

**Phoenix City Council
Community Services and Education (CSE) Subcommittee
Summary Minutes
Tuesday, November 18, 2025**

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

Subcommittee Members Present

Chairwoman Kesha Hodge Washington
Vice Mayor Ann O'Brien
Councilwoman Anna Hernandez
Councilwoman Debra Stark

Subcommittee Members Absent

CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Hodge Washington called the Community Services and Education Subcommittee (CSE) to order at 10:02 a.m. with Councilwoman Stark, Vice Mayor O'Brien, and Chairwoman Hodge Washington present. Councilwoman Stark and Vice Mayor O'Brien attended the meeting virtually. Councilwoman Hernandez joined the meeting in person at 10:04 a.m.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Ginnie Ann Sumner asked Council members to review Code of Conduct for parks and camping ordinances.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

1. Minutes of the Community Services and Education Subcommittee Meeting

Councilwoman Stark made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2025 Community Services and Education Subcommittee meeting. Councilwoman Hernandez seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

CONSENT (ITEM 2)

2. Authorization to Request a Carryover of Head Start Birth to Five Program Fiscal Year 2024-25

No presentations were planned, but staff was available to answer questions.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked why there were unspent funds at the end of the fiscal year for the Head Start Birth to Five Program.

Human Services Department Director Jacqueline Edwards clarified that there were leftover funds because of vacancies for teacher positions and transitions in services from homes to classrooms.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked if there will be unspent funds for the current fiscal year.

Director Edwards shared that her department is on track to use all Head Start funds this year, but noted it was usual for there to be a small amount of funds leftover that can be applied to one-time expenses, such as capital project expenses.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked whether leftover funds could go towards addressing issues impacting attendance such as meal programs, transit passes, or gas assistance.

Director Edwards shared carryover funds could be used for allowable expenses dependent on what Head Start at the federal level allows.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked if there was any reduction in participation due to eligibility concerns with the new administration.

Director Edwards shared that new applications were slow to come in at the beginning of the year, but classrooms are now full, with children on waitlists as well.

Councilwoman Stark moved to approve. Councilwoman Hernandez seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

INFORMATION (ITEM 3)

3. Head Start Birth to Five Monthly Report – September 2025

No presentations were planned, but staff was available to answer questions.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked for information on possible program delays for Head Start in Arizona due to federal action.

Human Services Department Director Jacqueline Edwards clarified there were no changes in the application process, but the program practices may be impacted by the court's final decisions and federal guidance around legal status requirements.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked how many families would be impacted if there were changes in program requirements from the federal level.

Director Edwards shared that while other factors are tracked, the status of families is not tracked. She offered to follow up with an updated number of potential families that could be impacted if requirements for the program change.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION (ITEMS 4-6)

4. Federal Programs Update

Human Services Department Director Jacqueline Edwards presented this item.

Director Edwards shared information on federal funding impacts on Phoenix social services programs, the most notable being the disruption of federal funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Director Edwards shared SNAP benefits are no longer delayed due to the State of Arizona action to fund SNAP through the rest of the year. She discussed actions the City of Phoenix took to support SNAP participants, including creating a webpage of resources, sharing educational materials and holding a citywide food drive.

Councilwoman Stark highlighted the initiative that Council Offices have taken to raise money and gather food donations.

Councilwoman Hernandez highlighted the importance for the City of Phoenix to support its residents through federal funding pauses to continue critical services. She suggested an emergency response planning committee to address similar issues that may arise.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington thanked staff for their work supporting resident needs through the longest federal shutdown and protecting vulnerable communities. She expressed support for an emergency response plan to deal with similar situations in the future that may occur.

Director Edwards conveyed the importance of quick action by the City and shared that the new food help webpage will continue to exist and be updated.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington highlighted the importance of assessing how effective outreach was and continuously improving the City's preparation and response for potential future federal funding disruptions.

5. Housing Repair Program Update

Neighborhood Services Department Director Spencer Self and Neighborhood Services Department Deputy Director Matt Utyro presented this item.

Director Self listed the various Housing Repair programs that Neighborhood Services Department (NSD) offers including owner-occupied housing rehab, homeowner assistance, weatherization assistance, Lead Safe Phoenix, and rental rehab.

Mr. Utyro shared an overview of the Housing Repair programs. He stated NSD used Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to replace Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding due to funding gaps, increasing pressure on CDBG funding.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington thanked staff for providing an overview of resources for residents.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked how many households were served through the hardship assistance program and whether demographics or neighborhood information were tracked.

Director Self clarified that it is difficult to share numbers for the hardship assistance program because it falls under the owner-occupied rehab program. He shared that the number may be low due to new code enforcement staff and a new system that will soon be implemented. Mr. Self confirmed that neighborhood information is tracked.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked if there was an outreach plan to ensure residents were aware of NSD programs.

Director Self shared that NSD works closely with community partners including faith-based organizations and the Human Services Department in outreach efforts. Director Self also noted that NSD shares information for Council Offices to share with the community.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked how much has been spent on the programs.

Mr. Utyro shared that costs fluctuate every year for each program depending on the number of applications and federal funding changes. Mr. Utyro highlighted, for example, the hardship assistance program is typically around \$400,000 a year, however, it is dependent on the amount of CDBG funds received from Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Councilwoman Hernandez asked whether the rental rehab program works with renters or rental property owners.

Director Self clarified the rental rehab program works with rental property owners, but there was also an opportunity for renters to initiate the process.

Councilwoman Stark asked how the City works with nonprofits to fill funding gaps.

Director Self shared there were limited partnerships with nonprofits.

Councilwoman Stark requested a list of potential nonprofit partnerships to consider and asked how Council Offices can assist.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked how long these rehabilitation programs take to complete and what barriers may cause delays.

Mr. Utyro shared that timelines for rehab project completion are determined based on the extent of repairs needed. He noted NSD must meet federal procurement and environmental guidelines for these programs, which can lengthen the timeline.

Director Self shared that, for example, hot water heaters are quickly done versus roof repairs which may take longer.

Mr. Utyro shared rental rehab takes six months to a year, weatherization takes five months due to the need for testing, and that Lead Safe Phoenix takes 60 days.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked for information on federal requirements and how Council Offices can assist these programs.

Director Self shared that in the future, it would be helpful to discuss this, however, for now, maintaining current program funding is a priority.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked what metrics are tracked through this program.

Director Self shared that there are reporting requirements for rental rehab, such as income level reporting.

Mr. Utyro shared there is an effort to track metrics and make this information more accessible.

Director Self shared that gathering information is a challenge for these programs since some residents prefer not to provide information.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked if there was any initial policy support that could be helpful to increase the program impact for the City.

Director Self agreed that it would be helpful to have further discussions on policy.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington expressed thanks to staff and partners.

6. City of Phoenix Housing Department Homeownership Programs and Initiatives Overview

Housing Director Titus Mathew and Assistant Housing Director Aubrey Gonzalez presented this item.

Housing Director Mathew provided an overview of housing affordability in Phoenix and the importance of homeownership. Director Mathew highlighted the City of Phoenix Open Door Down Payment Assistance Program which assists with down payments.

Assistant Housing Director Gonzalez shared information on the Section 32 Homeownership Program, Section 18 Homeownership Program, Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program, and the Community Land Trust Program.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked how much program information could be found on the City of Phoenix Housing Department website and whether the 2024 Housing Needs Assessment could be shared.

Housing Director Mathew stated the 2024 Housing Needs Assessment is posted on the Housing Department's website.

Councilwoman Hernandez spoke about the importance of housing options in Phoenix and thanked staff for their work.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington thanked staff and asked if there was a higher demand for the program.

Housing Director Mathew noted the increased demand for these programs since interest rates have decreased and shared the importance of down payment assistance.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked if there was any opportunity to donate homes to the Community Land Trust Program.

Housing Director Mathew shared that he would conduct research on whether home donations are possible.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington emphasized the importance of affordable homeownership opportunities.

Vice Mayor O'Brien thanked staff for their work.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairwoman Hodge Washington adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cecilia Alcantar-Chavez
Management Fellow