

PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 1, 2025, 4:00 PM

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 Vice-Chair; Anna Sanchez,
Maria Iannone, Mary Ann O'Neil, and Sharon Foltz

Absent: N/A

Also Present: Amber Mathewson, Library Director; Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director;
Anthony Batchelder, Deputy Library Director; Em DeMeester-Lane,
Deputy Director; Vicki Lázaró; Library Services Manager; Alina Rowe,
Library Services Manager; Linde Furman, Library Services Manager;
Renee Bibby, Library Services Manager, Kate DeMeester-Lane, Library
Services Manager; Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager and
Laura Lopez, Assistant to Library Director

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

2. CALL TO THE PUBLIC: None

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Sharon moved to approve April 3, 2025, meeting minutes, Anna Sanchez seconded, motion carried.

4. INTRODUCTION

Alina Rowe, Library Services Manager, Community Engagement

5. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS BY LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS

Anna Sanchez visited the El Pueblo Branch Library where the University of Arizona design students showcased their final projects at El Pueblo Library, aimed at celebrating the El Pueblo Neighborhood Center's upcoming 50th anniversary. The event highlighted community engagement through personal narratives, with students presenting thoughtful and creative work.

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

Pi Polletta, Pima Library Foundation Update:

- A recent donor engagement event featured Amber Mathewson and a Career Online High School graduate speaker.
- The team is finalizing the selection of a new endowment management company following a lengthy RFP process.
- The spring appeal is set to be mailed next week as a final fundraising push for the fiscal year.
- Four applicants have applied for the scholarship fund formerly managed by the Green Valley Friends of the Library, with award decisions expected next month.

Penny Moreno, **Friends of the Library:**

- The next Members-Only Book Sales are scheduled for May 17–18, with Community Sales on May 23–26 at the Country Club location.
- The Friends recently delivered \$65,000 to the library—marking the third of four pledged payments—with one final installment of \$65,000–\$70,000 due by year-end.
- Amber Mathewson also spoke at the Friends' annual April luncheon, where she provided library updates and was warmly received.

7. New Business:

A. Community Engagement and Public Services-Collaboration, Reorganization, and Vision – Marissa Alcorta and Em DeMeester-Lane provided information on the direction and priorities of Public Services and Community Engagement:

- Formalizing Training and Development
- Rebuilding the Community Engagement Office
- Empowering Branch-Level Programming
- Strategic Support and Partnership Building
- Embedding Community Engagement in Branches

This strategy emphasizes **capacity-building, decentralization, and responsive support**, aiming to align services more closely with both staff needs and community realities.

The library team agreed to review programming and staffing data using the existing January 2025 spreadsheet during the June meeting. This comparison will assess how programming levels align with staffing, with a goal of determining whether the tool is useful for ongoing evaluation. Based on June's insights, a decision will be made about conducting a follow-up review in December.

B. Community Engagement Office-Summer Reading Program and all things CEO – Marissa Alcorta and Alina Rowe provided a PowerPoint and discussion on:

- Community Engagement
- Staff Involvement
- Future Goals
- Support for Staff
- Historical Reflection

The library's work is centered on cultural celebrations, community outreach, staff development, and a personal, long-term commitment to Tucson's diverse populations.

Also discussed were the Affinity teams, who are self-governed with administrative support, allowing flexibility and shared leadership.

8. LIBRARY REPORTS

A. COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT - Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager, provided an update on:

- May 7, 2025, World Maternal Health Day
- Swap Stories with Strangers

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- Library website highlighting Team interviews
- The Annual Report

B. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT - Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director of Community Engagement, had no further updates.

C. PUBLIC SERVICES & REPORT - Em DeMeester-Lane, Deputy Director, provided an update on:

- **National Library Workers Day**
- The return of **page hours for the first time since 2023**.
- A **special shoutout** was given to Perri from El Pueblo Library, who received the **Drachman Impact Award** for impactful work with students on a special collection project.

D. SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT - Anthony Batchelder, Deputy Director, provided Facilities update on:

- Facilities - Valencia reopened after a recarpeting refresh, Bear Canyon is currently closed, and Mission Branch remains on track for Spring 2026 reopening.
- Staffing - The library received the requested PCNs, and we are actively hiring.
- Budget - The Board of Supervisors will vote on the recommended budget at their May 20th meeting, and it is available on the County Administrator's website.

E. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Amber Mathewson, Library Director and Steve Holmes, Deputy County Administrator provided an update on:

- **Wells Fargo Building** – The Board of Supervisors has not yet decided, but internal discussions are ongoing. For safety and security, basic maintenance of Main Library will continue until possible relocation.
- A potential purchase agreement may be presented to the board within the next month.
- If the building is acquired there will be a community engagement process included in the planning and design phase of the relocation.

There is a strategic opportunity for a long-term investment, avoiding spending more money on property the county will not retain and a concern that Wells Fargo could sell the building to another buyer.

Director Mathewson also provided an update on:

- June meeting and election of new Chair and Vice Chair
- Library Advisory Board Retreat to be scheduled after the next Director selection
- Possible cancellation of July meeting
- PEEPs program, and shared that to date, 4000 children have benefitted from this program. She encouraged Board members to visit the sites.
- Mission Branch Library

Deputy Director, Marissa Alcorta shared:

- 10-year award working with Teen Intern Program with San Miguel High School
- Summer Youth Interns

Community Survey Analysis had 7,000 online responses and about 200 paper responses and the Consultant is compiling the overall data. There was no plan for analyzing open-ended responses, approximately 6,000 written comments. These will be addressed in

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July, under a new contract with the same consultant.

The Library Admin Team provided an update on the Library Director Hiring Process.

ADJOURNMENT

Sharon Foltz moved to adjourn the meeting; John Halliday seconded. Motion carried; meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

Next Meeting: June 5, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

Submitted by: Laura Lopez, Administrative Services Manager