

### Citizen Bond Committee

02/11/2025


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Meeting Date

03/11/2025

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Date Minutes Were Approved

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Natosha Edmonds (Mar 12, 2025 13:23 PDT)

Chair

### CERTIFICATION AND ATTESTATION

I hereby certify that the accompanying document is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the aforementioned meeting. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.

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Nayeli Carranza (Mar 12, 2025 12:01 PDT)

Staff Liaison



**MINUTES OF THE AVONDALE CITIZEN BOND COMMITTEE**

CITY OF AVONDALE, ARIZONA  
SONORAN CONFERENCE ROOM

February 11, 2025

A **Regular Meeting** of the Citizen Bond Committee of the City of Avondale, Arizona was convened at 11465 West Civic Center Drive in open and public session at 6:00 p.m.

**Voting Members Present:** Chair Edmonds; Vice Chair Schuh; and Committee Members List, Arellano, Lopez-Davey, Ruoti, and De La Riva.

**Non-Voting Members Present:** Committee Member Duncan-Billiman.

**Non-Voting Members Absent:** Committee Member Sapata

**Other Municipal Officials Present:** Katie Gregory, Assistant City Manager; Renee Weatherless, Finance and Budget Director; Corey Larriva, Parks, Recreation, & Libraries Director; Dale Nannenga, Deputy City Manager; Memo Espinoza, Police Chief; Larry Rooney, Fire Chief; Craig Jennings, Judge; Stephen Kemp, Attorney; Nayeli Carranza, Finance Specialist; and Marcella Sarmiento, City Clerk.

**Audience:** Approximately eighteen staff members were present.

**1. ROLL CALL BY THE CITY CLERK**

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Committee Member Arellano moved to approve the January 14, 2025, Citizen Bond Committee meeting minutes; Committee Member List seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously 7 to 0.

Chair Edmonds	Aye
Vice Chair Schuh	Aye
Committee Member Ruoti	Aye
Committee Member De La Riva	Aye
Committee Member Lopez-Davey	Aye
Committee Member Arellano	Aye
Committee Member List	Aye
Committee Member Duncan-Billiman	Non-Voting Member

**3. PRESENTATION ON PARKS AND RECREATION PROJECTS.**

Parks and Recreation Department staff presented an update on potential bond-funded projects.

Katie Gregory, Assistant City Manager, provided an introduction for what will be covered at this meeting to include follow-up information from the January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Information related to rate impacts if a larger bond amount was requested will be discussed at the March meeting.

Corey Larriva, Park, Recreation, & Libraries Director, provided a more detailed review of the proposed trail projects primarily along the Agua Fria Trail. The bond initiative would provide the opportunity to fill in the gaps along this primary corridor, create opportunities for wayfinding, and comfort zones. The trail would be asphalt paved with guardrails installed and integrate lighting for safe traveling. The City is looking to purchase property along MC-85 and Dysart Road which would become a trail head with all the amenities to make it a pleasurable experience. An image of what the trail head would look like was shared with the committee. Additional images of successful trails within surrounding cities providing the committee with an idea of what the Agua Fria Trail could look like.

Mr. Larriva reviewed revised CIP plans for parks that make them user friendly. This includes creating more of a park initiative at Donatela Park, renovating and rejuvenating Fred Campbell Park, repurpose, reprogram, and renovating the Las Ligas Park, and add a trail head and park improvement at Festival Fields Park off Lower Buckeye Road. Staff met with a consultant regarding the Park Shade Expansion and suggested adding shade to the Softball 4-Plex at Festival Fields, the Basketball Courts at Friendship Park, the Splash Pad at Park Avenue Plaza, and the Basketball and Fitness Court at Alamar Park.

Ms. Gregory noted in March they will discuss how and what fits into the package.

Committee members noted these covered concerns from last week and a lot of people will be interested as this spreads funding over multiple areas.

#### **4. PRESENTATION ON PUBLIC SAFETY PROJECTS**

The Police department, Fire & Medical department, and Municipal Court staff presented on recent project successes, funded capital projects, and potential bond-funded projects.

Dale Nannenga, Deputy City Manager, provided an introduction into the Public Safety discussion, noting the Police Department, Fire Department, and the City Court will present completed, ongoing, and potential CIP projects.

Chief Memo Espinoza, Police Chief, provided an overview of the personnel structure of the Avondale Police Department being 167 sworn positions and 82 non-sworn staff. Their only objective is to provide quality police services and ensure implementing new policies or projects is done with the residents of Avondale in mind.

The City is divided into eight beats to provide smaller coverage areas for the officers which allows them to become familiar with the area and shorten response time. Communications receive two types of calls being a citizen generated call for service and an officer call which is an officer being visible and proactive to improve the quality of life for residents. These calls have increased 20% over the last 10 years.

Chief Espinoza discussed the three unique parts of the Avondale Police Department being the Detention Facility, the partnership in the Southwest Family Advocacy Center located in Goodyear, and the paid services provided to residents of Litchfield Park.

Chief Memo Espinoza, Police Chief, reviewed and discussed the completed CIP projects for the Police Department.

- The expansion and remodel of the property room was requested and approved based on the increased number of calls that resulted in increased arrest for crimes and collection of evidence that needed to be stored. This project was completed in 2021 at a cost of \$9.1 million funded through GOB, General Funds, and Impact fees.
- The Public Safety Detention Facility/Substation was requested and approved to provide Avondale with a facility to house inmates for up to thirty days. This facility will allow officers the opportunity to continue to serve the residents and the City will not have to pay the County Jail to book and/ or house an inmate. This facility also houses a patrol area that can deploy three patrol squads and a defensive tactics training room. The project was completed in October 2024 at a cost of \$20 million funded through the General Fund and GOB.
- The North Public Safety Facility's parking lot has been a challenge since moving there in 1999. The parking area is not secured or covered, leaving expensive vehicles and equipment vulnerable. This project installed ten-foot perimeter walls with 43 parking spaces and limited covered parking for the SWAT and armored vehicles. The project was completed in May 2023 at a cost of \$1.5 million funded through General Funds.

Chief Memo Espinoza, Police Chief, provided an overview of and discussed current funded CIP projects for the Police Department

- Communications Center Expansion will add four workstations at the main station on campus to handle the implementation of a second radio channel. The budget is \$4.5 million funded through General Funds and scheduled to be completed by September 2025.
- K-9 Facility will be utilized to training, examining, kenneling, storing food and equipment for the K-9s. Additionally, the facility will be multiuse by providing office space and physical agility training/test for new officers. The budget is \$4 million funded through General Funds and scheduled to be completed by August 2025.

Chief Memo Espinoza, Police Chief, reviewed and discussed potential bond projects for the Police Department.

- Police Department Training Facility this will be an indoor facility that offers an indoor range with ten bays for firearms and less lethal weapon training, an armory, and office space that can be used all year. The projected cost is \$12 million.
- Police Main Station 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Build-Out to allow more office space for future detectives to maintain the current level of service and ID Technicians. The projected cost is \$8 million.

Chief Larry Rooney, Fire Chief, provided an overview of the organizational structure of the Avondale Fire Department, noting they have 97 full-time employees who respond to specialty calls, all hazards, and community outreach. Chief Rooney discussed the Insurance Services Office rating of 2, which is the second highest and not only makes the City proud but provides businesses and residents with lower insurance rates. There are currently five fire stations within Avondale who strive for a 4–6-minute response time. Over the last ten years the calls for service have increased by 114%.

Chief Larry Rooney, Fire Chief, reviewed and discussed the Fire Station 175 located on Van Buren. The 17,000 square foot facility houses the ladder company, the Battalion Chief, and the Low Acuity Unit. The project was completed in February 2022 at a cost of \$10.3 million funded through General Funds and Public Safety Sales Tax.

Chief Larry Rooney, Fire Chief, reviewed and discussed the current funded CIP projects for the Fire Department.

- Fire Station 171 project will replace the 30–40-year existing fire station. The plans for the new facility took into consideration future growth for up to fifty years. The projected budget includes demolition of the existing building. The budget is \$15.8 million funded through General Funds and Public Safety Sales Tax with a completion date of November 2025 and demolition of the existing building will be completed in February 2026.
- Fire Training Center will be located on Lower Buckeye Road near the Municipal Operation Center. This center will provide necessary company training that has not been available since the previous fire tower was condemned three years ago. It is anticipated the center will last up to 25 years. The budget is \$4.3 million funded through General Funds and is currently in the Design/Build stage but will be completed this year.

Chief Larry Rooney, Fire Chief, reviewed and discussed potential bond projects for the Fire Department.

- Alamar Public Safety Facility will be in the southern part of the City and will consist of Fire Station 176 and a Police Substation. This facility allows a quicker response time for both fire and police and serves Alamar, the Phoenix Raceway, and SR-30 when constructed.
- The Public Safety Administration Building is a new concept that will provide office space for Public Safety agencies in one building for those that have been dispersed throughout the City. The projected cost is \$28 million with an ask of \$10 million.

In response to the questions, it was confirmed that the developer donated 3 acres of land for the Alamar Public Safety Facility. Ms. Gregory explained the Alamar Public Safety Facility has been approved through Council action for design and partial funding. The purpose of the meetings and presentations is to get the community to potentially vote for authorization to fund the projects.

In response to questions, Chief Espinoza noted the proposed training facility would meet all the training needs here in Avondale. Currently, Avondale pays \$300,000 per year for the partnership and 11.5% of any costs for new, replaced, or modified equipment at the facility which was \$300,000 last year. At this time, no other agencies would be looking for a partnership to use the training facility if constructed. This project is a higher need of the two presented.

In response to the questions, Chief Rooney explained the Alamar facility would decrease response time. Ms. Gregory explained the City is committed to this project and if it does not receive GOB funding, they will use General Funds and delay other projects in the queue.

Judge Craig Jennings, the Presiding Judge of Avondale City Court, provided an overview of the history of the court. He explained how he and the court staff are employees of the City and follow City procedures and he is a member of the Unified Court System of Arizona and reports to the Judge of the Maricopa County Superior Court and must follow requirements and mandates within the Judiciary.

There are sixteen employees at the City Court that work within five divisions. There is a pending request for an additional employee in the budget. It is anticipated that the City Court will grow in response to the continued growth of the City and Police Department. Judge Jennings provided a detailed overview of the types of cases that are handled at the Avondale City Court, including jury trials when requested.

- The completed CIP project at the City Court was the lobby expansion that provided an office for security, additional space for the magnetometer, and overall safer environment. The project was completed in November 2023 at a cost of \$804,000 using General Funds.
- The expansion CIP project for a City Court Training / Conference / Jury Room in the southeast portion of the building, that will allow space to host citywide and regional court training and a place to properly check in jurors. The project is in the design and planning phase with a projected budget of \$1 million using General funds for the design only and the construction is unfunded.
- The potential CIP project for City Court Expansion would provide more staff workspace, breakrooms, restrooms, and allow for future growth. Staff are currently working in the file room as they do not have adequate office space. The anticipated amount is \$5 million but it depends on the construction details that have not been finalized.

In response to the questions, Judge Jennings explained he would move the files to a different location because giving up staff or increasing the burden on staff or the public due to not having enough staff is not an option. City management prioritizes the projects once approved so it is hard to tell when the project will be completed. Unfortunately, adding a second story to the existing building would be more expensive and is typically done during the initial construction.

Katie Gregory, Assistant City Manager, spoke about previous projects that were public facing and for the community but lacked support for the infrastructure and finding space for employees. This set of potential CIP projects support the growth that has occurred over the past five years and will continue for another ten years. The total requested for this package is \$55 million.

Committee members provided feedback that included:

- The projects not only solved today's situation but forecasted for future growth as well.
- What would the impact be of increasing the ask by \$3 million so all projects can be approved or not use all the funds so there is some left.
- Suggest a survey of the committee members to prioritize the projects so you can see where the public stands.
- All for Parks and Recreation because projects need to be completed and shading needs to be completed for safety reasons in the summer. Public Safety requires expansion to meet the City's growth.
- These are not frivolous requests.
- Public Safety matters and is critical to the citizens and the City is growing with a focus on economic development.
- There is hope for all these projects, but they may have to wait another year.

Ms. Gregory clarified the intent was to present a package that meets the financial capability. However, the rates do fluctuate based on statutory requirements and there could be some room for a conversation. The City Council's direction is to not impact rates significantly. The Parks and Rec projects presented tonight will be part of the consideration, but the package will stay at \$68 million.

## **5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Committee, Vice Chair Schuch moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting; Committee Member De La Riva seconded the motion.

Upon vote, the motion was carried unanimously 7 to 0.

Chair Edmonds	Aye
Vice Chair Schuh	Aye
Committee Member Ruoti	Aye
Committee Member De La Riva	Aye
Committee Member Lopez-Davey	Aye
Committee Member Arellano	Aye
Committee Member List	Aye
Committee Member Duncan-Billiman	Non-Voting Member

Meeting adjourned at 8:01pm.

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Chair Edmonds

**CERTIFICATION AND ATTESTATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Citizen Bond Committee of the City of Avondale held on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of February 2025. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held, and that the quorum was present.

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Marcella Sarmiento, City Clerk

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Date Approved by Citizen Bond Committee