

PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 5, 2026, 4:12 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, Cam Juárez, Mary Ann O’Neil, Chair, Patrick Andrews and Katherine Thomson

Absent: Anna Sanchez, Mariana Padias, Vice Chair, and Frances Benavidez

Also Present: Tess Mayer, Library Director; Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director; Paulina Aguirre-Clinch, Library Services Manager; Vicki Lázaro; Library Services Manager; Heather Ross, Library Services Manager, Ken Zambos, Library Services Manager, Alina Rowe, Library Services Manager, Mary Pastrana, Community Engagement Manager; Paula Maez, Library Services Manager; Beth Matthias-Loghry, Library Services Manager; Samantha Neville, Librarian I; Roberto Lopez, Community Engagement Manager; Lindsey Curley, Librarian I; Monique Perez, Library Services Manager, Renee Bibby, Library Services Manager; Kate DeMeester-Lane, Library Services 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

Cam Juárez moved to approve February 5, 2026, meeting minutes, John Halliday seconded, motion carried.

4. INTRODUCTION: Around the room introductions.

5. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS BY LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS

Cam Juárez

- Highlighted visits to a preschool literacy program and the value of early intervention.
- Recognized staff support for an accessibility workshop related to national parks.
- Reported outreach reaching about **1,122 students** through school visits and programs.

John Halliday, Board member

- Attended the Career Online High School graduation at **Flowing Wells Library**, with **18 graduates** and over **100 attendees**. Event was well organized and inspiring, with diplomas presented and strong support from the Foundation and County representatives.

Pi Poletta, Foundation:

- The **Career Online High School graduation** was highlighted as a favorite program of the board, demonstrating the meaningful impact of the Foundation’s fundraising on graduates’ lives.

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Patrick Andrews, Board member

- Reported on the 85th annual Nation Rodeo event, which included 85+ parade floats and strong participation from Tucson organizations.
- The event drew **about 20,000 attendees**, representing an opportunity to promote **literacy and library engagement** through themed activities.

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, stated:

- The Friends will be at the Festival of Books
- There will be member sales on March 21 and 22 and community sales March 27 - 30.

Pi Poletta, Director of Philanthropy, Pima Library Foundation

- The Foundation will participate in the **Tucson Festival of Books**, where the library is providing a booth to support outreach and fundraising.
- Pi shared a **30-second promotional spot** featuring Foundation Board member **Melinda G. McDaniel** that will air during **March Madness**, helping increase visibility for the Foundation and highlighting her community involvement.

New Business:

A. Pima County Public Library at the Tucson Festival of Books 2026 – Mary Pastrana, Community Engagement Manager; Samantha Neville, Librarian I, Latinx Team, provided a presentation highlighting information about the upcoming event:

- The Tucson Festival of Books is a major community event drawing about 130,000 attendees, making it one of the largest book festivals in the country.
- Organizers highlighted the cultural focus, strong author line-up, and opportunities for the public to meet writers, attend signings, and engage closely with authors.

Roberto Lopez, Community Engagement Manager and **Lindsey Curley**, Librarian I, Youth Services Team presented on offerings for youth at the upcoming festival:

- Youth programming at the festival will include a **zine-making workshop**, youth resource tables, and **manga book giveaways**, reflecting strong interest from teen advisory boards.
- A last-minute addition to the Youth Author Stage will feature a **youth poetry celebration**, encouraging young people—especially from Indigenous and local communities—to share their writing and voices at the close of the festival.

B. Collections: Print and Digital – **Kate DeMeester-Lane**, Library Services Manager

- **Collections Management:** Physical donations are not added directly to the collection due to processing costs; instead, donated materials are sent to Friends of the Library for resale.
- **Collections & Digital Trends:** demand for digital materials, especially audiobooks—continues to grow, presenting licensing and AI-content challenges. Demand for materials has continued to increase since 2020.

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 design of the new Joel D. Valdez Main Library, with hopes of finalizing the contract in April.

8. LIBRARY REPORTS

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

- Staff will soon be launching the 2026–27 *One Seed, One Community* Mexican sunflower initiative.
- Comments about the Lorraine Eiler Collection launch are available on the library website, provided by **Lindsey Curley**, Librarian I.

B. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT - Marissa Alcorta, Deputy Director of Community Engagement.

- Deputy Alcorta recognized staff contributions to the Festival of Books and highlighted library sites' critical role in supporting elections, including voting access and election worker training, emphasizing teamwork and community collaboration.

C. PUBLIC SERVICES REPORT – Paulina Aguirre-Clinch, Library Services Manager with additional duties assigned provided an update:

- **Abbett Branch** reopens March 16; **Mission** expands to Mon–Sat hours, other branches to follow pending staffing, supporting community access.

Directory Mayer shared about the hours restoration process:

- The goal is to engage staff early in planning for smooth implementation; recruit/train as needed.
- Focus on restoring pre-pandemic library services and reconnecting community through outreach.

D. SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT - Tess Mayer, Library Director

- **Mission Branch** is nearly ready to open with staff and collections in place, staff recruitment is underway to fill new positions, the County budget process is in progress, and a new Deputy Director of Finance & Administration will start next week bringing County experience and a public service focus.

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

- **Reserve Policy:** At the 2/17/26 meeting, the Board of Supervisors adopted a reserve policy for the library that outlines the process for maintaining specific fund balance and cash reserve levels as well as their uses. The policy calls for the Library Advisory Board to discuss the status of the fund every six months.
- **Circulation** changes may be linked to temporary branch closures, a temporary lower influx of new material due to unanticipated vendor changes, as well as changes in usage patterns.
- **Community Access Concerns:** Some partners report reduced in-person program attendance due to immigration enforcement fears; online participation has increased as partners expanded online offerings as these changes began to occur.

ADJOURNMENT

Patrick Andrews moved to adjourn the meeting; Cam Juárez seconded. Motion carried; meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 9, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

Submitted by: Laura Lopez, Assistant to Library Director