

Meeting Minutes Library Board and Parks and Recreation Board Special Meeting

December 2, 2025 | 5:30 p.m.

Tumbleweed Recreation Center

745 E. Germann Rd. Chandler, AZ 85286



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Library Board Chair Alexis Merritt at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Library Board Attendance

Board Chair Alexis Merritt
Board Vice Chair Jennifer Pawlik
Board Member Parker McCarthy
Board Member Faith Risolo (Remote)

Library Board Members Absent

Board Member Arman Sidhu
Board Member Michael McElhany
Board Member Leanna DeKing

Parks and Recreation Board Attendance

Board Vice Chair Melanie Dykstra
Board Member James Montgomery
Board Member Sarah Sharits
Board Member Jegadesan Krishnamurthy

Parks and Recreation Members Absent

Board Chair John David
Board Member Lynette Bradley
Board Member Sue McInturf

Staff Attendance

John Sefton, Community Services Director
Corey Povar, Assistant Community Services Director
Mickey Ohland, Community Services Planning Manager
Katie Gaul, Engineer
Rachelle Kuzyk, Library Manager
Rebecca Kuiper, Recreation Superintendent
Chris Smith, Aquatics Superintendent
Paul Smith, Library Business Systems Analyst
Courtney Allen, Library Management Analyst
Jo-el Miller, Library Outreach Manager

Staff Attendance Cont.

Caryn Nall, Library Branch Manager

Debe Moreno, Library Branch Manager

Chris McGinley, Library Branch Manager (Remote)

Others Present

Jason Genck, BerryDunn (Remote)

James (JR) Clanton, BerryDunn (Remote)

Jeff Velasquez, J2 Design

Lee Swanson, Richard Kennedy Architects

Monique Ziesenhenne, BerryDunn (Arrived remotely at 6:52pm)

Unscheduled Public Appearances

None

Briefing Followed by Discussion

1. Project PR2503.01 Recreation and Library Strategic Master Plan

Introductions were made by members of both the Library Board and the Parks & Recreation Board, as well as city staff, BerryDunn consultants, and on-site architect consultants.

The Recreation and Library Strategic Master Plan is designed to gather community input to enhance library and recreation services in Chandler. The plan seeks to establish a ten-year vision for future service development, resource alignment, and program improvements looking to maximize the use and reuse of the existing facilities and services to meet or exceed national standards and be the best of the best.

The planning process will be facilitated by BerryDunn, a consultancy team with over 50 years of experience serving local governments and specializing in library and recreation planning. BerryDunn will engage directly with both boards and the community throughout the project timeline.

Board members expressed enthusiasm for public service and a strong commitment to improving quality of life for Chandler residents. They also voiced support for a collaborative and community-driven planning process.

Community engagement was emphasized as a crucial element for aligning services with community needs and maximizing existing resources. Engagement will target both users and non-users to gain a comprehensive understanding of participation trends and unmet needs. Strategies include surveys, interactive mapping tools, Menti feedback, and other innovative data-collection methods to gather diverse input. Engagement efforts aim to maximize community

involvement and foster diverse conversations. Jason Genck emphasized the importance of ongoing communication and regular review of engagement tools to ensure effective community interaction. The team noted they have optional comment-review settings for the engagement tools but generally do not filter user-generated content. Collaboration with private-sector partners will be explored to broaden resources and feedback channels.

Board members were encouraged to leverage their networks for outreach and community engagement. Regular updates will be provided to the project team and the community throughout the planning process. A major project update is targeted for May 2026. Boards and commissions will be kept informed regarding the project schedule and opportunities to participate in future focus groups and stakeholder meetings. Board members are also encouraged to submit additional ideas or feedback related to the planning process.

Library Board Member McCarthy inquired how the interactive map will get out to the public. Director Sefton informed everyone that the Community Services Department has a great Public Information Officer (PIO) as well as the city's Communication and Public Affairs (CAPA) office, so we will utilize them to get the word out when we're ready to put all the pieces out to the public.

Assistant Director Povar expressed his enthusiasm for exploring coordination and partnerships with private recreation providers in the community. He noted his interest in how these collaborations can help gather more meaningful feedback, improve understanding of the populations served, and create more efficient, aligned efforts over the next ten years. Jason Genck added that during previous planning processes, discussions with private industry partners revealed important insights that had not previously been part of the conversation. He emphasized that these engagements can open new bridges and opportunities for collaboration.

Parks and Recreation Board Member Montgomery inquired about demographics and facility usage, specifically how the department identifies both users and non-users of facilities. Director Sefton stated that this is an important component of the statistically validated survey, which uses random sampling to capture insights from those who may not currently use services but still find them important. Director Sefton deferred to Jason Genck for additional details. Mr. Genck explained that BerryDunn uses city-wide demographics and population estimates to ensure surveys reflect current community data. Non-users are identified through the statistically valid survey, which includes a margin of error of 5% and is designed to represent the community by age and location. Additionally, BerryDunn engages directly with the community, speaking with individuals in various locations. Through these conversations, they learn from both users and non-users, for example, hearing comments like "I haven't visited the library" or "I haven't visited that recreation center." Mr. Genck emphasized that BerryDunn's approach is comprehensive, recognizing that understanding both users and non-users is critical for making informed recommendations that best serve the community.

Parks and Recreation Board Member Montgomery inquired if BerryDunn has ever tried to integrate greater community resources into their planning? Jason Genck responded yes, they do a variety of planning efforts.

Community Services Planning Manager Ohland stated that he would like to see demographic analysis applied to youth and adult sports leagues, both internal and external, including participation rates, historical trends, future projections, and how those numbers affect existing facility needs. Jason Genck responded that this is indeed one of the major user groups with significant demand and strong partnership potential. Katie Gaul confirmed that it is already on their radar.

Parks and Recreation Board Vice Chair Dykstra asked whether it is possible to determine what percentage of the population are library cardholders, as well as the percentage of residents who participate in recreation programs. Director Sefton responded that the statistically validated survey will help provide reliable assumptions and deliverables regarding participation levels. However, he noted that determining exact numbers can be challenging in a community approaching 300,000 residents. He explained that while the department has strong data from library check-in and checkout systems, recreation program participation records, field reservations, and facility usage, these metrics do not always directly translate to the number of unique individuals participating. Library Manager Kuzyk added that approximately 30% of Chandler's population are library cardholders.

Library Board Chair Merritt asked how the boards and commissions will continue to be involved with the consultants beyond this initial meeting. Director Sefton responded that staff will provide updates to the boards as needed and can include these updates as a regular agenda item. He explained that the consultants are expected to have sufficient data and detail compiled by May, which will allow for a meaningful update to the boards at that time. Depending on schedules, the update may be presented collaboratively to both boards or provided separately during regular meetings.

Parks and Recreation Board Vice Chair Dykstra asked whether any focus groups or community outreach efforts are planned between now and May, and whether board members would be invited to participate, observe, or otherwise be informed of those activities. Director Sefton responded that as these opportunities are developed, staff will keep the boards informed of the project's progress and scheduled activities. He noted that board members' interest in participating in stakeholder meetings will be taken into account. A detailed calendar of activities and planned intercept events will be created. He added that some sessions will be strategic, curated stakeholder meetings that are not open to the general public, while many others will be open community engagement opportunities.

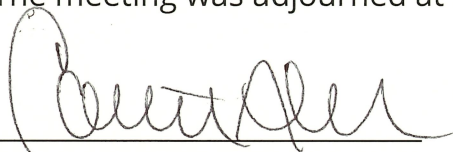
Library Board Chair Merritt asked how board members can best share their opinions, whether through the surveys alone or through additional opportunities. Director Sefton responded that board members are encouraged to participate both as residents and as board representatives. He noted that there will be formal opportunities for input, such as meetings like today's, but also encouraged members to reach out at any time if additional thoughts or concerns arise.

Jason Genck added that the team will develop a comprehensive engagement plan and strategy in collaboration with project staff. This plan will outline the focus groups, their frequency, timelines, locations, and other key details. He noted that the team is not quite at that stage yet but expects to have this information ready in about a month.

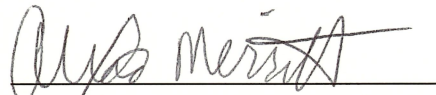
The meeting slide deck will be available to all meeting attendees.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Courtney Allen', written over a horizontal line.

Courtney Allen, Board Liaison

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Alexis Merritt', written over a horizontal line.

Alexis Merritt, Library Board Chair