



**APPROVED** Minutes  
Increased Advocacy for Youth with Disabilities  
Council Subcommittee  
Jan. 24, 2025

**Minutes of the Increased Advocacy for Youth with Disabilities Council Subcommittee meeting held on Jan. 24, 2025, 12:00 p.m., Hybrid Meeting - Tempe City Hall, 31 E. 5<sup>th</sup> St. and virtually through Microsoft Teams.**

**Members Present:**

Councilmember Berdetta Hodge – Chair  
Mayor Corey Woods – Subcommittee Member

**City Staff Present:**

Kevin Bailey, Deputy Fire Chief  
Amy Pfeifer, School Resource Officer  
Shawn Wagner, Deputy Community Services Director – Parks & Recreation  
Monique Perry, ADA Accessibility Coordinator  
Craig Hayton, Community Services Director  
Erin Fillmore, Sr. Management Assistant – Community Services  
Erin Kirkpatrick, Community Services Manager  
Kris Baxter-Ging, Communication and Marketing Director  
Clarence Matherson, Deputy City Attorney  
Tanya Chavez, Chief of Staff  
Mariana Peña, Mayor’s Assistant  
Keaton Hill, Council Assistant  
Melissa Westbrook, Council Assistant  
Vanessa Lopez, Council Assistant

**Stakeholders:**

Amanda Steele  
Brenda Walsh  
Genevieve Vega  
Jenniffer Jarvis  
Amy Pedotto

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances**

No public appearances.

**Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Dec. 13, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

Mayor Woods motioned for approval of the Dec. 13, 2024, subcommittee meeting minutes, seconded by Councilmember Hodge. Unanimous vote to approve.

### **Agenda Item 3 – Current City Training Offerings**

School Resource Officer (SRO) Amy Pfeifer, a 14-year veteran of the Tempe Police Department (TPD) and a mother of a child with down syndrome, shared her personal and professional experiences as an SRO at Marcos de Niza High School, she said she's witnessed firsthand the challenges and experiences of students with disabilities.

#### **Notable TPD Trainings:**

1. **Autism and De-escalation Training:** In 2022, officers completed an online training on autism and best practices for de-escalation and communication. SRO Pfeifer emphasized the value of hearing directly from individuals with disabilities and their families to enhance training effectiveness and said she is hopeful to see this expanded upon in the future.
2. **Public Education Videos:** Councilmember Hodge suggested creating short online videos to educate the public on these topics.
3. **Active Shooter Training:** An active shooter training is scheduled for February. Councilmember Hodge inquired whether SRO Pfeifer is invited to Tempe Union High School District staff trainings. SRO Pfeifer stated she attends some but not all. Councilmember Hodge said she'll ensure she's included in all future trainings.
4. **Community Engagement Event:** SRO Pfeifer noted that Chandler Police Department hosts "Pizza with Police" events for neurodivergent citizens. She has proposed a similar initiative for TPD, and discussions are underway to implement it in Tempe.
5. **Social Media Awareness:** The subcommittee recommended collaborating with Tempe Union High School District to create Instagram reels highlighting the experiences of disabled and neurodivergent youth.

#### **Future Curriculum Development for TPD:**

1. **Curriculum Development Resources:** Ms. Vega inquired whether the City of Tempe Human Resources Department has professional curriculum development staff. Mrs. Chavez confirmed that no such expertise currently exists within the department.
2. **Stakeholder Involvement:** It was suggested that Ms. Vega and Ms. Jarvis, with input from Ms. Perry, could serve as valuable resources for curriculum development.
3. **Next Steps:** Councilmember Hodge proposed gathering information and recommendations, with the goal of presenting them to the Commission on Disability Concerns for further action.

#### **Fire Medical Rescue:**

##### **General Tempe Fire Medical Rescue (TFMR) Practices:**

1. Work closely with community partners towards a common goal of safe assessment, treatment, and transport of patients, including those with disabilities. Work directly with Tempe Police, CARE 7, and the crisis team as needed.

2. All EMT's and paramedics receive training during their initial certification courses on interacting and communicating with disabled adults and children.
3. TFMR has a policy on the transport of children in ambulances, both emergent and non-emergent situations. This covers when the child is a patient and when the child requires transport to the hospital because their caregiver is the patient. Every TFMR ambulance is equipped with 3 different ways of restraining children of different sizes/ages (infant to preteen) for safe transport.
4. Ms. Pedotto asked if TFMR captures data from their calls, specifically if a person who is being treated has a disability. Chief Bailey said they have drop down menus for efficiency purposes. Mrs. Steele asked if this also includes mental health needs, and Chief Bailey said if the descriptors are in the drop-down menus that information is captured.
5. Chief Bailey said that if patterns are obvious, like repeated calls to a residence for mental health emergencies, TFMR brings in the Health and Human Services department.
6. The city used to have a Community Manager position that would be utilized for these types of events, and the city is currently working at getting this position back.

#### **Notable Trainings for TFMR:**

1. In 2019, TFMR trained all members as part of the City of Tempe Dementia Friendly certification. While not directly related to youth with disabilities, the training provides education on non-visible disabilities and is applicable in some scenarios to dealing with youth with disabilities.
2. In 2022, TFMR participated in the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES) Autism training and certification for all TFMR members.
3. In 2023, the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) Division of Developmental Disabilities presented to TFMR paramedics on interacting with adults and children with disabilities through the *Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) 101 for First Responders* class. The training focused on autism and non-verbal patients. As a result of the training, the (AAC) app was downloaded on every TFMR iPad to assist in communication with non-verbal patients. Mrs. Steele questioned if there was training on using the AAC app and if TFMR personnel knew how to use the app, and if the trainer was certified. Chief Bailey said the training was done by Kurt McCree of the Phoenix Fire Department, and a formal survey has been circulated on the AAC app with no complaints on its use.
4. In Dec. 2023, TFMR participated in the AEMS Fall Forum Conference, the keynote speaker was a Mesa Fire Department Captain who has a disabled child. The captain presented on how to interact with and safely transport patients.

#### **Agenda Item 4 – Discussion on Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Programs Curriculum**

- The 244-page CIT Programs Curriculum workbook was shared with the subcommittee prior to the meeting. Some stakeholders expressed they felt the workbook was packaged well and covered relevant topics but didn't have much coverage on disability awareness and competence training.

- Councilmember Hodge reminded everyone that Park Ranger Spykes expressed his willingness to attend a future meeting, providing stakeholders an opportunity to discuss areas for training improvement, particularly where the CIT manual may be lacking.

**Agenda Item 5 – Future Agenda Items**

- Stakeholders requested to hear from the Community Health and Human Services department on current city training offerings at an upcoming subcommittee

**Meeting adjourned at 12:59 p.m.**

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

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