

PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 5, 2026, 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: John Halliday, Anna Sanchez, Mariana Padias, Vice Chair, Cam Juárez, Katherine Thomson, and Frances Benavidez

Absent: Mary Ann O'Neil, Chair, Patrick Andrews

Also Present: Tess Mayer, Library Director; Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director; Vicki Lázaro; Library Services Manager; Heather Ross, Library Services Manager, Ken Zambos, Library Services Manager, Alina Rowe, Library Services Manager, Adriana Saavedra, Library Services Manager, Kate DeMeester-Lane, Library Services Manager, Heather Tyndall, Joyner Green Valley Branch Manager, Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager, Devin Robles, Applications Systems Administrator 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

John Halliday moved to approve the December 4, 2025, meeting minutes; Cam Juárez seconded. Motion carried.

4. INTRODUCTION

Paulina Aguirre-Clinch, Library Services Manager and temporarily assuming additional duties as Deputy Director of Public Services and Customer Service during a transition period. With over 15 years at PCPL, she expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity to contribute, learn, and support the organization.

5. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS BY LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS

Cam Juárez reported that he has visited schools and libraries in multiple roles, reaching about 1,000 students in February with engaging presentations on national parks, reading, and library access, strengthening student engagement and community connections.

John Halliday and District 1 colleague Katherine Thomson met with District 1 Supervisor's Assistant Nathan Bacall to review library programs, secure his support, and agree to ongoing communication and efforts to fill Library Advisory Board vacancies, especially in District 4.

Frances Benavidez praised the Ajo Library staff for hosting a respectful, culturally thoughtful reception honoring Lorraine Eiler's donation of 192 Indigenous-authored books, recognizing their care in honoring Indigenous traditions and community access.

Cam Juárez added that the **Saguaro National Park** Outreach team will participate in the Tohono O'odham Nation Rodeo Fair, as well as host the third annual traditional O'odham Storytelling event at Saguaro National Park (west) on January 21st, the

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event is a key community engagement effort with strong Tohono O’odham participation.

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

Penny Moreno, President, Friends of the Pima County Public Library, introduced Melanie Morgan as the new Executive Director, replacing Libby Stone. She also shared details about upcoming Friends book sales and highlighted Black History Month programming.

Pi Poletta, Director of Philanthropy, Pima Library Foundation, thanked staff for successful fundraising emails, recognized Melinda Gee-Daniel’s volunteer program, and shared upcoming media opportunities highlighting graduation and juvenile detention center library programs.

New Business:

A. Joyner Green Valley Branch Library Update – Heather Tyndall, Branch Manager

Presented a PowerPoint with outreach and programming highlights, showcasing inclusive children’s, teen, and family programs, community events, and extensive use of library spaces to support education, wellness, and community connection.

B. Mission, Vision and Values – Tess Mayer, Director

Updating the library’s mission, vision, and values is recommended, noting the current statement is nearly 10 years old and predates significant community and societal changes. After a short discussion it was emphasized that updating the library’s mission and strategic plan to reflect current community needs, highlighting the importance of gathering meaningful public feedback, especially from underserved groups, will be very important.

C. Change date of April Advisory Board Meeting, Tess Mayer, Director

To avoid staffing conflicts with the Public Library Association conference John Halliday moved to change the April 2, 2026, Advisory Board meeting date to April 9th, Cam Juárez seconded, motion carried.

7. Unfinished Business

A. Downtown Library Update – Library Administration

Tess Mayer, Library Director, stated that the county is still negotiating with a prospective vendor for the new library building design project. Historic preservation has been a key consideration throughout the design and construction planning process. No further questions were raised.

An update was provided on the current library building, which the library occupies until the new Downtown Library is completed. The City of Tucson issued a Request for Information (RFI) regarding potential future uses of the site. This process is led by the city, and Pima County Library will not be directly involved. The subsequent Request for Proposals is expected in 2026.

8. LIBRARY REPORTS

A. COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT - Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager, shared several library programs and events:

- New Writer-in-Residence sessions and workshops starting on the 17th.
- Pride- and Kindred-sponsored event with poetry and music at Wilmot Library.
- Community postcard project to combat loneliness.

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- High school graduate celebration on February 21.

B. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT - Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director of Community No further updates for this month's report but they stated that for next month they would provide:

- Staff updates on Festival of Books.
- General collections update for the board.

Board member, **Katherine Thomson**, highlighted the extensive media coverage of the library in the *Arizona Daily Star*, noting its positive public relations impact and high engagement with library communications.

Staff explained the Career Online High School program for adults 22+, providing a diploma and career certification, with library staff support and Foundation funding. Graduations are celebrated and inspire both students and their families.

C. PUBLIC SERVICES REPORT – Paulina Aguirre-Clinch provided an update on

- Mission Library opening this spring; hours Monday–Saturday.
- Staff preparing and coordinating services; opening date pending.
- Community-focused ceremony planned.

Board member **Katherine Thomson** asked why circulation and gate counts have decreased from 2024 to 2025.

Staff will address this in a future meeting.

D. SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT - Tess Mayer, Library Director

Serving temporarily in Finance/Admin; learning HR, facilities, and finance highlighted:

- Library budget is set at \$59.8M to support staffing and expanded hours, with vacancies improving,
- Abbott reopening March 16, Himmel on track for summer 2027,
- Interim leadership praised,
- Deputy Director of Finance recruitment ongoing, and
- Book inventory increasing under a new Ingram contract.

E. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Tess Mayer, Library Director

- Leadership plans to resume broader staff engagement once the finance role is filled, while noting Board approval of the new Ingram contract as a key operational milestone.

ADJOURNMENT

John Halliday moved to adjourn the meeting; Anna Sanchez seconded. Motion carried; meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Next Meeting: March 5, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

Submitted by: Laura Lopez, Assistant to Library Director