



APPROVED Minutes
Increased Advocacy for Youth with Disabilities
Council Subcommittee
Dec. 13, 2024

Minutes of the Increased Advocacy for Youth with Disabilities Council Subcommittee meeting held on Dec. 13, 2024, 2:00 p.m., Hybrid Meeting - Tempe City Hall, 31 E. 5th St. and virtually through Microsoft Teams.

Members Present:

Councilmember Berdetta Hodge – Chair
Mayor Corey Woods – Subcommittee Member

City Staff Present:

Dr. Velicia McMillan Humes, Chief Diversity Officer
Alex Jovanovic, Deputy Community Services Director – Parks & Recreation
Shawn Wagner, Deputy Community Services Director – Parks & Recreation
Monique Perry, ADA Accessibility Coordinator
Erin Kirkpatrick, Community Services Manager
Michael Spykes, Park Ranger Supervisor
Kris Baxter-Ging, Communication and Marketing Director
Eric Anderson, City Attorney
Tim Burch, Community Health & Human Services Director
Tanya Chavez, Chief of Staff
Mariana Peña, Mayor’s Assistant
Vanessa Lopez, Council Assistant

Stakeholders:

Amanda Steele
Brenda Walsh
Genevieve Vega
Jenniffer Jarvis
Jody Hernandez

Councilmember Hodge asked for all to provide brief introductions, and reordered agenda items as follows:

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

No public appearances.

Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mayor Woods motioned for approval of the Nov. 8, 2024, Subcommittee meeting minutes, seconded by Councilmember Hodge. Unanimous vote to approve.

Agenda Item 5 – Current City Training Offerings

Park Rangers:

1. Park Ranger Logs Review

Ranger Spykes reported that he reviewed the park ranger logs and did not identify any significant issues in interactions with disabled youth.

2. Park Ranger Training

While Park Rangers do not receive specific training focused on interacting with disabled youth, they complete a 40-hour training course provided by the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office. Park rangers are offered seats in this course as they become available.

3. Communication Training

Mrs. Steele asked about communication training, particularly regarding device usage. Ranger Spykes explained that 50-60% of their training focuses on communication skills. Additionally, all Park Rangers have been instructed to participate in employee training sessions aimed at achieving the goals outlined in *Crucial Conversations for Accountability*.

4. IBCCES Training

Ranger Spykes noted that The International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES) training is available at the academy. The Park Rangers have consistently accepted and participated in this training whenever it is offered.

5. Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training

CIT training, which includes content on mental illness, is also available. Ms. Vega requested the opportunity to review the CIT training curriculum.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

1. ADA Action Plan Update

Dr. Humes reported that the ADA action plan for Parks has been shared with the Park Rangers and is currently in its early stages of implementation.

2. ADA Training Development

Dr. Humes and Ms. Perry are collaborating on the ADA training component. A new team member is scheduled to start on December 30th to assist with this effort.

3. Community Survey on Disability Inclusion

A community survey is underway to gather feedback on increasing disability social inclusion. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) office is collaborating with Neighborhood Services on this survey. Dr. Humes noted that the data will be shared once the survey is completed.

Parks and Recreation:

1. IBCCES Training

IBCCES training is included in the onboarding process for new employees, with 80% of public-facing staff having completed the training.

2. Employee Training and Feedback

Basic training is available to all employees, with no limit on participation. Mrs. Steele inquired whether the training has been effective and if staff feedback has been collected through surveys. Ms. Kirkpatrick responded that no surveys have been conducted but agreed it was a great idea. Dr. Humes noted that surveying staff would be an initiative under her leadership as part of the city's goal to adopt universal design and become a destination city.

3. LEAP After-School Program Age Range

There was a discussion regarding the age cutoff for the LEAP after-school program, as school districts have recently adjusted the age range of students they serve. Ms. Kirkpatrick explained that the city has updated the program's age range accordingly. Previously, LEAP served students aged 13-22, but it now serves students aged 10-20. She clarified that participation in LEAP does not require being a public-school student but does require either residency in Tempe or attendance at a Tempe school, as well as meeting all other program requirements.

Agenda Item 3 – New Business

1. Care Ecosystem Exploration

Further exploration regarding the "Care Ecosystem," focusing on connecting the City of Tempe, school districts, daycare facilities, summer care programs, and addressing age restrictions. It was noted that significant gaps currently exist in these areas.

2. Collaboration with Tempe School Districts

Discussions are ongoing about involving the three Tempe school districts and defining their role in the care ecosystem to create a more comprehensive support system.

Agenda Item 4 – Goal Setting Initiatives: Prioritization and Discussion

1. Funding for Family Advocate Position

Councilmember Hodge reported that funding for a Family Advocate position is still being pursued at both the federal and state levels.

2. Subcommittee Goal Setting

It was recommended that the subcommittee establish SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) to facilitate progress monitoring.

3. Transition Plan: Subcommittee to the Commission

A goal was proposed to support the transition from this subcommittee to the Commission on Disability Concerns.

Agenda Item 6 – Future Agenda Items

- A one-page document that highlights programs and services for youth with disabilities that could be shared with school districts and placed on City of Tempe website.
- January meeting with presentations from Fire Medical and Rescue and the Tempe Police departments.

Meeting adjourned at 3:13 p.m.

Prepared by: Vanessa Lopez, Council Assistant, (480) 350-8597

Reviewed by: Tanya Chavez, Mayor and Council Chief of Staff, (480) 858-2215