



MEMORANDUM

Date: August 25, 2015

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "CHH", is written over the printed name "C.H. Huckelberry".

Re: **Equity Cost Sharing with Out-of-County Library Users**

Attached is an August 17, 2015 memorandum from Library District Director Melinda Cervantes regarding the possibility of instituting an out-of-County library fee similar to that now imposed in Maricopa County.

The issue arises due to a high proportion of Pinal County residents utilizing the Dewhirst-Catalina Library. In the memorandum, the Library Director discusses potential revenues that would be generated from an out-of-county library user fee. Based on Ms. Cervantes' past experience with other smaller counties with a higher percentage of out-of-county users, she concludes such fees are impractical and very difficult to enforce. Hence, the County will not pursue any further the development of an out-of-county library user fee similar to that imposed in Maricopa County.

I had requested Pinal County consider a financial contribution to the operation of the Dewhirst-Catalina library, but they declined. We will continue to pursue a number of alternatives regarding reducing our library costs and expenses paid for by Pima County taxpayers and I expect to have an implementation plan for Board consideration by the end of 2015. Ms. Cervantes suggests a number of potential strategies in her memorandum.

CHH/anc

Attachment

c: Melinda Cervantes, Director, Library District

MEMO



Date: August 17, 2015

To: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

From: Melinda Cervantes *mc*
Library Director

Re: **Out of County Library Cardholders**

Per your request I am providing additional information on Library cardholders who are not residents of Pima County. Pima County Public Library serves nearly 1 million residents of Pima County. In addition, the Library welcomes visitors and residents of nearby counties to visit and use Library resources for free. With the exception of one branch library location, Dewhirst-Catalina Library, non-resident visitors and cardholders are only a small percentage of the total daily customers of our libraries.

The Dewhirst-Catalina Library is located near the Pima County border with Pinal County and approximately 5 miles from the Saddlebrooke community. According to the 2010 Census, the Saddlebrooke community has a population of 9,600. The Oracle Library, operated by Pinal County is located nearly 17 miles to the northwest opposite the direction that most residents of Saddlebrooke generally drive for services.

A recent check of the number of Pima County Public Library cardholders who reside in Pinal County is 2,872. The total number of Out of County cardholders is 6,343 including Pinal County. The total number of Pima County resident cardholders is 378,325.

If 100% of Out of County residents were charged an annual fee of \$50.00 to use Pima County libraries, similar to what Maricopa County Library District¹ charges, total revenue would be \$317,150. My experience with library card fees is that they generally result in only 1% - 2% of total eligible population actually purchasing a library card generating very little new revenue. Additionally, the Library expends valuable resources accounting for this fee and turning away customers. Consequently, I do not recommend charging a fee to Out of County residents when the number of Out of County cardholders is less than 2% of the overall use of our libraries.

Dewhirst-Catalina Library is the only branch library where 47.5% of the use comes from Out of County residents. As I previously recommended, either Pinal County could choose to contribute to the operation of the Catalina Library or we can lower operational costs by reducing open hours.

An additional problem is the location of the Dewhirst-Catalina Library, which is on the west side of Arizona State Highway 77. This is relatively convenient for vehicle drivers coming from Saddlebrook, but is on the opposite side of the highway from schools and residences in Catalina. Highway 77 has no safe or easy pedestrian crossing in the Library area. As a result very few children use the Dewhirst-Catalina Library unless accompanied by an adult.

¹ The Maricopa County Library District is funded primarily by a secondary property tax. Non-residents who live outside Maricopa County and who do not own property in Maricopa County must pay a fee of \$50 per year to obtain a card because they do not pay the secondary property tax that supports the operations of the Library District.

If you are not a Maricopa County resident or Maricopa County property owner, the branch library staff will assist you in finding the nearest library which would be available for your use without a non-resident fee.

The preferred solution, if we are to continue Library service in Catalina, is to either reduce hours to a minimum, primarily to provide pick up and drop off service that will be used largely by Out of County residents, or to relocate the Library to the east side of Highway 77 where we can more appropriately deliver services for children and families.

Alternatively, we might use an enhanced regional approach, by closing the Catalina Library completely, redirecting adult users with vehicles to the Oro Valley Library and, on an itinerant basis, deliver library services for children and families in a parks, community center or other community building using staff from the Oro Valley Library. Library Bookmobile services to the Catalina area could also be increased.

c: Hank Atha, Deputy County Administrator for Community and Economic Development