature Panel
- Paranormal & Sci-Fi Panel
- “Powerhouse Chingonas” Panel
- Moderators & Collaborations

- C. Southwest Books of the Year – Beth Matthias-Loghry provided a PowerPoint presentation and highlighted:

- Library employee Carolina Caples, who created the artwork.
- The publication has been published for 48 years originating as a Christmas book gift idea list by the Arizona Daily Star reporters and U of A librarians.
- Publication made possible through partnerships with several organizations.

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- It is distributed in Arizona libraries, bookstores, government offices, tribal libraries and Southwest regional libraries
- Copies of the publication are taken to the National Book Festival in Washington, D.C.
- Has been a part of the Tucson Festival of Books since its inception.

### 10. LIBRARY REPORTS

#### COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT

Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager,

- Joined Ravenous Readers Personalized Reading Recommendations where readers submit books they like/dislike and receive tailored recommendations. They cover multiple genres
- Author Tom Holmes will be giving free workshops at Nanini and Martha Cooper as well as at the Tucson Festival of Books
- The Steam Maker event is February 27<sup>th</sup> in Sahuarita in collaboration with the School District, there were 300 attendees last year.
- The Library Community Survey went out to 91,000 people electronically

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT:

Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director, of Community Engagement. She provided an update on:

- Digital Inclusion & Literacy at LibLearnX (ALA Conference)
- Community Survey & Outreach Efforts
- New Staff & Training Initiatives

#### PUBLIC SERVICES & REPORT

Em DeMeester-Lane, Deputy Director, provided an update on:

- New Staff & Training Initiatives
- LSTA Grant for Customer Psychosocial Needs Analysis. Beth Waller conducted Individual interviews with staff, sent out an All-staff survey, visited libraries. A report with recommendations is expected soon.
- All branches now use a uniform scheduling template for efficiency.
- System allows easy access and accurate tabulation

#### SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT

Anthony Batchelder, Deputy Director, provided the following highlights:

- Facilities and Maintenance updates
- Finance and Contracts
- Staffing and HR
- Security & Incidents

The question was asked whether the library has a regular schedule of updates, i.e., carpets, refreshers, windows, etc. Anthony responded there is a schedule for updates, but at times it may change due to needs elsewhere.

#### LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Amber Mathewson, Library Director provided updates on:

- Team recognition & Staffing
- Facilities & Maintenance
- Finance & Contracts
- Security & Incident Reports

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- Federal Funding & Policy Concerns
- Legal & Communications

The Main Library discussion & Future Planning was introduced to initiate conversations, which will be scheduled with proper preparation and hope to encourage trust in upcoming improvements for next fiscal year.

### 11. ADJOURNMENT

Mary Ann O'Neil moved to adjourn meeting; John Halliday seconded. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** March 6, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

**Submitted by:** Laura Lopez, Administrative Specialist III