

PIMA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 3, 2020, 4:00 p.m.

Meeting conducted virtually via Microsoft Teams

Present: Nancy Puckett, Chair; Nubia Valentino, Vice-Chair; Beverly J. Bannon; Barbara A. Escobar; John Halliday; Maria Iannone; Cheryl Langer; and Elizabeth Soltero

Absent: Edward Buster and Betsy Shepard

Also Present: Amber Mathewson, Library Director; Karyn Prechtel-Altman, Deputy Director; Michelle Simon, Deputy Director; Kate DeMeester, Library Services Manager; Beth Matthias-Loghry, Library Services Manager; Sharla Ronstadt, Library Services Manager; Amy Rusk, Library Services Manager; Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager; Kendra Davey, Literacy Initiatives Program Manager; Ken Zambos, Workforce and Economic Development Program Manager; and Marisol Norzagaray, Career Online High School Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Nancy Puckett and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were in attendance.

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES

Cheryl Langer moved and Elizabeth Soltero seconded approval of the November 5, 2020 minutes. Motion carried.

4. INTRODUCTIONS

There were no introductions.

5. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS BY LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS

Board members updated on what library related activities they have been doing since the last meeting. Some of the responses included:

- Beverly J. Bannon commented that browsing is now allowed at the Wheeler-Taft Abbett Sr. Library, and noted the 30 minute limit inside the building.
- Cheryl Langer continues to manager the book cart at the Salazar-Ajo Library, and recently found a \$100 donation in the locked money box.
- Elizabeth Soltero started scheduling virtual check-ins with managers of District 5 libraries. She plans to meet with Alina Rowe, manager of the Richard Elías-Mission Library.
- Nancy Puckett continues to support Pima Library Foundation's efforts to raise money for the Sahuarita performance space. She and Deborah Jassem, the Foundation's Director, plan to meet with the Green Valley Friends group.

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

There were no reports.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. CAREER ONLINE HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE – KEN ZAMBOS, WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM MANAGER AND MARISOL NORZAGARAY, CAREER ONLINE HIGH SCHOOL COORDINATOR

Ken Zambos and Marisol Norzagaray gave an update on Career Online High School (COHS).

- COHS is a nationally accredited high school diploma program that offers certificates in 10 highly-marketable career fields.
- Scholarships are provided so there is no cost for the program.
- Participants must be 22 or older, live in Pima County, and have a PCPL card.
- They must complete an online self-assessment, and take a two week prerequisite course. They interview for scholarships after they pass the prerequisite course.
- Interviews used to be done in person, but because of Covid-19, the entire program is currently virtual.
- COHS is supported by donations from Pima Library Foundation and Friends groups.
- Since 2016, 9,401 self-assessments have been completed, 504 interviews have been conducted, and 182 scholarships have been awarded.
- There are currently 72 students enrolled and there have been 66 graduates to date.
- The pandemic has negatively affected people, but having more time on their hands allows people to assess their next steps, and more people have enrolled in the program.
- Since April, there have been 23 graduates. Many students continue their education after graduating.

Elizabeth Soltero asked how many scholarships are awarded per year and was told that over 180 have been given out over 3 years, averaging about 60 a year.

8. LIBRARY REPORTS

A. COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT

Holly Schaffer, Community Relations Manager, highlighted and/or added to her written report:

- Holly Schaffer has begun to outline what will be in the future Annual Report. It won't look the same, since she hasn't been able to meet with customers to listen to their stories, as she's done in the past. Content will feature columns from the Arizona Daily Star, awards PCPL has won, Love Letters to the Library, and other sources.
- José Luis Gomez, Tucson Symphony Orchestra's Music Director, has been hosting book clubs. The next one will be virtual on January 22nd, and PCPL has ordered eBooks *Why Mahler?* for it.

B. LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

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Director Mathewson thanked Ken Zambos and Marisol Norzagaray for keeping Career Online High School going.

The Pima County Board of Supervisors approved the Library Advisory Board's recommended name for the new W. Anne Gibson-Esmond Station Library.

There have been a few concerns from patrons regarding browsing of material. The Library is still following all the protocols with mask wearing, taking temperatures, cleaning, and hand sanitizer. The intention was to increase the number of people allowed in the building, but Covid-19 numbers went up. The Library is still keeping numbers of people allowed in the buildings low, while allowing them to use computers and to browse. The hope is that with a vaccine on the way, more people will be allowed in soon.

The Arizona Daily Star recently published a letter to the editor that voiced concerns about the Library allowing browsing. Director Mathewson and Holly Schaffer will be working on an editorial that will address what the Library is currently doing and how decisions are being made, and how it continues to be a great resource in the community.

On hiring, the Library recently got approval to hire for Library Technical Assistant positions, and Librarian II candidates received job offers today.

Barbara Escobar asked about positive Covid-19 cases with staff. Director Mathewson responded that there have been 8 or 9 employees who tested positive over time, but there haven't been any clusters, with most exposures coming from the outside. There have been a few people who have quarantined as result of a possible exposure, but nothing has been passing among staff. Director Mathewson said that everyone is getting weary, and to give library staff encouragement when possible.

Elizabeth Soltero asked if the Pima County Health Department is offering regular testing for county employees. Director Mathewson responded that the County has allowed staff to get testing on work time, with supervisor's approval. There is no information yet on whether or not the County will provide the vaccine, or if it will it be required.

C. PUBLIC SERVICES REPORT

Karyn Prechtel-Altman, Deputy Director of Public Services & Community Engagement, highlighted and/or added to her written report:

Deputy Director Prechtel-Altman informed that this past month training was done for staff to provide eviction prevention assistance to the public, with Kate DeMeester coordinating the trainings. The plan is to have computers available for individuals to use for hearings related to foreclosure. The Library is trying to get ahead of the need as a lot of evictions are expected in January.

Tucson Festival of Books continues being worked on, and the Nuestras Raíces Team is putting together a group of authors. Eight have confirmed so far, including Alberto Álvaro Ríos (*A Good Map of All Things*), Lydia Otero (*In The Shadows of the Freeway*), Esteban Castillo (*Chicano Eats*), Barbara Teller Ornelas and Lynda Teller Pete (*How to Weave a Navajo Rug*).

On statistics, the only things that are increasing at this time are digital circulation (books and audiobooks) and virtual programs. Email reference has been increasing steadily over

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time. For hunger relief, over 6,700 people were served meals and snacks in October. Last year in October, it was 3,500. Nancy Puckett asked if the increase was because there were more locations, or more per location. Deputy Director Prechtel-Altman responded that there were more locations, but also more food and different types of food—meals, snacks, and weekend packs. Director Mathewson added that while school districts are still distributing food, not as many kids are able to get to the schools.

John Halliday asked what PCPL was going to provide for people who get evicted in January. Kate DeMeester responded that the state and federal eviction moratorium is set to expire on December 31st, people who were protected will face eviction for non-payment of rent. Hearings are part of eviction process, and people are required to Zoom in to them. If they don't attend, the judgment goes against them. Library staff will help provide computer access and be able to help with using Zoom. Staff has also helped individuals in the past with rental opportunities, and were trained to help with forms.

Nancy Puckett noted that the number of cardholders went down. Deputy Director Simon commented that staff is going through accounts and merging duplicates.

D. SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT

Michelle Simon, Deputy Director of Support Services, highlighted and/or added to her written report:

Deputy Director Simon informed that PCPL purchased 400 hotspots (www.kajeet.com) for students and teachers to use within the community. She continues to work with Pima County School Superintendents Office, which is providing information to all of the districts, charter schools, and home schoolers in Pima County. Word is getting out, and there has been a great uptick in demand for hotspots. Students and teachers have to check them out with their library cards and get to use them for three months. The devices are filtered, and things like Facebook or Netflix cannot be accessed. This is currently a pilot program and a more sustainable program is in the works. Elizabeth Soltero asked how the hotspots were purchased, and Deputy Director Simon responded that Library operations funds and a grant from the State Library were used.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Next Meeting: February 4, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. Meeting will be held virtually, with instructions on the agenda.

Submitted by:
Judy Moses
Special Staff Assistant - Senior