

## Attachment A

### Phoenix City Council Public Safety and Justice (PSJ) Subcommittee Summary Minutes Wednesday, March 4, 2026

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

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

Subcommittee Members Absent  
Councilmember Betty Guardado

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Councilman Robinson called the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee (PSJ) to order at 10:05 a.m. with Councilwoman O'Brien and Councilman Waring present. Councilwoman Guardado was absent.

#### **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

None.

#### **MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

##### **1. Minutes of the Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee Meeting**

Councilwoman O'Brien made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 4, 2026 Public Safety and Justice Subcommittee meeting. Councilman Waring seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 3-0.

#### **INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION**

##### **2. Crime Lab Overview**

Police Department Assistant Director Judy Wolf and Crime Lab Administrator Benjamin Swanholm presented on the item.

Councilwoman O'Brien inquired why the City operated one of the few laboratories capable of testing gunshot residue.

Mr. Swanholm shared The City operated one of the few laboratories in the United States that conducted gunshot residue testing, and the only one in Arizona. He explained gunshot residue could disperse widely and was not always conclusive in determining whether an individual had fired a weapon, which contributed to the limited number of laboratories performing this analysis. The testing process required significant

time and resources, with a single test taking approximately 24 hours, reducing overall capacity. Mr. Swanholm added the testing was time-intensive, required significant resources, and was not always conclusive, but remained valuable to investigative teams.

Councilwoman O'Brien requested a follow up meeting from staff to learn more about the subject. She also asked whether the reported year-end total for the sexual assault kit backlog represented all cases completed in 2025 or the total number of cases completed across all years.

Mr. Swanholm clarified the graph represented year-end totals of the sexual assault kit backlog. At the end of 2025, the total shown reflected the number of kits still pending. Although the overall backlog was a little over 300 kits at the end of the previous month, three of those kits were currently being processed by the vendor. Councilwoman O'Brien requested a clarification on whether the graph reflected the full backlog, noting it did not include 2026 numbers.

Mr. Swanholm confirmed the current backlog totaled approximately 300 kits as of the end of February 2026.

Councilwoman O'Brien inquired about the laboratory's staffing levels, asking how many of the 170 positions were filled versus vacant, and requested information on the laboratory's turnover rate.

Mr. Swanholm reported the laboratory had approximately ten vacancies across multiple sections. He noted the laboratory's turnover rate averaged around 10 percent, with some disciplines experiencing higher turnover than others.

Councilwoman O'Brien reiterated the laboratory's turnover rate was about the same with comparable laboratories, with no indication it was higher or lower overall.

Mr. Swanholm noted the laboratory's 10 percent turnover rate was based on staff demographics and general organizational averages for a workforce of similar sizes. He clarified he was not aware, in the moment, of specific turnover averages for other forensic laboratories in Arizona or nationally.

Councilman Robinson asked about the approximate age of the 300 kits in the backlog and how they were prioritized for analysis.

Mr. Swanholm shared cases were prioritized based on their circumstances, such as arrests or court needs, and the goal was to process kits as they arrived. Vendor laboratories were required to return results within 90 days, after which the department needed an additional 30 to 60 days to complete reporting, depending on caseload.

Councilman Robinson inquired about how much of the crime laboratory employees' time was spent providing courtroom testimony.

Mr. Swanholm noted while an exact figure was not available at the moment, the laboratory tracked the number of hours spent on courtroom testimony monthly.

Councilman Robinson emphasized crime laboratory staff contributed significantly to major investigations over several decades and noted their responsibilities extended well beyond laboratory work to include providing courtroom testimony. Councilman Robinson thanked staff for their presentation.

### **3. Downtown Operations Unit Update**

Item continued to a future meeting.

### **4. Fire Staffing and Response Time Report**

Item continued to a future meeting.

## **INFORMATION ONLY**

### **5. Community Assistance Program (CAP) Expansion Implementation Report**

Item continued to a future meeting.

### **6. Police Hiring, Recruitment and Attrition Monthly Update**

Item continued to a future meeting.

## **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Channel Powd shared her concerns about pedestrian safety in District 8. She described delays in activation of the HAWK beacons on 33rd Street and Van Buren Street and at 36th Street and Van Buren Street, noting heavy pedestrian use and safety risks. She also reported recurring issues with the pedestrian signal at 28th Street and East Camelback Road, including the walk signal failing to illuminate and drivers ignoring pedestrian right-of-way. She expressed concerns about dangerous turning movements near Camelback Road and 26th Street and stated she had personally experienced several near-miss incidents. She added she had observed limited police enforcement in the Camelback and Esplanade area despite frequent safety hazards.

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Robinson adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dayana Rosas  
Management Fellow