



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, May 13, 2026
SkySong – Synergy I**

PRESENT: Councilwoman Jan Dubauskas, Chair
Vice-Mayor Adam Kwasman
Councilwoman Kathy Littlefield

STAFF: Greg Caton, City Manager
Luis Santaella, City Attorney
Tom Shannon, Fire Chief
Joe LeDuc, Police Chief

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dubauskas called the May 13, 2026, meeting of the City Council Committee on Community Safety to order at 2:21 p.m. Sarah called the roll. All participants were present and a quorum was established.

The Chair noted, let the record reflect, that the meeting room location had been changed from SkySong Synergy II to SkySong Synergy I. The street address remained the same as listed on the agenda and the City website, and directional signage was placed around the building to direct attendees to the revised room.

ROLL CALL

Members present as listed above.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair advised attendees that citizens may address the Committee during public comment on non-agendized items, and on agendized items when each item is presented. Per Arizona law, the Committee is prohibited from discussing or taking action on items not on the prepared agenda. Public testimony is limited to three (3) minutes per speaker, and written comment cards may be submitted to City staff at any time.

The Chair inquired whether any public comment cards had been submitted. No public comment cards were submitted.

1. Approval of Minutes

The Committee considered approval of the minutes from the March 25, 2026, meeting at approximately 2:23 p.m.

VICE-MAYOR KWASMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 25, 2026, MEETING AS PRESENTED. COUNCILWOMAN LITTLEFIELD SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

2. Preparedness for Open Spaces

Fire Chief Tom Shannon presented an overview of the Fire Department's preparedness for open space and fire season operations, including coordination efforts with the Police Department and the search and rescue canine program operated jointly between Fire and Police.

Police Chief Joe LeDuc followed with additional remarks on behalf of the Police Department regarding coordination and joint operations.

Chief Shannon also discussed considerations specific to the search and rescue canine program in light of the heat, noting that lighter-colored dogs are preferable for operations during hot weather. However, the program currently has only darker-colored dogs available.

Councilwoman Littlefield asked who monitors weather conditions in connection with open space and fire season preparedness. Chief Shannon responded that the Fire Department is aware of the conditions associated with the hot season and is actively monitoring them. Chief LeDuc added that Emergency Management is also in contact and engaged on the issue.

The Committee discussed the presentations and asked clarifying questions of Chief Shannon and Chief LeDuc.

The Chair thanked all firefighters for their work and offered congratulations on behalf of the Committee.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

This was an informational item. No formal action was taken.

3. Public Safety Grant Funding

Fire Chief Shannon presented the Fire Department's two current grants and the purpose of each.

Police Chief LeDuc followed with a presentation on Police Department grant funding. Chief LeDuc emphasized the process the Police Department goes through for every grant, including strategic alignment with the Department's mission and goals and ensuring that the City and community are taken care of, consistent with thinking through what each grant will do for all parties involved. He described the Department's four-step approval process for every grant: (1)

Identify, (2) Strategic Review, (3) Budget Review, and (4) Approval, with all grants reviewed and approved by the Chiefs before application. He emphasized that he has visibility to every grant.

Chief LeDuc reported that the Police Department's current grant portfolio totals approximately \$2.14 million in awards, with approximately \$1.53 million remaining to deploy. Funding sources include approximately \$822,000 Federal, \$1.30 million State, and \$11,500 Local, spanning five sections and approximately seven recurring programs. Funded areas include Forensics/Crime Lab, Traffic enforcement, Persons Crimes/HEAT, Communications (including the 9-1-1 system and Records Management System), and PCIS/Patrol Enforcement (including CIT training and the K9 program). Recurring funding sources include GOHS traffic grants, the ACJC Full-Service Grant, the ADOA 9-1-1 Grant Program, and the DOJ DNA Capacity Enhancement grant. One-time funding included the AZ DEMA Border Security Fund (\$500,000) and the DPS HEAT Anti-Trafficking Grant. Chief LeDuc stated grant funding comes from a mix of federal, state, and local sources, with the majority of current funding opportunities primarily coming through state resources.

The Chair asked City Manager Caton for his thoughts on grants. The City Manager noted that the grant process in Scottsdale operates differently than where he came from and that grants are currently not a priority for him. He noted that the City has had two contract personnel evaluating grant opportunities for the last two years, and that their positions effectively pay for themselves threefold by bringing additional funding into the City.

The Committee discussed the presentations and asked clarifying questions of Chief Shannon, Chief LeDuc, and City Manager Caton.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

This was an informational item. No formal action was taken.

4. Recruitment Updates

Fire Chief Shannon provided an update on the Fire Department's recruitment efforts since January 2026. Chief Shannon discussed the anticipated drop in staffing and noted that the academies are aligned with the projected drop. Chief Shannon also discussed the Fire Department's academy as a regional fire academy. He reported that the most recent fire academy included 45 recruits, which was the maximum they would want for the academy. The Department is exploring shift training in order to capitalize on the current volume of applications and to ensure that the facility can sustain the number of trainees.

Police Chief LeDuc followed with a recruitment update for the Police Department. Chief LeDuc reported on the Department's current status and stated that the Department is on track to be at zero vacancies by the end of the year. He noted that, as of May 4, 2026, the Department has 409 full-time budgeted Sworn Officer positions with 3 Police Officer vacancies, down from 11 vacancies reported at the previous meeting, and that 35 officers are in Training, 8 on Transitional Duty, 6 Off Work, and 3 on Military Leave.

Chief LeDuc explained that SPD attends three Mesa Police Academies annually (January, May, and September), comprising a 2-week pre-academy, a 6-month academy, and a 4-month post-academy and FTO phase. The January 2026 academy included 9 Recruit Trainees, the May 2026 academy included 13 Recruit Trainees, and September 2026 hires are to be determined.

Three SPD personnel are currently assigned to the Mesa Academy.

Chief LeDuc reported that the Department identified an 86 percent drop in applicants and, after evaluation, found that additional touch points with applicants were needed. The 86 percent figure is specific to changes in how the Department conducts recruitment, and Chief LeDuc reported that the Department is now hiring more people as a result of the change in approach. Chief LeDuc compared the Department's results to a 40 percent national average. The Department is also pursuing targeted lateral recruitment efforts using AI tools, social media, and additional candidate touch points. Chief LeDuc also highlighted the importance of not only hiring qualified officers but also making sure they feel supported and want to stay with the agency long term.

Committee Discussion

City Manager Caton addressed retention, noting a focus on a 3.5 percent step structure at approximately 5 percent annually, a related Council resolution, and a proposed longevity pay structure. Chair Dubauskas followed up with a question clarifying the progression of the longevity payments.

Vice-Mayor Kwasman expressed concern regarding the lag time when Scottsdale's pay drops to fourth in the regional market and requested an annual market review on July 1, stating that he wants to ensure the City Council keeps its commitment to maintain competitive pay.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

This was an informational item. No formal action was taken.

5. 911 Misuse Ordinance (Ordinance No. 4704)

City Attorney Luis Santaella presented proposed Ordinance No. 4704 concerning misuse of 911 and emergency services.

City Attorney Santaella explained that, under current law, there is no specific statute addressing misuse of 911 outside of false reporting. The proposed ordinance is intended to ensure that 911 is used properly and to preserve public safety resources, recognizing that misuse can delay response when an answer is needed for a genuine emergency.

City Attorney Santaella reviewed the purpose of the proposed ordinance, which is to ensure proper use of the 911 emergency communications system, preserve public safety resources, and deter intentional misuse that diverts emergency services from genuine emergencies. He noted that most states have laws addressing 911 misuse and explained that, if adopted, the ordinance would treat the conduct as a Class 1 Misdemeanor at the City level. The intent is to deter misuse and hold culpable individuals accountable, particularly in cases of intentional misuse such as swatting. He added that 911 calls come into police first and are then transferred to the fire department, if needed.

City Attorney Santaella walked through key definitions in the ordinance. The "911 System" is defined as a public safety answering point or communications center operated by police or fire capable of receiving 911 calls or texts. An "emergency" includes fires, life-threatening situations, accidents, medical events, deceased persons, suicide attempts, and missing persons. A "crime"

includes any crime in progress, a crime that has already occurred, reckless driving, or any other moving traffic violation.

Under the proposed legal framework, intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly calling, texting, or communicating with 911 for any purpose other than to report a crime or emergency would constitute a Class 1 Misdemeanor. The ordinance would also allow for recovery of emergency response expenses, with courts authorized to order reimbursement for personnel costs (salaries and benefits), equipment, materials, and supplies, and other directly related response costs.

Committee Discussion

Fire Chief Shannon referenced similar cases of misuse, including defective alarm scenarios in which a party fails to take corrective action and SFD is required to continue responding.

Vice-Mayor Kwasman stated he understood the intent regarding intentional abuse and asked whether the ordinance contains provisions to elevate swatting beyond a Class 1 Misdemeanor, or to differentiate swatting from other forms of abuse. City Attorney Santaella responded that swatting is covered under Arizona Revised Statutes as a false report and that the City cannot create a felony offense by ordinance.

Councilwoman Littlefield raised the example of calls regarding a cat in a tree or a snake inside a residence, asking whether the ordinance was intended to protect those types of calls. City Attorney Santaella responded that the ordinance can incorporate language addressing animals in distress or abuse-related calls so as not to penalize the caller.

Vice-Mayor Kwasman asked about non-injury accident calls. City Attorney Santaella indicated the ordinance language can be broadened to address those circumstances.

At approximately 3:16 p.m., Committee members indicated agreement with the direction of the proposed ordinance, including the additions and revisions discussed.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

VICE-MAYOR KWASMAN MOVED, AT APPROXIMATELY 3:17 P.M., TO RECOMMEND THAT THE ORDINANCE, WITH THE REVISIONS DISCUSSED, BE BROUGHT TO THE CITY COUNCIL. CHAIR DUBAUSKAS SECONDED THE MOTION AT APPROXIMATELY 3:18 P.M. COUNCILWOMAN LITTLEFIELD THIRDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED [UNANIMOUSLY].

6. Misuse of Fire Department Resources for Non-Emergency Patient Transfers Ordinance

City Attorney Santaella presented information regarding a potential ordinance addressing the misuse of Fire Department resources for non-emergency patient transfers.

City Attorney Santaella explained that the underlying issue is that facilities and staff find it inconvenient to wait on appropriate medical transport and instead call 911, generating non-emergency SFD response demand. He characterized the matter as a universal issue involving transfers of stable patients and noted that the Fire Department's medical director has advocated facilities for appropriate use. He identified two primary drivers, liability concerns and

convenience, both of which lead facilities to request SFD transfer.

Under the proposed framework, City Attorney Santaella explained, the ordinance would establish a civil offense, allow financial recovery of the cost of SFD response, and offset the fine where the entity participates in appropriate training to remedy the conduct, with the goal of being able to directly fine for non-emergency medical transfers.

Committee Discussion

Councilwoman Littlefield asked whether the ordinance was geared toward people needing assistance at their homes. City Attorney Santaella clarified that this is not that scenario, and Fire Chief Shannon added that the ordinance addresses transfers between medical facilities.

Councilwoman Littlefield expressed concern that the ordinance should not be drafted in a way that would cause people to be too scared to call 911, and cautioned against being overly strict.

Vice-Mayor Kwasman emphasized the need to be clear that facility staff are following the rules of the facility and noted that staff may be faced with a fine or being fired. City Attorney Santaella acknowledged the point but stated it is difficult to fine an LLC.

Vice-Mayor Kwasman pressed further on how the ordinance would be drafted in practice, asking how the City would proceed in cases involving a nurse acting inappropriately. For example, he asked whether the City would seek to fine the nurse directly, and whether holding the hospital accountable would create enough pressure for the facility to fire the nurse. He raised the concern that, without effective enforcement, the matter would ultimately have to be taken to the public.

Vice-Mayor Kwasman indicated he would like to work with City Attorney Santaella on the wording and expressed general support for the direction of the ordinance.

Chair Dubauskas described a recurring scenario in which the patient does not want to go to the hospital and the caregiver does not want to deal with the patient, and asked what the City does in those situations. The Chair noted that she is aware of how these situations arise, having observed them through the ride-alongs she has participated in. While Vice-Mayor Kwasman expressed concern about overly penalizing staff who are simply doing their jobs, the Chair emphasized that there are situations in which a nurse or caregiver should be held accountable, and that the ordinance should be drafted with those circumstances in mind.

Fire Chief Shannon referenced a recent state statute that obligates a business to lift a patient off the floor, which has not fully resolved the issue. He noted that the City's new ambulance is intended only for emergency need, not transfer, and that private businesses appear to be offsetting their costs by pushing demand to SFD, effectively moving liability to the City.

Fire Chief Shannon requested official language to remedy the concerns of compliance.

Chair Dubauskas reiterated that she wants to ensure that legitimate medical calls remain covered.

The Committee discussed the importance of community outreach and obtaining input from the community as part of the ordinance development process.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

No motion was made on this item. City Attorney Santaella will revise the ordinance and bring it back to the Committee, after which public outreach will be conducted to gather community input.

7. Public Comment

The Chair opened public comment on non-agendized items within the Committee's jurisdiction, noting that no official Committee action could be taken on these matters and that advocacy for or against a candidate or ballot measure is prohibited pursuant to state law.

No members of the public came forward to speak.

8. Possible Items for Next Meeting

The Chair asked Committee members for suggested agenda items for the next meeting and discussed potential dates to reconvene following summer break, as well as possible fall meeting dates. The Committee discussed proposing a follow-up on the non-emergency patient transfer ordinance for the second meeting after the summer break, recognizing that City Attorney Santaella's revisions and the subsequent community outreach process would need time to complete.

Vice-Mayor Kwasman asked Committee members to send any additional agenda items directly to the Chair.

Vice-Mayor Kwasman asked Fire Chief Shannon about fireworks and LED drone shows. Chief Shannon stated that he is in favor of LED drone shows and noted that the City's ordinance on fireworks stands as currently written.

Second: Vice-Mayor Kwasman seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion carried [unanimously].

ADJOURNMENT

COUNCILWOMAN LITTLEFIELD MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VICE-MAYOR KWASMAN SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED [UNANIMOUSLY].

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 3:45 p.m.