

**CITY OF PHOENIX
ETHICS COMMISSION
Summary Minutes
June 18, 2026**

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

Commission Members Present

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

Commission Members Absent

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairwoman Patricia Sallen called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. with Commissioner Ann Hart and Commissioner Sam Leyvas present. Vice Chairman Peter Schirripa joined virtually.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 16, 2026

Commissioner Hart made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2026, Ethics Commission Meeting. Commissioner Leyvas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

3. Staff Update

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

Chairwoman Sallen asked staff if anyone had signed up to speak.

Special Projects Administrator Rebecca McCarthy stated there are no members of the public signed up to speak for any of the items today.

Chairwoman Sallen asked staff to present any updates.

Special Projects Administrator McCarthy provided an update on the status of the recruitment for the Commission Member vacancy. She stated the application deadline was June 20, and no eligible applicants have been received. She confirmed the application will be extended through August 20.

Deputy City Manager David Mathews added that staff will conduct additional outreach to the City Council Offices to support with the process.

4. Inquiry Review Process

Chairwoman Sallen introduced the item and listed a few items for discussion. The first item is regarding notarization and she referenced San Diego's submittal process. She stated the notarization process is an additional roadblock to the process. She would like to Commission to consider removing the notarization requirement, pending the possibility of sanctions can be satisfied by just signing under penalty of perjury. The second item is regarding withdrawal and noted the Commission needs a process for when a Complainant seeks to withdraw an application. She preferred the approach where once the complaint is submitted, pending it satisfies the technical requirements, it cannot be withdrawn by the Complainant. The third item is regarding the appearance of impropriety and she recommended adding language to the ethics policy. She opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Leyvas agreed with the Chairwoman's comments on notarization. He asked if this item was on the list from Council to review, per the Citizen Petition, and asked to confirm what the other items were to ensure the Commission is being responsive to the request. He questioned if the Commission has now set a precedent that one may withdraw a complaint up until the point the Commission has taken jurisdiction. He noted there would still be a potential penalty for a frivolous complaint.

Chairwoman Sallen stated the research shows San Antonio's Commission could impose sanctions for up to \$500 and attorney's fees incurred by the respondent.

Commissioner Leyvas stated he agrees with Chairwoman Sallen on the first item and on the third item to add language to the ethics policy regarding the appearance of impropriety. He discussed the notion of advisory opinions and noted the Commission is currently only able to issue advisory opinions when requested.

Chairwoman Sallen supported having the ability to provide advisory opinions to address any gaps in the policy that might be identified after a complaint is resolved.

Commissioner Leyvas asked whether it is standard practice for Boards and Commissions' Rules of Procedure to return to the City Manager or City Council for approval.

Chief Counsel David Benton stated he will research the process for the other Boards and Commissions and was unclear if there was a set standard across the City.

Commissioner Leyvas discussed it is important for the Commission to have independence in being able to revise the Rules of Procedure and was interested to know if this Commission was an exception to the standard process in the City.

Chairwoman Sallen agreed that understanding the process for the other Boards and Commissions would be helpful.

Commissioner Leyvas asked if staff could restate the questions asked within the Citizen Petition.

Special Projects Administrator McCarthy read the four requests on the Citizen Petition, which the City Council reviewed on December 17, 2025.

Commissioner Leyvas stated that the only undiscussed item from the Citizen Petition was the ability to submit complaints online. He agreed the ability to submit a complaint online removes another roadblock to citizen's submitting complaints, along with the removal of the notarization.

Commission Attorney Nillen stated the current revised form does include verbiage about penalty of perjury.

Chairwoman Sallen further clarified only the notarization requirement would need to be removed from the current form.

Commissioner Leyvas asked if the current form requires a signature.

Commission Attorney Nillen responded yes.

Chairwoman Sallen clarified her suggestion is to have the submittal process online, which could include checking a box to indicate the Complainants are submitting this document under penalty of perjury and sign electronically.

Commissioner Leyvas agreed. He noted the Commission still needs to decide how the public can provide input.

Commissioner Hart expressed concern about the process for withdrawal and asked if the Commission could further discuss this.

Chairwoman Sallen suggested establishing a withdrawal procedure, specifying when a complaint can be withdrawn and the timeframe for doing so after submission.

Commissioner Leyvas agreed with the suggestion about a timeframe and suggested 10 days. He noted that a Respondent may hire an attorney and begin incurring fees before the Commission can review or take jurisdiction on the matter.

Commissioner Hart agreed a 10-day timeframe seems appropriate.

Commissioner Leyvas asked if the provision for San Antonio was in their ordinance or their rules.

Commission Attorney Nillen responded the provision is in their ordinance.

Commissioner Leyvas recommended to include the language about the withdrawal procedures within the Ordinance, instead of the Rules of Procedure.

Commissioner Hart asked if the Commission needed to take a vote on the timeframe of 10 days.

Chairwoman Sallen stated yes. She noted this is currently a discussion to develop a list of proposals the Commission would ask the City Manager's office to review. She asked Vice Chairman Schirripa for any additional discussion.

Vice Chairman Schirripa agrees with the items discussed. He noted he sees value in removing the financial penalty as well.

Commissioner Leyvas noted the Commission has not discussed the financial penalty item in detail. He stated he sees the value in keeping the provision. He recommended the Commission ask the Commission Attorney to work with City staff to draft language on the amendments discussed and noted there may be an opportunity for the public to provide input as well.

Chairwoman Sallen asked staff to confirm the process.

Deputy City Manager Mathews explained that if the Commission requested to draft a rule change, the Commission Attorney and City staff would work on a draft rule change to present to the Commission at a future meeting. The Commission would need to vote to take those changes to the City Manager, per the current Rules of Procedure, and then to the City Council for their approval.

Chairwoman Sallen asked if there were any other proposals.

The Commission did not have other proposals.

Chairwoman Sallen summarized the items previously discussed, including removing notarization assuming the sanctions language remains, developing a process for withdrawal, including language regarding appearance of impropriety, proposing advisory opinions, allowing an online complaint submittal form, possibly removing the financial penalty and allowing more ownership over the Rules of Procedure.

Commission Attorney Nillen asked the Chairwoman if she wanted to a motion on each item.

Deputy City Manager Mathews assured the Chairwoman that she could make a motion for each item.

Commissioner Leyvas made a motion to request the Commission's Counsel, in collaboration with City staff, to draft an amendment to the Commission's Rules of Procedure that removes the notarization requirement, while keeping an attestation with the penalty of perjury language and reviewing the sanctions language.

Chairwoman Sallen asked for confirmation if the Commissioner proposes to keep the sanctions language.

Commissioner Leyvas stated he wants to provide City staff with flexibility to include the language if needed.

Vice Chairman Schirripa seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

Commissioner Leyvas asked if the submittal process was written in the Ordinance or the Rules of Procedure.

Chief Assistant City Attorney Deryck Lavelle responded the submittal process is included in the Rules of Procedure.

Commissioner Leyvas made a motion to amend the Rules of Procedure to allow electronic submittal and signature of complaints. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion.

Commission Attorney Nillen asked for clarification on whether the Commission is seeking to include an additional section within the electronic signature process that requires individuals to check a box affirming that they are signing under penalty of perjury.

Deputy City Manager Mathews noted the staff will work with the legal representatives to identify what the electronic form needs to include.

The motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

Chairwoman Sallen stated the next item for discussion is the withdrawal process, beginning with the question of if a Complainant should be allowed to withdraw.

Commissioner Hart stated yes.

Commissioner Leyvas made a motion to request the Commission's Counsel, in

collaboration with City staff, to draft an amendment to the City Ordinance that specifically addresses and allows a Complainant to withdraw a complaint within a specific number of days. The motion additionally requests the Commission's Counsel to work with City staff to identify a recommended number of days, based on other jurisdictions.

Chairwoman Sallen agreed with the motion to review other jurisdictions.

Chief Assistant City Attorney Lavelle noted that some of the items discussed may be applicable to the Ordinance and some may be applicable to the Rules of Procedure. He asked the Commission if they could include the option of including the draft language in the Ordinance or Rules of Procedure as applicable.

Commissioner Leyvas stated he wants this item included in the Ordinance. He agreed to amend his motion to allow for this flexibility.

Deputy City Manager Mathews stated that to allow staff flexibility to make edits in all appropriate documents, staff would request the Commission either make a new motion or amend a prior one, since the second motion about electronic filing also needs to be updated in the Ordinance.

Chief Assistant City Attorney Lavelle explained that if the Commission's motion only covers one document, such as the Ordinance, it restricts flexibility to revise other necessary documents.

Commission Attorney Nillen mentioned that since portions of the ordinance are also further expanded upon within the Rules of Procedure, it may be logical to include them in both.

Deputy City Manager Mathews suggested making a motion at the end which would cover all of the motions previously voted on.

Commissioner Hart seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

Chairwoman Sallen noted the next item to discuss was the proposal to remove the financial penalty.

Commissioner Leyvas stated he believes the financial penalty is a reasonable solution to a potential problem and the proposed fine is not significantly high. He stated he did not recommend changing the language.

Chairwoman Sallen asked if the Commissioner would be making a motion.

Commissioner Leyvas stated that he would only propose a motion if the Commission decided it was necessary to respond to the Council about the Citizen Petition.

Commissioner Hart questioned the benefit of imposing a financial penalty to begin with.

Commissioner Leyvas commented that since the Commission only reviews complaints against appointed and elected officials, its proceedings can be inherently political and there is a possibility that a Complainant may submit a complaint to damage another person's reputation.

Commissioner Hart asked how this is enforced.

Commissioner Leyvas responded it is enforced by the Commission.

Chairwoman Sallen asked if the Commissioner would make a recommendation.

Commissioner Leyvas provided an example of a Complainant filing a complaint every month and how this could be considered frivolous or without merit.

Chairwoman Sallen noted the sanctions are imposed by the Council themselves.

Commission Attorney Nillen clarified the Council determines the sanction per the Commission's recommendation.

Chief Counsel Benton read Phoenix City Code Section 2.53(O) regarding action for frivolous complaints.

Commissioner Leyvas asked for confirmation regarding the deciding parties, mentioning that one is the Commission and the second is the City Council.

Chief Counsel David Benton stated the City Attorney could file a complaint in Court against the person.

Commissioner Leyvas noted there are multiple decision makers when reviewing alleged frivolous complaints.

Vice Chairman Schirripa made a motion to recommend the City Council makes no change to the current financial penalty language. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion.

Chairwoman Sallen summarized that the Commission reviewed the matter and will notify the Council that no modifications are recommended regarding changing the language.

Commissioner Leyvas asked to make a friendly amendment. He stated he would not recommend stating the Commission has no change, but rather that Commission has no recommendation on this matter.

Chief Counsel Benton commented that Commissioner Leyvas' motion is different than Vice Chairman Schirripa's and would require a separate motion, not a friendly amendment.

Commissioner Hart asked Commissioner Leyvas to repeat his statement.

Commissioner Leyvas stated he would make a motion to provide no recommendation to the City Council regarding keeping the sanctions or removing them.

Commission Attorney Nillen stated the Commission should finish the discussion on the first motion by Vice Chairman Schirripa before moving to the second motion proposed by Commissioner Leyvas.

Commissioner Hart asked Vice Chairman Schirripa to repeat his statement.

Vice Chairman Schirripa repeated his motion to recommend the City Council makes no change to the current financial penalty language.

Commission Attorney Nillen further clarified that Vice Chairman Schirripa made a motion to recommend that the City Council keep the current financial penalty language unchanged.

The motion failed by a 3-1 vote.

Commission Attorney Nillen confirmed the Commission needs at least four votes to pass procedural changes, as noted in the Rules of Procedure and the Ordinance.

Commissioner Leyvas made a motion to make no recommendation to the City Council regarding the current financial penalty language for frivolous complaints.

Chairwoman Sallen asked Commissioner Leyvas to provide more details.

Commissioner Leyvas stated that since the City Council requested input, the Commission's response is that we have no recommendation on this issue.

Commission Attorney Nillen repeated his motion to make no recommendation to the City Council regarding the current financial penalty language for frivolous complaints.

Commissioner Hart asked for clarification between the two motions.

Commission Attorney Nillen responded that Vice Chairman Schirripa made a motion in the affirmative stating the City Council should keep the language and

Commissioner Leyvas is recommending the Commission makes no recommendation to City Council on this matter, essentially abstaining on the issue.

Commissioner Hart asked for further clarification.

Commission Attorney Nillen explained the first motion is more proactive, stating the Commission deliberated this item and agrees it is reasonable to keep the language.

Commissioner Leyvas noted his motion has a similar result but removes any recommendation.

Deputy City Manager Mathews explained that if the Commission wants to keep the financial penalty, staff will draft a motion accordingly. He noted for the second motion, since it involves not making any recommendation to City Council, staff will not draft anything related to it. He concluded that one motion requires drafting, while the other does not.

Commissioner Hart asked if he motions could be combined.

Chief Counsel Benton clarified that while the result is the same, the motions are different.

Commissioner Hart seconded the motion.

Chairwoman Sallen asked City staff to draft language to the City Council stating they are making no recommendation regarding the current financial penalty language.

Deputy City Manager Mathews clarified the City Council did not ask for a response from the Commission. He explained the since the City Council had to vote to take action on the Citizen Petition, their action was to refer the Citizen Petition to the Ethics Commission and the City Council is not expecting a response returned from the Ethics Commission. He noted the meeting minutes will reflect the Commission reviewed all items in the Citizen Petition and what was decided.

Chief Assistant City Attorney Lavelle further explained the City Charter only requires the City Council to take action and the action the City Council took was to refer the Citizen Petition to the Ethics Commission.

Commissioner Leyvas noted that even though the Commission does not have to respond, he believes it is important show the public the Commission is fully reviewing and discussing the matters.

The motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

Commissioner Leyvas made a motion to request the Commission's Counsel, in collaboration with City staff, to draft language regarding the appearance of impropriety, within the appropriate documents. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

Chairwoman Sallen revisited the earlier proposal regarding advisory opinions.

Commissioner Leyvas stated he is not ready to make a motion.

Chairwoman Sallen inquired whether the Commission should consider proposing to increase its ownership over the Rules of Procedures.

Commissioner Leyvas stated he is not ready to make a motion but would be open to further discussion in the future.

Commissioner Hart agrees with the comments.

Chairwoman Sallen asked about next steps.

Deputy City Manager Mathews asked if the Commission would be willing to make a motion authorizing staff to update the Rules of Procedure, Ordinance, and other relevant documents as necessary, since the first two motions only referenced the Rules of Procedure.

Commissioner Leyvas made a motion to request the Commission's Counsel, in collaboration with City staff, to identify and recommend appropriate locations to document the proposed amendments discussed today, including within the City Ordinances, Rules of Procedure, etc. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

Commissioner Leyvas thanked the Chairwoman and the Commission for the discussion.

Deputy City Manager Mathews requested that the Commission provide a timeline regarding their preferred schedule for reviewing the draft amendments.

Chairwoman Sallen asked when the next meetings were set.

Special Projects Administrator McCarthy confirmed there is a meeting July 16 and August 20.

Chairwoman Sallen requested staff to return with draft amendments by August 20.

5. Update on March 4, 2026, Alleged Open Meeting Law Violations Investigation

Chairwoman Sallen asked for an update from the Commission's Attorney.

Commission Attorney Nillen explained the County Attorney's Office responded on May 5 stating that no Open Meeting Law violation occurred and they closed their investigation.

Chairwoman Sallen thanked the Commission Attorney and asked if there was any further action.

Commission Attorney Nillen responded no.

6. Legal Opinion Requested involving the Request for Reconsideration

Commissioner Hart made a motion to move into executive session for the purpose of receiving legal advice from the Commission Attorney related to Agenda Items 6 and 7. Commissioner Leyvas seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 4-0.

The Commission entered Executive Session at 4:08 p.m.

The Commission returned from Executive Session at 4:56 p.m.

No action was taken.

7. Review of Current Complaints

Chairwoman Sallen explained the Commission has three items to discuss and the Commission will begin with EC-25-18.

Commissioner Hart made a motion to dismiss EC-25-18 because the Commission does not have proper jurisdiction, noting that the Commission received a request for reconsideration. Chairwoman Sallen seconded the motion.

Commissioner Leyvas stated he is inclined to vote against the motion. He noted this matter has been discussed for several months and the Commission accepted jurisdiction on this matter. He stated that procedural issues regarding notarization and attestations should remain procedural, not jurisdictional, and noted these are only included in Rules of Procedure. He supports proceeding with this matter and opposes dismissing EC-25-18, as it serves the public interest to address the questions presented in the original complaint.

Chairwoman Sallen called for the roll call vote. The motion failed 2-2 by the following roll call vote:

Yes:	2 – Chairwoman Sallen and Commissioner Hart
No:	2 – Vice Chairman Schirripa and Commissioner Leyvas,

Chairwoman Sallen explained that although she initially supported taking jurisdiction and continuing the investigation, she decided to vote for dismissal because the complaint was not notarized and lacked the sanctions language. She stated the motion failed because it requires four affirmative votes to pass any action on a complaint.

Commissioner Leyvas asked which side could make a motion to reconsider the vote.

Commission Attorney Nillen explained that the prevailing side of the vote could make a motion for reconsideration and in this instance, the prevailing side would be the party which voted no on the most recent vote.

Commissioner Leyvas asked for further clarification on what the vote could be after the vote for reconsideration.

Chief Counsel Benton confirmed the Commission would be voting on the original motion after the vote for reconsideration.

Commissioner Leyvas made a motion to reconsider the recent vote.

Commission Attorney Nillen explained the motion for reconsideration would need three affirmative votes out of the four.

Chief Counsel Benton agreed that only majority is required for the motion to reconsider. He confirmed that four votes in the affirmative would be needed for the second motion, as required by the Ordinance.

Chief Counsel Benton referenced Rules of Procedure, Rule 5: Initial Evaluation by Commission.

Commissioner Leyvas asked the Commission Attorney or City staff to read the section.

Commission Attorney Nillen stated that if this was the initial evaluation, a vote of 2-2 would mean the motion failed and the matter would be closed. She stated the Commission voted to accept to take jurisdiction in December and the motion today was to dismiss the matter.

Deputy City Manager Mathews stated that under this section (Rule 5), the Rules of Procedures state that if the Commission does not have four affirmative votes, the item is closed.

Commissioner Leyvas confirmed this is not the initial evaluation.

Special Projects Administrator McCarthy explained that under Rule 6(G), the Rules of Procedure state if there are less than four votes to make a recommendation to the full Council or to dismiss the request for inquiry, the request for inquiry is deemed closed.

Chairwoman Sallen stated the Commission has already taken jurisdiction on this matter.

Deputy City Manager Mathews clarified Rule 6(G) refers to when an investigation is taking place. He stated the Commission voted to dismiss. He asked the Commission Attorney to review.

Commission Attorney Nillen agreed the motion was to dismiss the inquiry.

Special Projects Administrator McCarthy confirmed the language is also under Phoenix City Code 2-53(L): Commission Review.

Chairwoman Sallen asked for clarification on next steps.

Commissioner Leyvas stated the question is regarding the original jurisdiction and the Commission has not moved forward into their investigation yet. He stated they were not voting on a recommendation.

Chairwoman Sallen commented that Rule 6(G) discusses the investigation. She explained this matter is currently being investigated and there was a motion to dismiss.

Deputy City Manager Mathews further explained that four votes in the affirmative were not received to dismiss or to continue.

Commissioner Leyvas asked if there was any vote around jurisdiction in the ordinance.

Deputy City Manager Mathews responded that Rule 5 (Initial Evaluation by Commission) discusses voting regarding jurisdiction. He explained that after the initial evaluation, then the matter moves to the investigation stage.

Chief Counsel Benton commented the Commission has already accepted jurisdiction and the Commission is in the investigation stage.

Deputy City Manager Mathews noted a motion was made to dismiss and four votes in the affirmative were not received. He confirmed the language is in the Ordinance as well.

Commission Attorney Nillen explained that even if a matter is closed, one has the right, under Robert's Rules of Order, to make a motion to reconsider the prior

action, even though the Commission's Rules of Procedure state the matter is closed.

Chief Counsel Benton responded he is verifying if Robert's Rules of Order apply under these circumstances.

Commission Attorney Nillen confirmed that if left as is, the matter is closed.

Chairwoman Sallen asked if the results are the same, even though the motion did not pass.

Deputy City Manager Mathews explained the results are different. He noted the motion was to dismiss, which failed, and per the Rules of Procedure, the matter is now closed.

Chairwoman Sallen stated the practical result is the same.

Deputy City Manager Mathews confirmed the practical result is the same but dismissing the complaint is technically different than closing the complaint.

Commission Attorney Nillen asked Chief Counsel Benton if Robert's Rules of Order apply in this situation.

Chief Counsel Benton and Commission Attorney Nillen continued a sidebar conversation to review Robert's Rules of Order and discuss next steps.

Commissioner Leyvas asked Commission Attorney Nillen if he could proceed with his motion.

Chief Counsel Benton and Commission Attorney Nillen continued a sidebar conversation to review Robert's Rules of Order and discuss next steps.

Commissioner Leyvas made a motion to reconsider the recent vote.

Chairwoman Sallen asked if Vice Chairman Schirripa was still online.

Commissioner Leyvas asked if Vice Chairman Schirripa must second the motion.

Commission Attorney Nillen responded that any Commissioner can second the motion to reconsider.

City staff began to troubleshoot Vice Chairman Schirripa's ability to hear and participate in the meeting.

Commissioner Hart seconded the motion.

Chairwoman Sallen asked to hold on taking a vote until Vice Chairman Schirripa returned.

City staff continued to troubleshoot Vice Chairman Schirripa's access to the meeting.

Chief Counsel Benton and Commission Attorney Nillen continued a sidebar conversation to discuss next steps.

Commission Attorney Nillen explained she and Chief Counsel Benton are checking the City's Rules of Council Proceedings (Phoenix City Code Section 2-60) to confirm they do not contradict with the Robert's Rules of Order, as the Commission adopted the City's Rules of Council Proceedings.

Commission Attorney Nillen confirmed that Robert's Rules of Order do apply.

Chairwoman Sallen asked if the Commission can act with only three Commissioners.

City staff continued to troubleshoot Vice Chairman Schirripa's access to the meeting and called him. Vice Chairman Schirripa left the Webex meeting.

Special Projects Administrator McCarthy noted he is having technical issues and will be calling into the meeting shortly.

Commissioner Hart asked if the Commission could table the conversation regarding EC-25-18 until the next meeting. She stated she has an appointment.

Commission Attorney Nillen confirmed there no requests to speak.

Chairwoman Sallen asked if the Commission could take action with three.

Commission Attorney Nillen explained it would not be advised.

Deputy City Manager Mathews confirmed the motion to reconsider only needs three votes in the affirmative.

Chairwoman Sallen noted that, due to technical difficulties and the fact that only three commission members are present, a motion could be made to table further action on Agenda Item 7 until the next meeting.

Commissioner Leyvas stated that since the Commission Attorney and City staff are still discussing, he would like to make a motion to adjourn the meeting. He does not agree with the conclusion being discussed.

Commissioner Hart seconded the motion to adjourn

Chairwoman Sallen adjourned the meeting 5:26 p.m.

The Commission could not complete their discussion on this matter due to technical difficulties. The Commission adjourned until the next meeting, set on the calendar for July 16, to complete the discussion on the matter.

No action was taken on EC-25-01 and EC-25-06.

8. **Call to Public**

There was no call to the public because the meeting was adjourned.

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

There was no discussion on this item because the meeting was adjourned.

10. **Adjournment**

Chairwoman Sallen adjourned the meeting 5:26 p.m.