

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING  
CITY OF PHOENIX  
ETHICS COMMISSION**

Pursuant to A.R.S. Section 38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the **ETHICS COMMISSION** and to the general public, that the **ETHICS COMMISSION** will hold a Hybrid meeting open to the public on **January 15, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.**

**OPTIONS TO ACCESS THE MEETING**

- **Call-in to listen** to the live meeting: Dial 1-415-655-0001, Enter meeting access code 2337 535 1463 and press # again when prompted for the attendee ID.
- **Observe the live meeting virtually**, by clicking on the following link and registering to join the meeting online:  
<https://cityofphoenix.webex.com/weblink/register/r0f834b7a459b3039ec5f964690bd9a30>
- If you would like to attend in person at Phoenix City Hall, 12th Floor, Central Conference Room 200 W. Washington St., Phoenix, Arizona, **please RSVP to [ethics.commission@phoenix.gov](mailto:ethics.commission@phoenix.gov).**
- **Register to speak and/or submit a comment** on an agenda item:
  - Contact: Rebecca McCarthy
  - At: (602) 262-7526
  - Email: [ethics.commission@phoenix.gov](mailto:ethics.commission@phoenix.gov)
  - By: 11:00 a.m. on January 15, 2026

**Public Comment:** If you wish to provide a written comment or speak at the meeting virtually or by phone, please submit a request to [ethics.commission@phoenix.gov](mailto:ethics.commission@phoenix.gov) or call (602) 262-7526 no later than 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 15, 2026. The email or phone call should include your first and last name, email address, the item number(s) and whether you would like your comment read into the record or if you wish to speak.

**Please take notice that in order to preserve the integrity of the investigation process and pursuant to the City Code, all information related to an Ethics Inquiry is required to remain confidential until there is final action by the Commission; therefore, the Commission will not take public comment on Agenda items regarding pending ethics inquiries. Written comments may be submitted at any time to the Commission inbox at [ethics.commission@phoenix.gov](mailto:ethics.commission@phoenix.gov).**

Additional information can be found at <https://www.phoenix.gov/ethics>.

## **Executive Session**

The Ethics Commission may vote to convene into executive session (which will not be open to the public) pursuant to A.R.S. Section 38-431.03(A)(2) or (A)(3) for discussion or consideration of any items on the agenda, at any time during the meeting. The Ethics Commission must take action on an agenda item in open session. Items on the agenda may be discussed out of order unless they have been specifically noted to be set for a certain time.

The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1.	Call to Order/Roll Call	Chair
2.	Commission Attorney Explains Public Comment	Commission Attorney
3.	Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 18, 2025 <b>Discussion and Possible Action</b>	Chair
4.	Staff Update <b>Information and Discussion</b>	Recording Secretary
5.	Discussion of Inquiry Review Process and Citizen Petition <b>Discussion and Possible Action</b>	Chair
6.	Review of Current Complaints <b>Discussion and Possible Action</b>  1. EC-25-01 2. EC-25-06 3. EC-25-08 4. EC-25-09 5. EC-25-10 6. EC-25-12 7. EC-25-18	Chair
7.	Call to Public	Chair
8.	Future Agenda Items and Meeting Dates	Chair
9.	Adjournment	Chair

For further information, please contact Rebecca McCarthy at (602) 262-7526 or via electronic mail at [ethics.commission@phoenix.gov](mailto:ethics.commission@phoenix.gov). For reasonable accommodation or translation services, please contact Rebecca McCarthy at (602) 262-7526 or TTY: 7-1-1 as early as possible to coordinate needed arrangements.

1/12/2026

## AGENDA ITEM 3

**CITY OF PHOENIX  
ETHICS COMMISSION  
Summary Minutes  
December 18, 2025**

Phoenix City Hall  
12<sup>th</sup> Floor, Central Conference Room  
200 W Washington St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Committee Members Present

Jose Samuel (Sam) Leyvas III, Chair  
Patricia Sallen, Vice Chair  
Ann Hart  
Cheryl Pietkiewicz  
Peter Schirripa

Committee Members Absent

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

Chairman Sam Leyvas called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. with Vice Chairwoman Sallen and Commissioners Ann Hart, Cheryl Pietkiewicz, and Peter Schirripa present.

**2. Commission Attorney Explains Public Comment**

Elizabeth Nillen, Commission Attorney, stated members of the public may speak for up to two minutes on agenda items and gave direction on appropriate decorum when providing comments.

**3. Approval of Meeting Minutes from November 20, 2025**

Vice Chairwoman Sallen made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 20, 2025, Ethics Commission Meeting. Commissioner Pietkiewicz seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 5-0.

**4. Staff Update**

Deputy City Manager David Mathews provided an update on the Citizen Petition submitted by a member of the public on December 3. He summarized the Citizen Petition contained several recommendations relating to either the Ethics Ordinance or the Rules of Procedure for the Ethics Commission. He stated the item was heard by the City Council on the December 17<sup>th</sup> Formal City Council meeting, and the City Council voted to refer the Citizen Petition to the Ethics Commission at the January 2026 meeting for discussion and potential recommendations back to City Council. Deputy City Manager Mathews noted the petition was included in today's agenda for reference and will be included as an agenda item at the January meeting for discussion.

Vice Chairwoman Sallen asked how and what City Council voted on specifically. She noted there were policy questions regarding the notarization and thought there was discussion about a waiver.

Deputy City Manager Mathews stated the City Council voted to refer the entire Citizen Petition to the Ethics Commission for review and recommendations.

Vice Chairwoman Sallen asked if there was any other recommendation from City Council.

Deputy City Manager Mathews responded no. The City Council voted to accept staff's recommendation to refer the Citizen Petition to the Ethics Commission.

Chairman Leyvas asked if Vice Chairwoman Sallen had additional questions about the need for a waiver for the notarized signature.

Vice Chairwoman Sallen responded yes. She stated the topic was discussed during the November meeting as to whether the Commission had authority to waive their Rules of Procedure to act on an unnotarized complaint. She clarified her question was if the City Council had an opinion on this matter. She stated the Commission could discuss this issue at the January meeting.

Chairman Leyvas stated the Commission could discuss this matter today versus waiting, as it is a critical question regarding the complaints on the agenda today. He stated he would have postponed any vote on the inquiries during the November meeting, even if they were notarized, as the inquiries were only received a few days prior to the meeting; the Commission would not have had adequate time to fully review the inquiries.

Assistant Chief Council Deryck Lavelle provided additional clarification to the Commission regarding the Citizen Petition. He clarified the Commission is not necessarily charged with the discussion of a waiver, with respect to the Citizen Petition, but rather the five identified areas identified in the Citizen Petition. He recommended the Commission specifically review the five areas identified in the Citizen Petition.

Chairman Leyvas acknowledged Assistant Chief Council Lavelle's clarification. He summarized the petition and the barriers referenced, noting that the City Council asked the Commission to review the petition, which differs from the Commission's ability to waive a rule during the meeting.

Assistant Chief Council Lavelle recommended the Commission to review the specific requests in the petition.

Chairman Leyvas opened the floor to discussion from the Commission.

There was no further discussion.

**5. Review of Current Complaints**

Chairman Leyvas asked if the Commission would make a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss inquiries listed under Agenda Item 5 and to receive legal advice, pursuant to Arizona Revised Statutes Section 38-431.03.

Commissioner Hart made a motion to convene in Executive Session to discuss inquiries listed under Agenda Item 5. Vice Chairwoman Sallen seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 5-0.

The Commission entered Executive Session at 3:12 p.m.

The Commission returned from Executive Session at 4:32 p.m.

Chairman Leyvas stated that he would have voted to postpone the inquiries during the November meeting to allow for more time to review, regardless of if the inquiries were notarized or not. He stated the need to balance rules with efficiency and to not let the process prevent the Commission from being prudent and timely in their investigations. He noted the Rules of Procedure allow some latitude to best serve the public's broader interest. He stated he is open to hearing and considering the inquiries during this meeting.

Vice Chairwoman Sallen supported the comments made by Chairman Leyvas. She referenced the Ethics Commission's Rules of Procedure (Rules), Section 4 Rule 1. She noted the Rules of Procedure states the rules "should be construed, administered and employed by the Ethics Commission and the parties to secure the just, speedy and inexpensive determination of every action and proceeding." She noted the Complainants were not informed of the notarization requirement, and the requirement was not included on the Request for Inquiry submittal form. Per the Rules, she agrees with the proposal to consider the inquiries as is..

Chairman Leyvas noted the Commission and staff did not provide the appropriate notarization requirement on the form and noted this requirement will be fixed to align with the Rules. He opened the floor to discussion.

There were no additional comments by the Commission.

Chairman Leyvas asked if the Commission would make a motion on EC-25-01.

Commissioner Pietkiewicz noted there are 21 complaints and urged the Commission to respect the effort the complainants took to submit the complaints. She stated the Commission should investigate the claims as responsibly and completely as possible while not attempting to review them in an urgent manner.

Commissioner Pietkiewicz made a motion to investigate EC-25-01 and EC-25-06, focusing on the timeliness of the actions identified in the complaint. There was no second. The motion failed.

Vice Chairwoman Sallen made a motion to accept jurisdiction on and investigate EC-25-01 and EC-25-06, as both are facially sufficient and warrant additional investigation. Commissioner Schirripa seconded the motion.

Chairman Leyvas opened the floor to discussion from the Commission.

Chairman Leyvas stated he will vote in favor of an investigation as it falls within the Commission's jurisdiction and warrants investigation. He noted there are additional questions and concerns he would like the Counsel to investigate.

Chairman Leyvas called for the roll call vote. He reminded the Commission the motion would need an affirmative vote of four Commission members to pass.

The motion passed 5-0 by the following roll call vote:

**Yes:** 5 – Chairman Leyvas, Vice Chairwoman Sallen, Commissioner Pietkiewicz, Commissioner Schirripa, and Commissioner Hart

**No:** 0

EC-25-01 and EC-25-06 will be investigated.

Chairman Leyvas asked if the Commission would make a motion on EC-25-02.

Commissioner Pietkiewicz noted she made a mistake on her previous motion and intended to make a motion relating to another respondent.

Chairman Leyvas reminded Commissioner Pietkiewicz the specific details of the inquiry are confidential at until the inquiry is voted on. He requested she restate her motion now.

Commissioner Pietkiewicz stated she was not making a motion on EC-25-01.

Chairman Leyvas stated EC-25-01 has already been voted on.

Commissioner Pietkiewicz stated she does not have a motion.

Chairman Leyvas made a motion to dismiss EC-25-02 and EC-25-16 and to decline to take jurisdiction on the matters because the complaints are facially insufficient to pursue. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion.

Chairman Leyvas commented that although one may argue the respondent is acting unethically, he does not believe the complaints were facially sufficient. He stated the complainants may provide more information, but he will be voting to dismiss.

Chairman Leyvas opened the floor to discussion from the Commission.

Chairman Leyvas called for the roll call vote. The motion passed 5-0 by the following roll call vote:

<b>Yes:</b>	5 – Chairman Leyvas, Vice Chairwoman Sallen, Commissioner Pietkiewicz, Commissioner Schirripa, and Commissioner Hart
<b>No:</b>	0

EC-25-02 and EC-25-16 were dismissed.

Chairman Leyvas asked if the Commission would make a motion on EC-25-03.

Commissioner Schirripa made a motion to dismiss EC-25-03, EC-25-15, and EC-25-20 and decline to take jurisdiction on the matters because the complaints are facially insufficient to pursue. Vice Chairwoman Sallen seconded the motion.

Chairman Leyvas noted the inquiries relate to the same respondent and does not believe the information provided meets the standard of a true conflict of interest. He noted he will be voting in favor of the motion to dismiss.

Chairman Leyvas opened the floor to discussion from the Commission.

Chairman Leyvas called for the roll call vote. The motion passed 5-0 by the following roll call vote:

<b>Yes:</b>	5 – Chairman Leyvas, Vice Chairwoman Sallen, Commissioner Pietkiewicz, Commissioner Schirripa, and Commissioner Hart
<b>No:</b>	0

EC-25-03, EC-25-15, and EC-25-20 were dismissed.

Chairman Leyvas asked if the Commission would make a motion on EC-25-04.

Chairman Leyvas made a motion to dismiss EC-25-04, EC-25-13 and EC-25-17 and decline to take jurisdiction on the matters because the complaints are facially insufficient to pursue. He explained he does not believe sufficient information has been provided to warrant investigation or create a strong case of a conflict of interest. He noted he did not ask for a second prior to providing his comments.

Vice Chairwoman Sallen seconded the motion.

Chairman Leyvas opened the floor to discussion from the Commission.

Chairman Leyvas called for the roll call vote. The motion passed 4-1 by the following roll call vote:

**Yes:** 4 – Chairman Leyvas, Vice Chairwoman Sallen, Commissioner Schirripa, and Commissioner Hart  
**No:** 1 - Commissioner Pietkiewicz

EC-25-04, EC-25-13 and EC-25-17 were dismissed.

Chairman Leyvas asked if the Commission would make a motion on EC-25-05.

Chairman Leyvas made a motion to dismiss EC-25-05, EC-25-14, and EC-25-21 and decline to take jurisdiction on the matters because the complaints are facially insufficient to pursue. Vice Chairwoman Sallen seconded the motion.

Chairman Leyvas opened the floor to discussion from the Commission.

Chairman Leyvas noted his reasons for motioning to dismiss these inquires is the same as the previous. He explained he does not believe substantive information has been provided to warrant investigation.

Chairman Leyvas called for the roll call vote. The motion passed 4-1 by the following roll call vote:

**Yes:** 4 – Chairman Leyvas, Vice Chairwoman Sallen, Commissioner Schirripa, and Commissioner Hart  
**No:** 1 - Commissioner Pietkiewicz

EC-25-05, EC-25-14, and EC-25-21 were dismissed.

Commission Attorney Nillen provided a time update and reminded the Chairman of the vote required in Agenda Item 6.

Chairman Leyvas asked if the Commission would make a motion on EC-25-07.

Vice Chairwoman Sallen made a motion dismiss EC-25-07, EC-25-11, and EC-25-19 and decline to take jurisdiction on the matters because the complaints are facially insufficient to pursue. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion.

Chairman Leyvas opened the floor to discussion from the Commission.

Chairman Leyvas called for the roll call vote. The motion passed 4-1 by the following roll call vote:

**Yes:** 4 – Chairman Leyvas, Vice Chairwoman Sallen, Commissioner Schirripa, and Commissioner Hart  
**No:** 1 - Commissioner Pietkiewicz

EC-25-07, EC-25-11, and EC-25-19 were dismissed.

Chairman Leyvas stated EC-25-08 and EC-25-18 involve the same respondent. He believes one is facially sufficient to investigate and the other is not. He made a motion to accept jurisdiction on EC-25-18, and the complaint facially meets the benchmark to warrant investigation. Commissioner Pietkiewicz seconded the motion.

Vice Chairwoman Sallen asked the Chair to clarify which complaint the motion applied to.

Chairman Leyvas responded the motion was only for EC-25-18.

Commission Attorney Nillen asked if Commissioner Pietkiewicz agreed with the motion.

Commissioner Pietkiewicz responded yes.

Chairman Leyvas called for the roll call vote. The motion passed 5-0 by the following roll call vote:

**Yes:** 5 – Chairman Leyvas, Vice Chairwoman Sallen, Commissioner Pietkiewicz, Commissioner Schirripa, and Commissioner Hart  
**No:** 0

EC-25-18 will be investigated.

The Commission did not take action on EC-25-08, EC-25-09, EC-25-10, and EC-25-12.

## **6. Elect Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for 2026**

Chairman Leyvas nominated Patricia Sallen to act as Chairwoman for 2026. Commissioner Schirripa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Chairman Leyvas nominated Peter Schirripa to act as Vice Chairman for 2026. Vice Chairwoman Sallen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.

**7. Call to Public**

Chairman Leyvas asked staff to introduce the public who requested to speak.

Scott McGill noted his cases have been dismissed but wanted to speak on behalf of the North Gateway Village Planning Committee, for which he is the Chair of as of December 2025. He noted all members who serve on the Committee are residents and work in the North Valley and take their role very seriously. He stated that, with the ethics inquiries filed against them, they have been subjected to significant scrutiny, specifically regarding the rezoning case for North Park Development. He noted the Complainants are attempting to discredit the Committee Members and stop a quorum from voting during their meetings. He stated at no time has he received money or benefitted from the developers. He asked the Commission to review the actions of the Complainants, specifically referring to the recent North Gateway Village Planning Committee Meeting in November.

Paul Li thanked the Commission for serving on the Board as volunteers. He noted that while they don't want to discourage public from filing valid complaints, there should be a mechanism to deter the public from making false allegations to harass the members. He noted that all Board and Commission members at the City serve as volunteers to be part of the participatory government processes. He asked the Commission to not remove any potential deterrents from the Rules for people who misuse the policy to harass the members. He stated it could decrease the public's willingness to volunteer to serve on Boards to better the community, and it would be a disservice to the City of Phoenix.

**8. Future Agenda Items and Meeting Dates**

There were no future agenda items discussed.

**9. Adjournment**

Chairman Leyvas adjourned the meeting 5:07 p.m.

## City Council Formal Meeting



City of Phoenix

### Report

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Agenda Date: 12/17/2025, Item No. 77

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## Consideration of a Citizen Petition Related to the Ethics Commission Inquiry Process - Citywide

This report provides the City Council with information in response to a citizen petition submitted by Tamara Weaver at the December 3, 2025, Formal City Council meeting regarding the Ethics Commission Inquiry Process, **Attachment A**.

### Summary

The petitioner requests the City Council to:

1. Immediately suspend the notarization requirement for ethics inquiries until such times as clear public notice and reasonable alternatives are implemented.
2. Eliminate the requirement of in-person, daytime-only delivery and permit submission by an online portal.
3. Remove or substantially revise all language threatening financial penalties for complaints later determined to be without merit.
4. Direct the City Clerk and Ethics Commission to conduct a comprehensive review of the ethics complaint process with meaningful public input and to propose revisions that prioritize accessibility, equity and public trust.
5. Report back to the public within fifteen days on actions taken to implement these reforms.

The City of Phoenix Ethics Commission (the “Commission”) held their first meeting in March 2024. In April 2024, they approved the Commission’s Initial Rules of Procedure and the Commission’s Bylaws. The Commission began reviewing eight outstanding complaints previously submitted between 2019 and 2023. Prior to receiving the 21 *Requests for Inquiry* referenced in the petition, the Commission had planned to conduct a comprehensive review of their processes, including the Rules of Procedure, after resolving the first eight inquiries.

The petition asks the City Council to address alleged deficiencies in the current ethics inquiry process administered by the Commission and the City Clerk Department. At the most recent meeting of the Commission held on November 20, 2025, 21 ethics *Requests for Inquiry*, submitted by members of the public only a few days prior to the meeting, were tabled because they were not notarized. Rule 4(a) of the Commission’s Rules of Procedure requires a *Request for Inquiry* be notarized. These Rules were

drafted by the City Manager's Office in consultation with the Law Department in January 2018 and approved by the Commission in April 2024 after individual commissioners were seated.

The petitioner noted that, prior to the meeting, neither the official ethics inquiry form available on the City's website nor any accompanying instructions indicated that notarization was required. The 21 inquiries are the first complaints received by the Commission since they were seated in March 2024, and the absence of a notary stamp on the inquiry form and corresponding instructions was a clerical error that has since been corrected.

Additionally, the petitioner takes issue with the requirement that the notarized form must be delivered in person to City Hall during regular business hours. Per the instructions provided to the complainants by the City Clerk, in this instance they were authorized to submit the notarized forms by email and had the option to either drop-off or mail the original notarized forms to the City Clerk's Office.

Lastly, the petitioner takes issue with language contained on the *Request for Inquiry* form that anyone who files a frivolous complaint may be assessed a civil penalty. This language mirrors the requirements provided in Phoenix City Code Section 2-53(O) and in Rule 4(a) of the Commission's Initial Rules of Procedure. Any change to this language will require a change to the City Code and the Commission's Initial Rules of Procedure.

**Options for Council Action**

- A. Accept the petition.
- B. Deny the petition.
- C. Refer the petition to the Ethics Commission for further consideration and recommendation during the Commission's January meeting.

Staff recommends referring the Citizen Petition to the Ethics Commission for further consideration and recommendation at their January meeting. Prior to receiving the 21 *Requests for Inquiry* referenced in the petition, the Commission had planned to undertake a comprehensive review of their processes, including the Rules of Procedure. Referring the petition would allow the Commission to continue their planned review of the process improvements in coordination with the City Clerk and Law Departments and, upon approval, present those recommended changes to City Council for their review and consideration.

**Responsible Department**

This item is submitted by Deputy City Manager David Mathews and the City Manager's Office.



**CITIZEN PETITION REQUEST**

2025 DEC -3 PM 4:40  
CITY CLERK DEPT.

From Tamara Weaver [REDACTED]

Date Wed 12/3/2025 1:37 PM

To Council Packet Mailbox CLK <Council.packet.mailbox@phoenix.gov>

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Citizens' Petition Request to the Mayor and City Council For the Promotion of an Equitable, Accessible, and Transparent Municipal Ethics Complaint Process

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council:

We, the undersigned residents and taxpayers of the City, respectfully submit this petition and request that it be entered into the official record of a regular Council meeting and that the Council take formal action to address the serious deficiencies in the current ethics inquiry process administered by the City's Ethics Commission and City Clerk.

At the most recent meeting of the Ethics Commission, twenty-one (21) ethics inquiry requests submitted by members of the public were summarily tabled—not on the merits of the allegations contained therein, but solely because the submissions lacked notarization.

Prior to that meeting, neither the official ethics inquiry form available on the City's website nor any accompanying instructions indicated that notarization was required. No space was provided for a notary's signature or seal. Only after these 21 inquiries were rejected on procedural grounds did a revised form—dated November 25—suddenly appear on the City's website, now containing a notary block.

Furthermore, the City Clerk has stated that the completed, notarized form must be physically delivered in person to City Hall during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday). This requirement imposes an insurmountable barrier for the many residents who work during those hours or who rely on public transportation, have childcare responsibilities, or face mobility challenges.

Compounding these obstacles, the new form contains language warning citizens that they may be assessed a penalty in excess of \$500 if their complaint is later deemed "frivolous." According to recent Federal Reserve data, approximately one-third of American adults would be unable to

cover an unexpected \$400 expense without borrowing or selling something. The mere threat of such a financial penalty has a chilling effect and will predictably deter legitimate reports of misconduct, particularly from lower- and moderate-income residents.

Taken together, these policies and practices—notarization without prior notice, mandatory in-person delivery during standard working hours, and the prospect of substantial monetary sanctions—create a system that is neither equitable nor accessible. Rather than encouraging public oversight of government ethics, the current process erects procedural and financial hurdles that disproportionately burden ordinary residents while shielding public officials and employees from legitimate scrutiny.

A credible ethics process must be straightforward, safe, and genuinely available to every member of the community it serves. When procedural requirements and threatening language combine to discourage participation, the process ceases to protect the public and instead protects the institution from accountability.

Therefore, we petition the Mayor and City Council to:

1. Immediately suspend the notarization requirement for ethics inquiries until such time as clear public notice and reasonable alternatives (such as electronic notarization or a sworn declaration under penalty of perjury) are implemented;
2. Eliminate the requirement of in-person, daytime-only delivery and permit submission by an online portal;
3. Remove or substantially revise all language threatening financial penalties for complaints later determined to be without merit, replacing it with language that encourages good-faith reporting;
4. Direct the City Clerk and Ethics Commission to conduct a comprehensive review of the ethics complaint process with meaningful public input and to propose revisions that prioritize accessibility, equity, and public trust; and
5. Report back to the public within fifteen (15) days on actions taken to implement these reforms.

The residents of this City deserve an ethics oversight system that welcomes, rather than repels, citizen participation. We urge the Council to act swiftly to restore confidence in the integrity and fairness of our local government.

Respectfully submitted this 3rd day of December, 2025,

Stetson Valley Residents

We request that this petition be formally received and that the Council place this matter on an upcoming agenda for discussion and action.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter of public trust and democratic accountability.