



**City of Scottsdale
Library Board
Regular Meeting Minutes**
Wednesday, October 8, 2025
Appaloosa Library – Meeting Room 1
7377 E. Silverstone Drive
Scottsdale, AZ 85255

PRESENT: Chair Dr. Freda Hartman, Vice-Chair Enid Seiden, Board Members Sam Campana (arrived at 3:07 p.m.), Roselyn O'Connell, Janice Shimokubo, Leslie Totten

ABSENT: Monica Sonnenklar

STAFF: Michael Beck, Library Director; Sarah Kaufman, Senior Manager; Thomas Brown, Library Supervisor; Raven Creech, Appaloosa Branch Manager; Javier Mendoza, Administrative Assistant

Call to Order

Chair Hartman called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present as listed above.

Public Comment

There was no response to the call for public comment.

Minutes – September 10, 2025

Board Member Shimokubo suggested that the first sentence of the second paragraph in Item 6 should read, "...Library Service and Technology Act grant requests were awarded..."

VICE-CHAIR SEIDEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2025, LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED. BOARD MEMBER O'CONNELL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR HARTMAN, VICE-CHAIR SEIDEN, AND BOARD MEMBERS O'CONNELL, SHIMOKUBO, AND TOTTEN VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSIDENTING VOTES.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

1. Patron Comment Report

Library Director Michael Beck reviewed comments 1, 4, 11, 12, 14 through 18, and 25 as listed in the agenda packet and the responses made by Library staff. He cautioned patrons

not to use anything of value as bookmarks. He noted that the fiber cable at Civic Center Library is being replaced this week, which should provide increased Wi-Fi bandwidth.

Board Member O'Connell asked for more information about comment 25. Mr. Beck said he believed that was a general comment, and staff forward those types of messages to the collection development manager to find out more information about the book being sought. He noted that the City of Phoenix has a much larger budget than Scottsdale, but Scottsdale tries to provide outstanding service to the 10,000 Phoenix residents with Scottsdale library cards. He spoke about the MAX program, noting Phoenix will be the last entity to join the system.

Regarding the Chair's inquiries, Mr. Beck indicated that Branch Manager Raven Creech will discuss the potential for a noise wall in Appaloosa Library in greater detail during her item. He said Library staff is encouraged to be proactive regarding specific patron comments, but he and the senior managers review items which require additional research. In addition, staff track the comments they receive over long periods of time.

Board Member Shimokubo observed that comments have become more negative recently and wondered why that might be. Mr. Beck pointed out that three negative comments were made by one patron. Negative comments are included in the report for transparency, and staff try to address them; patrons who want a quiet space, for instance, are directed to study rooms in each library. He praised staff for their excellent customer service.

Chair Hartman rephrased her question about staff looking through comments over time to identify trends. Vice-Chair Seiden opined she never got a sense of negativity from patron comments. Mr. Beck said the nature of the comments tends to vary from month to month.

2. Friends of the Scottsdale Public Library

Sheila Reyman, President of the Friends of the Scottsdale Public Library (Friends), noted the Friends are a 501(c)(3) organization, so any donations made to them are tax-deductible. She read a blurb about the purpose of the Friends, listing some of the programs it offers and recent initiatives it supported. She noted the Library Board cannot raise money, but Board Members can be members of the Friends.

Ms. Reyman announced a \$10,000 grant from Cox Charities which the Friends used to purchase two AWE computers. She promoted the Friends' largest fundraiser, the 24-Hour Donor Challenge on October 22, where organizations pledge to match donations. Their goal is to raise \$20,000, and \$12,000 in donor matching has already been committed. She discussed a fair scheduled for December 6 and said that type of event was chosen because children learn best through play. She spoke about the Friends' approach to soliciting grants.

In response to Board Member questions, Ms. Reyman indicated membership for the Friends must be renewed annually. Those who do will receive a letter from the Friends thanking them for their donations. She clarified that \$12,000 in matching funds has been pledged, so if \$12,000 is donated, the total received will be \$24,000. It is up to each matching donor whether they will still donate the funds if that much is not privately donated, but most do. She added that a total of \$14,000 was raised last year. She mentioned that the Donor Challenge will take place during National Friends of the Library Week. She discussed the efforts taken by the Friends to promote the event and celebrate donors on social media, as well as the relationship between the national Friends program and local

Friends organizations. She noted that Friends raise money throughout the year, not just through this event.

3. Public Programs Policy

Senior Library Manager Sarah Kaufman said the proposed policy was the product of combining three policies to reduce redundancy and improve clarity. The policy encourages residents to utilize Library services and collections, as well as provide criteria that public programs hosted by the library must meet.

In response to Board Member queries, Ms. Kaufman explained the intent of criteria 6, and with respect to criteria 8, she said presenters may not solicit business but may provide business cards after their program ends. Library Director Michael Beck provided an example of a master gardener program which allowed attendees to reach out to the presenter afterwards to obtain more information. Ms. Kaufman said the library tries not to promote one political ideology over another; however, it does participate in a national initiative regarding banned books.

Citing criteria 5, Board Member Totten recommended making it clear that though certain programs are intended for certain age groups, they are not exclusive to those ages. In response to additional questions, Mr. Beck noted the library will pay the Japanese Friendship Garden for a gardening presentation. Through this proposed policy, members of the public will be able to suggest program topics, which would then get filtered through the library's policies and procedures. The library cannot charge attendees for commercial gain, he continued, but they do pay the providers of the programs.

Ms. Kaufman indicated the library's coordinator positions serve all four libraries and work with the primary program producers at each location. Mr. Beck added that they have a systemwide programming committee composed of employees at each branch, and he explained how they collaborate to facilitate programs at certain locations and handle budgetary matters. He provided the Junior CSI Academy and a sourdough cooking program as examples.

Chair Hartman questioned how staff are assured that presenters know the library's program policy. Ms. Kaufman replied that one tool is the suggest-a-program form, where external presenters are asked numerous questions about their professional and presentational background. Coordinators and programming staff also communicate the library's expectations, vet the marketing materials to ensure they are proper, and discuss whether presenters should be welcomed back after their programs are complete. She clarified that the suggest-a-program form has a statement drawing attention to the library's criteria for public programs. Presenter contracts are also signed to ensure the presenters abide by Library policies and procedures.

4. Library Podcasting

Library Supervisor Thomas Brown explained what he has done in his three years working on the podcast, including researching other podcasts around the world, and his history in podcasting. Much of his second year was spent training people on podcasting and recording an entire season of seven episodes. He noted the second season is currently in pre-production. He said the podcast utilizes an NPR style made up of many different segments, which he then described. Though there are ten people on the team, everybody is invited to

participate in the process. He mentioned that a list of things happening this month is included at the end of each episode.

Mr. Brown played a small portion of the first episode. He described how each episode will be broken down, his expectations for how certain segments will be assembled and who they are expected to target, and his goals for the future. He hoped to have every Library employee work on at least one segment of the podcast over the next four or five years.

Library Director Michael Beck spoke about his discussions with Mr. Thomas about the podcast and praised his passion. He said the podcast provides a new avenue for programming. He believed Board Members will enjoy the finished product. Mr. Brown mentioned that Sheila Reyman with Friends of the Scottsdale Public Library appeared on the second episode of the first season, and he encouraged any Board Members who wished to participate in season 2 to contact him.

Vice-Chair Seiden wondered how to find the podcast. She suggested a segment focused on the history of Arizona. Mr. Brown responded that the podcast can be found on YouTube, Apple, and Spotify, although a wrong version of the first episode was uploaded on at least one of those platforms. Mr. Beck said staff are exploring ways to promote the podcast, and there are numerous opportunities to reach different audiences.

Board Member Shimokubo suggested partnering with the City's podcast. Mr. Brown spoke about working with other Scottsdale podcasters to advertise each other's podcasts and stagger the release dates, so listeners have something new to listen to each week.

5. Appaloosa Library Highlights

Appaloosa Branch Manager Raven Creech discussed the Pony Express self-service program found only at Appaloosa Library and provided statistics about its use. She hoped to include something like Mustang Library's noise wall at this branch, but those projects can take up to a decade. To mitigate noise complaints, she said the collaborative room has been swapped with the quiet room. Reservable study rooms are also available, as are larger rooms with different volume limits. She will continue to evaluate other possible improvements to lighting or the need for more furniture. She explained the rationale for moving the quiet room.

Ms. Creech indicated the Storytime series is back for the fall, and she promoted programs such as a pumpkin wrecking ball, the Scottsdale Artist School, and Halloween Family Fun Day. She thanked the Friends of the Scottsdale Public Library for its donation of an AWE machine, a computer equipped with early learning software. Getting a second one has allowed more children to participate. She spoke about Appaloosa Library's request for a 3-D printer like the one at Mustang Library.

Ms. Creech mentioned that one employee in the page position left for a different library, but that position was backfilled quickly. Responding to Board Member questions, she explained that pages are responsible for returning books to their appropriate places. Adult volunteers help stock the library shop and receive more independent tasks not requiring supervision, while teen volunteers help youth programming staff with tasks like signing people up for the summer reading program and manning stations at the Halloween Family Fun Day.

Board Member O'Connell lauded the teens who volunteer at Appaloosa Library. Chair Hartman expressed appreciation for all that Ms. Creech, and her staff do.

6. Library Board Retreat

Chair Hartman said that at previous retreat held in 2023, the bylaws were reviewed, a representative from the City's Attorney's Office was present, the liaison model was assessed, and the Board discussed ways it could help staff with outreach. She noted that retreats do not face the same time restrictions as regular meetings. She wondered whether the Board had interest in holding another retreat.

In response to Board Member Totten's questions, Chair Hartman stated that three hours were allotted in the afternoon for the last retreat. The only formal presentation made during that retreat was by the interim director regarding outreach and Library partnerships; the agenda was limited. Board Members would not be expected to make presentations. She provided examples of topics that she felt could warrant presentations, but the Board would determine what it wants to discuss. Library Director Michael Beck clarified that retreats are treated the same as normal Board meetings in terms of posting and agenda creation. Chair Hartman said the last one was more informal, facilitating better discussion.

Vice-Chair Seiden opined a retreat should be held in a more comfortable environment than the last one, and a topic should be determined before a retreat is deemed necessary. Chair Hartman agreed the previous location was a very corporate environment. Discussion ensued about the topics covered in the last retreat.

Board Member Shimokubo requested another month to weigh the need for another retreat. Board Member O'Connell felt she was too new a Board Member to know whether another retreat is necessary. Board Member Campana noted that several members will be termed out from the Board or up for reappointment next year, so it could be useful to future members if this Board wants to memorialize what it is trying to do. Chair Hartman agreed that there could be value in capturing what the Board is building toward over time and any key issues that could inform the future.

Chair Hartman confirmed that no facilitator was used at the last retreat, where board members who were passionate about certain topics were able to lead the discussion on them. Administrative Assistant Javier Mendoza noted the agendas, meeting minutes, and audio from the previous retreat are available online if anyone is interested in seeing what was discussed. Board Member Campana requested that the Library Director be asked about his experience with successful retreats and potential knowledgeable facilitators. Chair Hartman indicated this item will be included on next month's agenda.

7. Director's Report

Library Director Michael Beck reviewed the Directors Report with attendees. Mr. Beck stated that staff is in the process of identifying needs so they can make any necessary budget requests. He discussed the involvement of board members in College and Career Week, the significant attendance at the event, and the library's partnership with Scottsdale Unified School District for it. He spoke about the agencies that will attend and make presentations for Library Staff Day. He noted a correction that the Friends of Scottsdale Public Library's 24-Hour Donor Challenge will be held on October 22, not October 23. He reviewed the

various ways all Library programs are marketed. He added that Library staff will be present at the farmer's market to try to register people for library cards.

8. Board Member's Report

Board Member Totten spoke about the presence of hundreds of colleges, universities, and military representatives at the recent College and Career Week event. She wished there was better signage at the event. She relayed praise she heard about the Baby Cuddles program held at Mustang Library. She felt the Scottsdale Ambassadors should tour the Civic Center Library. She promoted an upcoming appearance by Sarah Kearney, Executive Director of Blue Zone Project Scottsdale.

Vice-Chair Seiden discussed attending an invasive species presentation. She suggested a program where the documentary Banned Together is shown, noting that a commercial-free version is available for community use.

Board Member Shimokubo spoke about the Phoenix Library Foundation holding a Raise the Stacks fundraiser.

Chair Hartman promoted a free Scottsdale Sister Cities Association picnic on October 22 where students from Morocco will be honored guests.

9. Identification of Future Agenda Items and Future Meetings

Board Member Shimokubo requested a presentation on Scottsdale Roundup as well as a discussion on how the library can coordinate with the Parks and Recreation department on Scottsdale's 75th anniversary.

Vice-Chair Seiden wondered about an update on Human Relations Commission speakers. She thought speakers from the university should be asked to educate the community on various topics. Chair Hartman offered to follow up with the Vice Chair on that matter.

The Library Board's next meeting will be on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. at Arabian Library.

10. Adjournment

BOARD MEMBER TOTTEN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VICE-CHAIR SEIDEN SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR HARTMAN, VICE-CHAIR SEIDEN, AND BOARD MEMBERS CAMPANA, O'CONNELL, SHIMOKUBO, AND TOTTEN VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

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