

Attachment A

Phoenix City Council Public Safety and Justice (PSJ) Subcommittee Summary Minutes January 7, 2026

City Council Chambers
200 W. Jefferson St.
Phoenix, Arizona

Subcommittee Members Present
Councilman Kevin Robinson, Chair
Vice Mayor Ann O'Brien
Councilman Jim Waring

Subcommittee Members Absent
Councilwoman Betty Guardado

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Robinson called the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee (PSJ) to order at 10:03 a.m. with three members present.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Roberto Borbolla, the owner of Family Landscaping LLC thanked Public Safety staff, expressed his discontent with the gun violence in communities and recommended the City utilize external agencies to assist.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

1. Minutes of the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee Meeting

Chairman Robinson made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2025, Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee meeting. Vice Mayor Ann O'Brien seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 3-0.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION (ITEMS 2-4)

2. Office of Accountability and Transparency Update

Office of Accountability and Transparency (OAT) Director Shannon Johanni presented general updates on the office including becoming 100 percent staffed, presenting at the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement Conference, establishing a working relationship with the Family Advocacy Center, reviewing 159 Department Administrative Investigations, with 37 reports published to date and the Police Department agreeing with 23 of 25 recommendations. Ms. Johanni explained the Police Department has implemented operations orders for 20 recommendations and department disagreement with recommendations were isolated to two reports and fact specific. She shared the agreed upon recommendations focused on robust Professional

Standards Bureau (PSB) investigations and transparent documented reasoning to support decision-making.

Ms. Johanni explained robust PSB investigations include reviewing all available relevant evidence, including body worn camera footage, conducting interviews and addressing all potential policy violations or misconduct alleged or raised. She stated recommendations in progress also include detailing in custody-death evaluation criteria and providing written analysis of conclusions and decisions by PSB, the Critical Incident Review Board (CIRB) and the Police Chief. Ms. Johanni emphasized OAT has not yet verified whether operations manual changes improved outcomes but will continue reviewing investigations to ensure revisions enhance accountability and transparency and will release reports in late 2026 on investigations conducted after the department's implementation efforts.

Ms. Johanni conveyed the Civilian Review Board (CRB) will hear OAT's reports and the Police Department's response approximately 60 days after publication. She noted OAT will connect with each Council district as the board meetings are scheduled throughout the City. Ms. Johanni announced the CRB has held four meetings to date and adopted all OAT recommendations. She added OAT's mediation director has conducted seven Department level community mediations, addressing systemic or policy level concerns. Ms. Johanni provided an example of a recent successful mediation where a community member was frustrated by the lack of communication, poor customer service, and lengthy process from the public records unit and unit leadership was able to address the concerns.

Ms. Johanni presented on OAT's Community Engagement Team which has connected with more than 15,000 community members since 2024. She shared the team has begun piloting its Youth Outreach Program where 24 students participated and reflected on the issues and needs, they see in the community. She thanked the Public Safety and Justice subcommittee.

Vice Mayor O'Brien questioned which schools the Outreach Program will be working with.

Ms. Johanni replied they will meet with each Council district to identify schools.

Vice Mayor O'Brien asked have particular schools been identified and is the program currently at South Mountain.

Ms. Johanni replied the program is currently at South Mountain High School.

Vice Mayor O'Brien asked if the program is continuing through the semester.

Ms. Johanni replied yes, the team conducted surveys at the beginning and end of the program to see what students thought. She shared OAT is working on refining partnerships with schools and refining the curriculum to ensure student needs are met.

She explained the first five weeks of the 11-week curriculum remain fixed, while the other five weeks are tailored to the student interest survey conducted at the semester's start to address community-specific issues such as education, law, and policing.

Vice Mayor O'Brien asked if the students were surveyed after completion.

Ms. Johanni stated the students were surveyed after completion and the team is working on putting that information together.

Chairman Robinson asked Ms. Johanni to explain the process of breaking the tie when OAT and the Police Department disagree on recommendations.

Ms. Johanni stated the first two disagreements were in the beginning stages of OAT's work and the tie breaker is the Civilian Review Board. She explained OAT tries to understand what the Police Department's concerns are and resolve those before reports are released.

Chairman Robinson asked her to give an example of what type of issue would be mediated between a police officer and someone who is making a complaint against a police officer.

Ms. Johanni stated an example is when an officer responds to a call and, in the heat of an escalated situation, uses coarse language that may seem unprofessional or upsetting to community members, by swearing around children. She explained many complaints stem from perceived rudeness or misunderstandings, such as when an officer explains they cannot take a collision report based on policy, which gives the community member a chance to understand while expressing their frustration.

Chairman Robinson thanked Ms. Johanni for the presentation and acknowledged the work OAT is doing.

3. Animal Ordinance Update Overview

Lieutenant Karen Hudson presented Animal Crime Investigations which began in 2022 and currently Sergeant Milo Kaufman serves as the Subject Matter Expert and Rainey Sharer serves as a Police Civilian Investigator (PCI) on animal-related issues. She shared the department conducted peer city research and found Maricopa County Sheriff's Department has a dedicated animal crimes detail while other peer cities refer animal crimes to their general crime detectives.

Lieutenant Hudson announced the language update after 2023, impacting what is considered cruel neglect or adequate shelter neglect which helps officers to better define if a person is violating a shelter ordinance. She added, since the ordinance update, the animal cruelty bookings have increased by 15 percent over a two-year period.

Lieutenant Hudson stated the department provided a training video, so officers understand how to investigate animal crimes. She announced the 311-system update which allows citizens to report violations of tethering, animal cruelty and shelter. She reported 249 complaints overall and the difference between the Arizona Humane Society which conducts cruelty investigations and Maricopa County Animal Care and Control which handles licensing.

Lieutenant Hudson presented the effects of the new ordinance Senate Bill (SB) 1658 which only requires unreasonable suffering and allows officers to easily identify animal suffering. She added there is a City Code allows for no exceptions and staff can enforce this code regarding individuals experiencing homelessness with an animal. She explained SB 1658 replaced the requirement of protracted suffering with unreasonable suffering in animal cruelty laws, making it easier for officers to intervene without waiting for prolonged harm. She added this change was prompted by the Chandler 55 case, where authorities were delayed in rescuing animals due to the previous standard.

Councilman Waring questioned if the Department provides guidance if owners need assistance with an animal issue and if that ever happens.

Lieutenant Hudson stated yes, people call for those things, and they do a welfare check with the Humane Society to ensure the individual is educated on how to handle animals and assist.

Councilman Waring requested staff ensures that the community is aware and educated on what the rules are.

Vice Mayor O'Brien asked is staff provides information about other resources other than Humane Society.

Lieutenant Hudson stated the City has a contract with the Humane Society which makes the organization the primary contact.

Vice Mayor O'Brien stated the department can explore later and talk offline.

Lieutenant Hudson stated the Bureau continues to meet monthly with the Arizona Humane Society, update policies, increase the number of liaison officers, conduct post-academy trainings and hold quarterly meetings.

Vice Mayor O'Brien thanked Lieutenant Hudson for the presentation and asked if the Bureau alongside the Neighborhood Services Department provided education and outreach after the bookings and citations.

Sergeant Kaufman stated the numbers provided are based on arrests done in the field and are reviewed by staff. He explained cases may be submitted to the Arizona Humane Society, Neighborhood Services Department, or to Maricopa County.

Vice Mayor O'Brien stated there is a long list of things to track, but it is important to know how cases ultimately end up in the system as the department makes modifications and changes.

Ms. Bays replied they will look into how staff can track that information, if there are changes that need to be made and how staff can make those changes.

Vice Mayor O'Brien shared her appreciation for the work being done and the presentation.

Chairman Robinson thanked Lieutenant Hudson and the Animal Crimes Investigation Team for their work and presentation.

4. Police Hiring, Recruitment and Attrition Monthly Update

Commander William Jou stated the update reflects the Police Departments ongoing efforts to improve hiring and staffing. Commander Lou reported as of October 2025, there are 2,493 filled sworn positions and 144 recruits, totaling 2,637, with academy recruits nearly doubling from 83 to 144 in a year. He reported applications surged in 2025, with January receiving 518 compared to 234 in 2024 and October reaching 504 compared to 380, reflecting successful hiring strategies as the Police Department work toward 3,125 sworn officers.

Commander Jou reported the department received 503 applications from female candidates and 2,541 from male candidates in 2024, which increased in 2025 to 813 female applicants and 3,716 male applicants. He explained, this alongside a 62 percent increase in female applicants, reflects the department's efforts of targeted outreach and commitment to equitable and inclusive hiring practices.

Councilman Jim Waring stated, over a three-year period the Police Department has less applicants based on slide two and the number of recruits does not make up for the lack of officers.

Commander Jou reported the Police Department hired 159 recruit officers and 8 lateral officers in 2024, increasing to 206 recruits and 17 laterals in 2025. He added female hires grew slightly from 22 in 2024 to 23 in 2025, reflecting continued efforts to attract women and strengthen both pipelines through targeted outreach and career development opportunities. He reported the Police Department engaged with Dr. Tanya Meisenholder, the Director of gender equity for policing at New York University, who praised the department for their commitment and recruiting practice during the department's 30 by 30 Initiative. He shared Dr. Meisenholder helped identify areas of improvement, such as increased visibility at women- focused expos and job fairs. Commander Jou added the department partnered with the Police Foundation on December 6 to host a brunch where over 30 female applicants joined female officers to discuss career opportunities. He announced Commander Julia Egea has agreed to lead the initiative.

Commander Jou reported the department strives to employ a diverse department reflective of the community with Hispanic and White applicants making the largest groups followed by Black and Asian applicants. He noted there's still room to improve in representation across several groups in reference to actual hires.

Commander Jou reported attrition is highest among officers with less than one year of service and those with over 21 years, driven by early career adjustment challenges and retirement eligibility. He stated the Organizational Integrity Bureau, led by Commander Bryan Knueppel, is formalizing exit interviews, analyzing early intervention data to enhance employee wellness and retention and monitor stressors that could lead to early retirement.

Vice Mayor O'Brien referenced the slide including projected DROPS and asked if the 18 projected drops for November and December due to those officers reaching their maximum DROP period.

Commander Jou replied yes, those individuals would be their five-year or seven-year DROP.

Vice Mayor O'Brien asked if these individuals are retiring because there is no alternative.

Commander Jou replied yes.

Vice Mayor O'Brien asked if the numbers could be higher if an individual decided to leave prior to their DROP or chose to not utilize DROP.

Ms. Bays replied yes, that is correct.

Vice Mayor O'Brien asked if there is a way for staff to have an indication of others in the pipeline that were supposed to retire during those months given the timeline.

Ms. Bays replied staff is trying to provide projected separations that they are sure of.

Vice Mayor O'Brien thanked Ms. Bays for the clarification and expressed her concern regarding retirements especially those who retire prior to their full DROP years. She asked Commander Jou to clarify how exit interviews are being conducted.

Commander Jou stated the department has been doing exit interviews but are starting a newer process due to concerns with individuals leaving within less than a year. He explained individuals that are leaving early are meeting with executive staff to provide feedback and the department has expanded that to a more formalized process in collaboration with Human Resources. He added the Organizational Integrity Bureau will handle statistical information intake regarding the exit interviews.

Vice Mayor O'Brien restated the exit interviews will be conducted for all officers, not just those who were with the department for less than a year.

Commander Jou replied yes.

Vice Mayor O'Brien expressed frustration with the timing of the incorporation of the exit interviews and asked how many officers are retiring without using DROP.

Commander Jou replied staff does not have that number currently but will provide it at the next update.

Ms. Bays stated the data can be provided, staff does not have it currently.

Commander Lou reported on a previous request from the Subcommittee to provide peer city research regarding recruitment efficiency. He reported Phoenix Police Department demonstrates competitive performance and recruitment efficiency when compared to Houston and San Antonio. He explained the department's recruitment process averages 130 days, with the fastest hires completed in 60 days, compared to three to six months in other cities. He stated Phoenix runs the most academies compared to those peer cities with a smaller average class size and less background investigators.

Vice Mayor O'Brien stated she understands the City has significantly less background investigators, is there a need for additional background investigators to assist the department and could the class sizes be larger.

Commander Leif Myers reported in 2025, the Police Department hired over 200 recruits and maintained an 85 percent retention rate, the highest in three years. He added, currently, four academy classes with 120 recruits are operational, with another class starting pre-academy on January 20 and a graduation scheduled for January 28. He explained the top reasons for attrition since 2023 are personal reasons, rule violations, and proficiency concerns.

Councilman Waring asked if the Police Department is looking at the strengths of the candidates instead of the weaknesses to utilize them in other roles.

Commander Myers replied most of the proficiency concerns are based on safety in the firing range which cannot be ignored.

Councilman Waring asked if staff is finding alternative placements in civilian roles so recruits that have come far into the process can still serve the community.

Commander Myers stated yes, before a recruit is removed from the academy, staff communicate with Employment Services to look for viable opportunities within the City.

Commander Myers reported personal reasons is the primary reason for attrition and shared the department has modified the academy by reformatting family night to instill positive family dynamics, food, and academy tours to reassure families of recruit safety

and success. He added, before recruit dismissal, there is a conversation with command staff to provide feedback, discuss performance, and allow the recruit extra time to discuss with family before making a final decision.

Commander Myers reported the field training program is operating at a 91 percent retention compared to 71 to 72 percent in 2024. He added over the last three calendar years, 445 officers have completed or are in training; 356 remain active sworn officers, 64 separated, and 25 transitioned to civilian roles. He reported 80 percent of officers in training have maintained City employment.

Commander Jou stated in 2026 the Police Department is looking to continue to achieve competitive hiring timelines and the 2026-2027 plan is to include strategic planning for the 30 by 30 Initiative and staffing increases at Employment Services and the Police Academy with the Council's permission.

Chairman Robinson requested Chief Giordano come up to the table and noted the academy is placing an emphasis on providing the resources needed for recruits to be successful and asked Commander Myers to speak to the efforts the department is making to retain them.

Commander Myers stated the department has shifted the academy to an adult learning environment by offering numerous attempts and recognizing the recruit's progress.

Chairman Robinson noted past academy practices focused on high-stress environments that encouraged attrition and modeled negative behaviors, but the department has shifted to an adult-learning approach. He stated, the Police Department is still deficient in police officers and to hire more people, the department has to increase the number of staff in the Recruitment Bureau. He asked Chief Giordano to address that and explain where the department will be six to twelve months from today.

Chief Giordano stated the department is losing before their DROP period ends for various reasons and he is working to improve morale and retention by engaging directly with precincts and addressing concerns. He explained the department has shifted from excluding candidates to supporting success while maintaining State standards. Chief Giordano added the department aims for 40 strong recruits per class and strategically increase hiring by reallocating experienced officers to Employment Services to shorten timelines. He acknowledged the department is short and is adjusting to improve staffing while maintaining service quality.

Councilman Waring thanked Chief Giordano and emphasized that not all employees are suited to be trainers, urging staff to select individuals with strong communication skills. He asked if staff actively identify those individuals.

Chief Giordano replied staff are trying to identify the right people to deliver the right message and train correctly. He added Commander Myers and Jen LaRoque have done a good job ensuring his mission is communicated effectively to the department.

Chairman Robinson asked where the recruitment team will be six months from now and what staff are doing to speed up the recruitment process.

Chief Giordano stated immediate communication to ensure individuals complete applications as soon as possible with background investigators providing constant communication and assistance in completing forms.

Chairman Robinson asked if Ms. Bays and Commander Jou can meet in the next 30 days to look at the possibility of moving individuals to the Employment Services Bureau at a quicker rate.

Vice Mayor O'Brien shared her appreciation for the improvements rated to applicants, highlighted the Phoenix 30 by 30 Initiative and stated studies show women officers use less excessive force and see better outcomes for crime victims. She added the department's partnership with the Mayor's Women's Commission exemplifies the innovative thinking needed to recruit women as officers and led to the department's participation in the Fresh Start Career Fair, connecting with 30 women, five of whom remain in active contact with recruiters. She emphasized appointing Julie Egea to lead the 30 by 30 Initiative reporting directly to Chief Giordano, elevated the program to a priority. Vice Mayor O'Brien stated while the department remains 500 officers short of its goal, it is clear the recruitment strategies and expanded outreach are delivering results.

Chairman Robinson noted visiting the academy to better understand operations, thanked staff for their hard work and echoed appreciation for Chief Giordano's engagement with officers.

Anne Ender stated the community is ready to assist the City with addressing the crisis and asked for a report to the public showing how many sworn officers there are per precinct per shift and the response times by precinct and Council district.

INFORMATION ONLY (ITEMS 5-6)

5. Fire Staffing and Response Time Report

Information only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

Orla Bobo stated the City is pushing the narrative GO BOND and TPT increases will improve fire response times with new stations, yet the City is only building one station at a time and which will not assist with the current response times. She stated TPT and GO BOND funds should be used to improve response times now and response times are an indicator of service equity and public safety.

6. Community Assistance Program (CAP) Expansion Implementation Report

Information only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Robinson adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Taniya Williams
Management Fellow