

**Phoenix City Council
Community and Cultural Investment (CCI) Subcommittee
Summary Minutes
Wednesday, June 7, 2023**

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

Subcommittee Members Present

Councilwoman Betty Guardado, Chair
Vice Mayor Yassamin Ansari
Councilwoman Debra Stark
Councilwoman Kesha Hodge Washington

Subcommittee Members Absent

CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Guardado called the Community and Cultural Investment Subcommittee to order at 10:03 a.m. with Vice Mayor Yassamin Ansari, Councilwoman Kesha Hodge Washington, and Councilwoman Debra Stark present.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Jerry Van Gasse expressed support for the City's effort to redevelop Papago Park.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

1. Minutes of the Community and Cultural Investment Subcommittee Meeting

Councilwoman Stark motioned to approve the minutes of the May 3, 2023, Community and Cultural Investment Subcommittee meeting. Councilwoman Hodge Washington seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, 4-0.

CONSENT ACTION (ITEMS 2-6)

2. Fiscal Year 2023-28 Public Art Plan

Consent only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

3. Artist Contract for Maryvale Grand Canal Crossing Public Art Project

Consent only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

4. Pueblo Public Art Deaccession

Consent only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

5. Artwork Donation - Hatcher Urban Businesses

Consent only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

6. Request Approval of the Head Start Birth to Five Infectious Disease Mitigation Policy

Consent only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

Councilwoman Stark motioned to approve consent Items 2-6.

Vice Mayor Ansari seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, 4-0.

INFORMATION ONLY (ITEMS 7- 9)

7. Head Start Birth to Five Monthly Report - April 2023

Information only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

8. 2023 Summer Solstice Celebration at Burton Barr Central Library

Information only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

9. Phoenix Public Library's 2023 Summer Reading Program

Information only. No Councilmember requested additional information.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION (ITEMS 10-11)

10. Park Ranger Hiring Update

Parks and Recreation Director Cynthia Aguilar introduced Parks and Recreation Deputy Director Jarod Rogers to provide an update on Item 10.

Mr. Rogers discussed City park ranger duties, such as helping improve visitor satisfaction, park safety, and park usability. He said about 69 Mountain Preserve park rangers, including eight vacancies, serve the City. Additionally, about 28 Urban park rangers support the City's urban park system, including 186 parks, pedestrian pathways, and tunnels.

Councilwoman Stark asked about a recent Parks and Recreation recruitment effort and whether what was targeted for all vacant positions.

Ms. Aguilar replied this particular recruitment was targeted for the third shift.

Chairwoman Guardado expressed support for the City's effort to hire new park rangers. She asked about the hiring process for new rangers.

Ms. Aguilar explained the various methods to attract qualified candidates, including social media advertisement and a group hiring event.

Chairwoman Guardado asked about the difference between City-employed parks rangers and private security guards Parks and Recreation recently used to patrol some parks.

Ms. Aguilar answered the private security services were authorized to provide roving patrols to 12 specific locations between 8 p.m. and 10 a.m. daily. The Park Rangers would also be patrolling the City's 186 Urban Parks with an additional authority to issue trespass notices or citations.

11. Park Activation Neighborhood Grant Program Update

Ms. Aguilar gave an update on Item 11. She noted some benefits of the City's Park Activation program to promote a healthy lifestyle for residents, including new park amenities, park programming, and the new neighborhood grant opportunity funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Councilwoman Stark asked for clarification of qualified census tracts.

Ms. Aguilar answered staff uses the U.S. Census Tract definition of a qualified census tract to review parks located within the boundary or near those qualifying census tracts.

Vice Mayor Ansari asked if staff could award some of the ARPA-funded neighborhood grants before the end of the year.

Ms. Aguilar replied the City is hiring additional staff to administer the neighborhood grants program to help expedite the process.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked if the neighborhood grants opportunity is limited to programs, events, and activities or if it could also be used for other services related to park amenities as deemed by the Neighborhood Associations.

Ms. Aguilar answered this particular grant opportunity is limited to programs and events.

Chairwoman Guardado asked if local nonprofit organizations wanting to host events at City parks could qualify for the neighborhood grant funding.

Ms. Aguilar replied yes.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION (ITEMS 12-13)

12. Recommend Fee Increase for Use of Phoenix Tennis Center

Ms. Aguilar introduced Parks and Recreation Supervisor Stacia Homes to discuss item 12. She also acknowledged Mr. and Mrs. Ragland sitting in the audience.

Ms. Homes presented Item 12, noting the Phoenix Tennis Center is the largest in the metropolitan area serving 60,000 visitors annually through leagues, tournaments, and open play. She stated the Parks and Recreation Board recommended a fee increase from \$4.00 to \$5.10 for 90 minutes of court time and a light fee increase from \$5.00 to \$5.10 for a 90-minute court reservation at 6:00 p.m. or later. However, staff recommends the CCI Subcommittee increase the fee from \$4.00 to \$6.00 for 90 minutes of court time and \$5.00 to \$6.00 for 90 minutes of court reservation at 6:00 p.m. or later. Junior fees remained unchanged at \$2.00 for 90 minutes of court reservation.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked about the demographics of tennis center users by age and after 6:00 p.m. preservation statistics.

Mrs. Veronica Ragland, Business and Legal Consultant for Ragland Tennis Services, replied Juniors represent 15 to 20 percent of the tennis center community. She added the tennis center court is reserved between 65 to 70 percent of capacity after 6:00 p.m.

Chairwoman Guardado motioned to recommend the City Council approve increased fees for the Phoenix Tennis Center to \$6.00 for 90 minutes of court reservation and \$6.00 for lighting per 90 minutes. She further recommended that the City Council approve no change to the current junior fees of \$2.00 per junior for 90 minutes of court time.

Mr. Joe Ragland expressed support for the recommended fee increase.

Mrs. Veronica Ragland discussed the increased expenses for operations and expressed support for the recommended fee increase.

Vice Mayor Ansari seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, 4-0.

13. Head Start Birth to Five Full Enrollment Initiative Plan

Human Services Director Marchelle Franklin, Human Services Assistant Director Nichole Ayoola, and Human Services Deputy Director Patricia Kirkland presented Item 13.

Ms. Franklin gave an overview of Item 13, noting Fiscal Year 2022-23 enrollment numbers, efforts to address enrollment issues, and factors affecting enrollment.

Ms. Ayoola stated the Head Start Birth to Five program's enrollment is 68 percent, meaning 2,341 of the 3,451 available slots are filled. She mentioned some strategies staff has undertaken to increase enrollment, including community outreach, advertising on City garbage trucks, billboards, and various media platforms.

Ms. Kirkland discussed resources staff used to identify critical factors impacting enrollment numbers, including existing data on enrollment, surveys completed by program participants and teachers, and the latest Community Needs Assessment, which identified four factors that have impacted total enrollment numbers: staff shortages due to low wages, a mismatch of family educational needs and program offerings, eligibility issues, and language barriers.

Councilwoman Stark asked if the Human Services staff is collaborating with the City's Youth and Education Office to assist with enrollment.

Ms. Kirkland replied yes.

Councilwoman Stark asked if there were ways the subcommittee could help promote the Head Start program.

Ms. Franklin responded the subcommittee could help in several ways, including inviting staff to their Council District events, providing a contact listserv, and providing feedback on constituent needs and preferences.

Councilwoman Stark asked staff to discuss how Covid-19 impacted the program.

Ms. Ayoola replied the Covid-19 pandemic affected enrollment in different ways, including a shift in the needs of families and the workforce.

Vice Mayor Ansari asked staff to elaborate on some of the language barriers noted in the presentation and how they affect enrollment.

Ms. Kirkland answered the language barrier primarily impacts the Head Start program's home-based service, where staff who visit participant families' homes encounter language challenges due to some families' specific Swahili and Farsi dialects.

Vice Mayor Ansari asked if the City is looking to hire more interpreters and translators to overcome this challenge.

Ms. Kirkland replied staff is working with the current vendor to identify the specific Swahili and Farsi dialects needed to address this challenge.

Vice Mayor Ansari stated many Afghan refugees speak Farsi, especially the dialects some of the families in the Head Start speak, and would appreciate an employment opportunity.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked if the recently completed Class and Compensation Study will address staff shortages caused by low wages.

Ms. Franklin replied yes.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington recommended the City consider parents and guardians of children who qualify for the Head Start program as potential employees.

Chairwoman Guardado asked about the eligibility criteria for the Head Start program.

Ms. Kirkland answered the eligibility for the Head Start program includes income, participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and homelessness.

Chairwoman Guardado asked if children receiving free meals at school qualify for the Head Start program.

Ms. Kirkland replied yes.

Chairwoman Guardado asked if Council could raise the eligibility criteria at or below 140 to 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines to allow more families to participate in the Head Start program.

Ms. Kirkland replied the current qualification cap is at or below 130 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, but staff would explore the existing procedures and report back to the subcommittee.

Chairwoman Guardado asked if the Human Services staff is collaborating with the City's afterschool PAC program.

Ms. Kirkland replied yes.

Chairwoman Guardado asked about the Head Start program's home visitor staffing level.

Ms. Kirkland responded the program has 28 positions, 13 of which are currently filled.

Chairwoman Guardado noted the Head Start program pays some teachers \$21 per hour while others receive \$13 for the same job. She asked why there is a significant pay gap between educators doing the same work.

Ms. Kirkland replied such pay inequities result from education levels and teaching requirement differences between school districts and nonprofit organizations. School districts require teachers to be certified through the state; nonprofits do not.

Chairwoman Guardado recommended Head Start program teachers receive equal pay.

Chairwoman Guardado motioned to approve the submitted Head Start Birth to Five Full Enrollment Initiative plan. She also motioned staff to provide the CCI Subcommittee with a monthly update on the progress of the enrollment initiative plan.

Vice Mayor Ansari seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, 4-0.

Chairwoman Guardado noted this was the last CCI subcommittee meeting before the summer recess. She thanked her colleagues and staff for their hard work.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no speakers for public comment.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Chairwoman Guardado adjourned the meeting at 11:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Yusuf Dirow, Management Fellow