

Meeting Minutes

Library Board Regular Meeting

January 18, 2022 | 6:30 p.m.
Basha Library Program Room
5990 S. Val Vista Dr., Chandler, AZ



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Acting Board President Beth Brizel at 6:31p.m.

Roll Call

Commission Attendance

Board President Beth Brizel
Board member Bob Lowry
Board member Maria Munoz
Board member Michael McElhany
Board member Karla Palafox
Board member Arman Sidhu – Not present

Staff Attendance

Rachelle Kuzyk, Library Manager
Courtney Allen, Management Assistant

Scheduled and Unscheduled Public Appearances

None

Consent Agenda

1. November 16, 2021 Library Board Meeting Minutes
Motion was made by Board member Munoz to approve, Board member McElhany seconded.
Motion passed 5-0.

Briefing

1. New Library Board Member
Bob Lowry has been appointed to the Library Board. Board member Lowry is currently the Friends of the Library (FOL) Board President.
2. Library Board Member Resignation
Library Board President Shanesha Davis has resigned from the Library Board.

3. Library Manager's Report – Rachelle Kuzyk

The Library Manager's Report was provided to the Library Board in advance of the meeting for the Board Members review.

Rachelle mentioned the winter break pilot program City Management approved for the closure of City facilities during the week between Christmas and New Years. The Library is a public serving facility, so it remained open with reduced hours and minimal staff. Monday, December 27 and Friday, December 31, City facilities were closed in observance of Christmas and New Years, respectively. December 28, 29 and 30 all four Chandler libraries were open from 9am-5pm. The library was busier than expected during the week. The staff who worked the week will be able to take the block of three days off at a time of their choosing later in the year. If the program continues hopefully there will be staff that volunteers to work so there is rotation. This was a new pilot program so hopefully it will be something City Management decides to continue with in the future as a new benefit to employees.

The food for fines program occurred in December. Patrons were very receptive to it and provided a lot of positive feedback about the program. Overall, in December the library waived \$6,300 in fines, with approximately \$4,700 coming from the two-week period during the food for fines program. There was a total of 56 boxes of food totaling 1,487 pounds donated to the local Azcend to help feed the underprivileged. The program was only supposed to be one week but due to a lack of advertising the library extended the program for an additional week. Board member Brizel asked how the program worked. Rachelle explained that for every can of food donated, a \$1 library fine was waived.

The library café will have its grand opening Monday, January 24 with a soft launch this week. Board member Munoz inquired who will run the café. Rachelle informed the Board of the State of Arizona requirement to offer vending/cafeteria contracts to businesses that are going into government facilities under the Business Entrepreneurship Program. The contracts are typically awarded to blind entrepreneurs. Michael Armstrong and his wife were awarded the contract and have several businesses with the program. They are both visually impaired and run the café along with one blind and one sighted employee. All Library Board members suggested this be advertised and promoted. Rachelle responded stating the information has been forwarded to Marketing and Communications so hopefully there will be media coverage. Board member Lowry added that the FOL will be displaying and selling books in the café. Rachelle and Board member Lowry commented that Michael has been very collaborative, and it will be a successful relationship.

Board member Lowry added to the volunteer portion of the Managers report informing the Board the FOL are sponsoring the upcoming Early Literacy Summit at the Chandler San Marcos hotel February 3-5. Approximately 100 librarians from all over the state will be in attendance for general and break-out sessions. There will be FOL signage and information throughout the event so there will be plenty of positive exposure.

Board member Brizel inquired on the status of Sunset Library and if there will be re-opening ceremony. Rachelle informed the Board that the tentative opening is February 1, but there are still many aesthetics and stress cracks that need to be repaired before opening to the public. Rachelle will know more by the end of this week and will inform the Board if the date will remain February 1 or if it will need to be pushed back. There are interviews with the press scheduled for next week, but they may be postponed if the opening date is pushed back.

Action Agenda

1. Move the Library Board to elect a new Board President with a term beginning January 18, 2022, ending May 1, 2023.

Board member Munoz nominated Board member Brizel to fill the role of Board President. Board member Palafox seconded the motion. Motion Passed 5-0.

2. Discuss and tentatively approve the library to implement the elimination of fines. With the tentative Board approval, library leadership will move forward with the City's required postings and notifications. The Board will give final approval for the Library to be fine free at the May 16, 2022 meeting.

Rachelle informed the Board of the history of the fine free proposal. The proposal to eliminate library overdue fines was submitted to the budget office during the budget process in December, 2021. Budget bounced the proposal back stating the Library Board has the authority to make a motion to approve the elimination of overdue fines. The process must begin with the Library Board making a tentative approval decision. With tentative approval, library administration, City Clerks office, and Communications and Public Affairs Department will post and advertise the motion to eliminate library overdue fines for 60 days. After the 60 days of posting, the Board can give final approval at the May 16, 2022 meeting, providing there is no opposition to the motion. Rachelle gave the Board statistics of the revenue generated from overdue fines. In 2014/15 the library received \$143,340.72 in overdue fines, while in 2020/21 only \$40,945.33 was collected. The increase in eResources dramatically decreased the circulation of print materials, in turn reducing the number of overdue fines. Maricopa County Library District, Mesa, Scottsdale, and Phoenix have already eliminated overdue fines, leaving Chandler as one of the few libraries in the valley that still charge fines for overdue materials, which turns away patrons to visit neighboring libraries. Board member Palafox also mentioned that as a teacher she runs into problems with her students not being able to check out library items for school projects due to overdue fines on their account. The board also agreed that charging patrons who still must utilize print materials due to their possible lack of access to eResources unfairly penalizes them. Rachelle did inform the Board that only overdue fines will be eliminated, not lost or damaged books. The Board would like to temporarily waive overdue fines until final approval is granted at the May meeting, pending no opposition. Rachelle informed the Board she will find out if that is a possibility and get back to the board with an answer.

Board member Munoz made a motion to approve the Library to move forward with the elimination of fees. Board member Lowry seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Discussion

1. How can the library support the community with covid testing kits? Board member Munoz. Rachelle informed the Board the reason Chandler library has not participated in handing out covid testing kits is because Chandler libraries never offered curbside pick-up during the covid shutdown. Chandler libraries remained open for lobby services so there was no system in place for curbside pick-up and we did not want to risk the safety of our patrons by inviting possible covid positive cases into the library to pick-up a testing kit.

Information Items

1. The Library Board has a current vacancy so if you know of anyone that will be a good advocate for the library, please refer them to the City's website to apply for a seat. Board member McElhany stated he sits on another board with a former state librarian so he will mention it to her.

Member Comments/Announcements

Board member McElhany asked new Board member Lowry to introduce himself and give the Board some background information. Bob informed the Board he has been the FOL Board President for three years and feels his presence on both Boards will help the communication between them. He has been a Chandler resident for six years, married for 45 years, and retired from the radio industry. Bob has a history of libraries in his family. His grandfather ran the Pittsburgh library system, his Uncle ran the West Virginia University library, and his mother was a librarian and teacher.

Calendar

1. The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 15, 2022, at 6:30 p.m., at the Hamilton Library, 3700 S, Arizona Ave. Chandler, 85248.

2. The next Friends of the Library Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 8, 2022 at 1:00 p.m., in the Copper Conference Room 254 at the Downtown Library, 22 S. Delaware St.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Board member McElhany, Board member Munoz seconded. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Rachelle Kuzyk, Board Liaison

Beth Brizel, Chairman