



Attachment A  
**City of Phoenix**  
**Minutes**

Meeting Location:  
City Council Chambers  
200 W. Jefferson St.  
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

**City Council Policy Session**

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**Tuesday, February 27, 2024**

**2:30 PM**

**phoenix.gov**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The Phoenix City Council convened in Policy Session on Tuesday, February 27, 2023, at 2:38 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

**Present:** 9 - Councilwoman Yassamin Ansari, Councilwoman Betty Guardado, Councilwoman Kesha Hodge Washington, Councilwoman Ann O'Brien, Councilwoman Laura Pastor, Councilman Kevin Robinson, Councilman Jim Waring, Vice Mayor Debra Stark and Mayor Kate Gallego

**COUNCIL INFORMATION AND FOLLOW-UP REQUESTS**

Councilwoman Ansari discussed Laveen's 72nd Annual Barbecue, the opening of Circular Plastics Microfactory, and the annual Maricopa Association of Governments Point in Time Homelessness Street Count. She then shared past events including Centering Black Voices, Hike with a Firefighter, DTPHX Inc.'s CAN I KICK IT?, and recent heat relief efforts. She encouraged attendance at the Laveen Quarterly Meeting on March 5, the 3rd Annual Nowruz on March 16, and the First Missionary Baptist Church Community Health, Safety and Resource Fair on March 23.

Councilman Waring joined the meeting in-person at 2:44 p.m.

Councilwoman Guardado thanked residents, City staff, and organizations for helping plant trees across District 5. She mentioned neighborhood leaders meeting to discuss homelessness, community events, as well as community cleanups. She encouraged attendance at the annual Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods (GAIN) event on March 1 and Maryvale Mercado event on March 3.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington discussed Laveen's 72nd Annual Barbecue, a recent meeting with the African-American Advisory Board, her attendance at a roundtable on water with Congressman Ruben Gallego, and a meeting with Arizona Fresh. She encouraged attendance at Bubbles, Brunch and Boobs event on March 2, the Laveen Quarterly Meeting on March 5, the Laveen Youth Talent Showcase on March 23, Pierre Parkapalooza on March 23, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Competition with Future Stars on March 30.

Councilwoman Pastor encouraged attendance at participatory budget meetings on Feb. 27 and Feb. 28, light rail public meeting on Feb. 28, Melrose Street Fair on March 2, coffee chat on March 5, and 3rd Annual Empowering Generations event on April 6. She then discussed the grand opening of The Royale, 35th Avenue Cleanup, and highlighted Black-owned Businesses in District 4. She thanked City staff for participating in the District 4 Pickle Ball Tournament.

### **CONSENT ACTION**

This item is scheduled to allow the City Council to act on the Mayor's recommendations on the Consent Agenda. There is no Consent Agenda for this meeting.

### **CALL FOR AN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A vote may be held to call an Executive Session for a future date.

### **REPORTS AND BUDGET UPDATES BY THE CITY MANAGER**

This item is scheduled to allow the City Manager to provide brief informational reports on topics of interest to the City Council. The City Council may discuss these reports but no action will be taken.

### **INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION (ITEMS 1-2)**

#### **1 General Fund 2024 -25 Preliminary Budget Status and Multi-Year Forecast**

##### **Discussion**

Mayor Gallego stated for the past three fiscal years, the City has experienced strong growth, with increased resources and significant investments thanks to voters approving the \$500 million general obligation bond.

She then discussed deep cuts to ongoing revenues due to recent actions taken by the Arizona State Legislature and the expiration of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, which pose financial uncertainty and require tough conversations to ensure fiscal sustainability.

City Manager Jeffrey Barton provided updates on the City's budget practices and the impact of recent State-level decisions, stating that despite fiscal challenges, the City remains committed to delivering essential services to its residents.

Budget and Research Director Amber Williamson provided an overview of Fiscal Year 2024-25 preliminary general fund status and the multi-year forecast. She then highlighted the importance of the forecast as a financial best practice, guiding the City's decision-making and budget adoption process. She discussed the economic outlook, general fund revenue estimates, and expenditure projections, considering factors like employee compensation and pension costs. She shared that despite the \$80 million surplus for Fiscal Year 2024-25, projections showed deficits in the following years, attributed to Arizona State Legislative actions impacting revenue streams. She then outlined next steps in the budget adoption process, including community feedback sessions and council votes scheduled for May and June.

Vice Mayor Stark left the meeting at 3:08 p.m.

Vice Mayor Stark joined the meeting virtually at 3:13 p.m.

Mayor Gallego opened the floor to public comment.

Casey Purington expressed concerns on budget matters and questioned the effectiveness of budgeting practices, raising issues of being ignored by various agencies despite attempts to address concerns. He urged officials to address these issues and emphasized his readiness to engage in dialogue, directing officials to his website for contact.

Mayor Gallego closed the floor to public comment.

Councilwoman Guardado expressed gratitude to City staff for their hard work and highlighted the impact of recent Arizona State Legislature actions on the City's budget. She acknowledged the effective use of ARPA funds and the positive changes implemented by the City since the pandemic began. She then asked about preparation within departments regarding potential budget cuts and whether discussions on this matter had begun.

Mr. Barton replied that as part of this year's Program Budget process he asked all City departments to submit draft budget cuts for Fiscal Year 2024-25, although he does not anticipate needing to make cuts to next year's budget, in an effort to give Council the full picture of what potential cuts may look like for departments. He then said staff will evaluate various avenues for balancing Fiscal Year 2025-26 and future budgets, including potential cuts, as requested by Council.

Councilwoman Guardado asked how staff plans to address community expectations during the budget hearings. She emphasized that many new amenities are necessary for the community and questioned how the City would respond to community members who have become accustomed to these additions.

Mr. Barton recommended holding the surplus funds as one-time resources and not allocating funds for new services. He then shared the importance of educating the community about the impact of the State's actions on the budget and assured the Fiscal Year 2025-26 budget would prioritize preserving the current level of services.

Councilwoman Guardado inquired about the potential impact of the budget situation on the City's General Obligation (GO) Bond Program.

Mr. Barton replied that the bond rating agencies are closely monitoring the City's financial activities, and there is no single factor that determines bond ratings. He expressed confidence in the City's history of financial decision-making and the importance of transparency in the budget process.

Councilwoman Guardado shared her concerns about potential budget cuts affecting residents and maintaining essential services. She highlighted the progress made in recent years in improving community morale and access to City programs, expressing a desire to avoid returning to the challenges faced during the aftermath of the 2008 economic downturn. She then urged staff to strategize and plan effectively to mitigate the impact of budget constraints without compromising services or burdening constituents.

Councilwoman Ansari asked for clarification on the projected dip in the General Fund in Fiscal Year 2025-26 followed by an improvement in the City's economic outlook.

Ms. Williamson responded that the projected dip in the General Fund in Fiscal Year 2025-26 is based on anticipated revenue growth rates across various revenue categories. She added despite State actions that may reduce revenue, overall revenue is expected to continue growing even into Fiscal Year 2025-26.

Councilwoman Ansari inquired about the efforts made by staff to advocate at the State Legislature about the impact of repealing the Residential Rental Tax.

Mr. Barton replied that staff is engaging with State Legislators on potential impacts of various bills on the City's fiscal situation. He also highlighted the Mayor's active involvement, along with the mayors of other major cities, in seeking a delay or replacement of the funding lost due to the repeal of the Residential Rental Tax. Additionally, he noted that labor groups and public safety are advocating to prevent further impairment of City resources.

Councilwoman Ansari asked whether the discussion about not adding any new services or programs in the upcoming budget cycle pertained to this year specifically.

Mr. Barton recommended refraining from adding ongoing services in the upcoming budget cycle due to one-time resources and the forecasted

stress on the budget in subsequent years. He then stated the importance of continuing current services, seeking efficiency, and planning for future budget cycles to address potential imbalances.

Councilwoman Ansari highlighted progress made by the City over the past couple of years, including initiatives to address homelessness and raising wages. She expressed concern about the potential consequences if the City is unable to address the shortfalls resulting from State Legislative actions.

Mr. Barton explained the projected shortfall for Fiscal Year 2025-26 is approximately \$92 million. He then said the City has time to work on solutions and is currently balanced for next fiscal year. He also mentioned that preserving the \$80 million surplus could help mitigate the impact of the shortfall, and stated that the City would need to either reduce expenditures or increase revenues to balance the budget after Fiscal Year 2024-25 if predictions held.

Councilwoman Ansari emphasized maintaining equitable City services, particularly in public safety and community amenities, and urged for innovative solutions to address the budget shortfall.

Mayor Gallego thanked the City Manager and stressed the importance of State Shared Revenue for public safety.

Councilman Robinson acknowledged the need to reach out to legislators and advocate for the City's interests, particularly in public safety.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked about the impact of the City's economic forecast on implementing the GO Bond, particularly the allocation for public safety, expressing concern about potential limitations.

Mr. Barton replied the GO Bond program remains on track.

Ms. Williamson added that keeping the GO Bond a priority will be critical.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked about the impact of the budget forecast on

accommodating future community requests and input.

Mr. Barton responded that the need to preserve the existing budgeted service level and not recommend additional programs or services due to the projected deficit is critical. He added that educating the public on revenue challenges and decisions made in the past to maintain a balanced budget is also crucial.

Councilwoman O'Brien expressed her support for City staff and thanked the Mayor and fellow Councilmembers for advocacy efforts with State Legislators, she stressed the importance of understanding the impacts of State decisions on the City.

Vice Mayor Stark noted the difference between the current situation and the Great Recession, where revenue streams were severely impacted across sectors, resulting in a lack of funding. She then asked staff to highlight the difference in revenue situations between then and now.

Mr. Barton responded that the Great Recession caused a major downturn in revenue streams. In contrast, the current situation involves revenue growth challenges amid rising costs, with substantial revenue losses due to legislative actions, not a downturn in revenue streams.

Vice Mayor Stark commented on the broader impact of revenue challenges on cities and towns statewide. She reiterated the City's commitment to engaging with legislators and seeking solutions.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington expressed concerns about the City's financial trajectory beyond 2026. She suggested that increasing revenue might become necessary if legislative action fails. She asked if there are any forms of increase in revenue that can be pursued at this juncture.

Mr. Barton replied the City continuously examines fee revenue but stressed that raising fees dramatically would be impractical for generating the necessary revenue.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington stressed the need for more funding to

provide services and emphasized that the position the City is in is entirely due to external factors.

Councilwoman Pastor asked to discuss the need for immediate solutions to the projected deficits in Fiscal Year 2025-26 and Fiscal Year 2026-27, seeking clarification on the specific actions available within the 18-month timeframe.

Mr. Barton outlined the process for the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2025-26 budget, indicating the options that involve either bringing in new revenue or reducing expenses.

Councilwoman Pastor asked how the City could increase revenue in order to maintain its current level of services.

Mr. Barton mentioned the Council has the authority to raise sales taxes and explore other fee adjustments.

Ms. Williamson explained the Council has the authority to enact a City sales tax increase, subject to posting requirements. She added the Council could consider this option next year, along with potentially exploring a combination of reducing programs and services and increasing revenue to address projected deficits. She then emphasized being competitive with other cities' tax rates and noted there is currently a projected surplus for Fiscal Year 2024-25, providing time for Council to discuss.

Councilwoman Pastor asked about the impact of the City's budget outlook on the recently passed GO Bond, expressing concern about potential downgrades. She questioned whether the City should implement solutions to avoid such downgrades, which could increase costs for constituents.

Mr. Barton stressed the City's good relationships with bond rating agencies and expressed confidence in having time to address the projected budget deficit while considering community needs and the cost of services.

Mayor Gallego reiterated the City's commitment to financial responsibility and maintaining a balanced budget.

Councilwoman Pastor asked what actions the City should request from the State Legislature.

Mayor Gallego outlined the City's request to the Arizona State Legislature, advocating for a one year delay in the implementation of the rental tax to save \$83 million, highlighting the impact on public safety and urging constituents to voice their support for the City's fiscal health to State Legislators.

Councilman Waring acknowledged the City's accuracy in budget projections, noting efficiency gains despite a growing city. He then asked about the total dollar amount of new spending over the last three years.

Ms. Williamson answered that over the past three fiscal years there had been approximately \$365 million in additional supplementals, which includes about 660 positions.

Councilman Waring asked how much of that \$365 million was allocated to new programs.

Ms. Williamson did not have the exact breakdown of new initiatives at hand, but responded considered all additional spending as enhancements to existing programs and services.

Councilman Waring emphasized the need for a balanced approach to budget challenges, advocating for a review of recent spending increases, consideration of new programs' impacts, and expressed concerns about escalating resources allocated to addressing homelessness, seeking clarification on spending increases in this area over the past three years.

Ms. Williamson provided estimates from the Office of Homeless Solutions indicating potential future General Fund needs, starting at approximately \$6.5 million for Fiscal Year 2024-25 and increasing to around \$22 million thereafter, contingent upon depletion of ARPA funding, emphasizing that such allocations would be subject to Council

decisions.

Mr. Barton added that the recent reallocation strategy approved by the Council aimed to fund homeless operations until June 2025 using ARPA funds, with plans for another reallocation exercise to extend funding further, aiming to buy time before making financial decisions.

Councilman Waring emphasized the need to address the homelessness issue differently to avoid increases in spending, urging people to accept available services and cooperate with service providers.

## 2 **City of Phoenix 2024 Heat Response Plan**

### **Discussion**

Vice Mayor Stark expressed gratitude for the City's proactive approach in addressing the upcoming challenges. She appreciated the early planning efforts to tackle issues well ahead of time.

Mayor Gallego appreciated the early planning for heat-related challenges, the need for a comprehensive citywide approach to protect vulnerable residents from extreme heat and climate change impacts.

Fire Department Assistant Fire Chief Tim Kreis discussed the challenges faced by firefighters during hot summers and emphasized the importance of a collaborative approach to heat response.

Heat Response and Mitigation Director Dr. David Hondula presented the 2024 heat response plan, focusing on enhancing public health and community resilience through specific actions.

Public Health Adviser Nicole Witt shared data on heat-related health impacts and discussed strategies to address them, including outreach to vulnerable populations and worker safety initiatives.

Deputy City Manager Gina Montes summarized the City's response plan, which includes preseason preparation, tiered response strategies, and collaboration with partners.

Vice Mayor Stark expressed gratitude for the proactive approach to the heat relief plan, acknowledging the tragic loss of life, emphasizing the humanity of the victims, and thanked City staff for their comprehensive efforts while expressing hope for a better summer ahead.

Councilwoman Ansari expressed her appreciation for having two overnight heat respite centers. She asked about the capacity of Burton Barr Library and the Senior Opportunities West Center to shelter individuals suffering from the effects of extreme heat.

Dr. Hondula replied that staff anticipates the capacity of these locations to be approximately 50 individuals at this time.

Councilwoman Ansari asked to elaborate on Burton Barr Library as a navigation center.

Office of Homeless Solutions Director Rachel Milne replied that Community Bridges, Inc. (CBI) will operate the navigation centers and their staff will guide individuals to needed services, including transport from the sites and ensuring access to various City services.

Councilwoman Ansari asked about the notification process for library customers regarding the life-saving measures.

Ms. Montes explained that Library staff will inform the public through notifications and signage, with plans for limited extended hours focused on heat relief services.

Councilwoman Ansari asked about the contingency plan in case the 71st Avenue and Van Buren Road site for overnight shelter is delayed, asking staff if there was a “plan B” for alternative locations.

Ms. Milne replied there are 790 shelter beds, including the one planned for 71st Avenue and Van Buren Road, which are currently under construction and will serve as navigation centers to direct individuals to other shelter sites.

Ms. Montes added that staff is working in coordination with Maricopa

County to identify temporary hotel shelters, ensuring these shelters do not all go offline simultaneously and that at least one will remain operational past the summer.

Councilwoman Ansari asked about plans for addressing high concentrations of unsheltered individuals.

Ms. Montes highlighted the use of the Incident Management System during heatwaves, improved communication plans, readiness to mobilize resources, and the introduction of overnight respite and expanded transportation.

Councilwoman Ansari asked if there were any changes in transportation from the previous year.

Ms. Milne replied the transportation plan developed with CBI was to facilitate access to the overnight navigation centers and subsequent essential services.

Dr. Hondula acknowledged previous issues with 211 phone service for transportation to cooling centers and shared the Maricopa County Health Department's potential efforts to improve the service this year.

Ms. Montes added plans to provide transit passes to individuals accessing services as an additional measure.

Councilwoman Ansari asked about worker heat safety and information on potential enforcement measures for a proposed worker heat safety ordinance.

Human Resources Director David Mathews responded staff are investigating methods to integrate heat safety standards for contractors and subcontractors into the procurement process and contracts.

Councilwoman Ansari asked about the heat safety practices of subcontracted entities.

Mr. Mathews responded that staff is exploring methods to address heat

safety practices with subcontractors, including incorporating requirements in City leases to ensure compliance cascades through subcontracted entities.

Councilwoman Ansari asked about the potential staffing shortages for enforcing state procedures on heat safety guidelines in City contracts, questioning whether contract compliance inspectors could handle the responsibility.

Mr. Mathews confirmed that staff are exploring the enforcement aspect. Councilwoman Ansari asked about discussions regarding existing contracts and potential implications.

Mr. Mathews affirmed that this is one of the items being explored.

Mayor Gallego stated that there are various challenges related to heat, highlighting the importance of designing solutions tailored to different circumstances.

Councilwoman Guardado asked how staff planned to hold contractors accountable and suggesting potential ordinance changes to ensure enforcement and effectiveness.

Assistant City Manager Lori Bays replied that there is a need to assess staff capacity for enforcement to ensure effectiveness.

Councilwoman Guardado recommended researching contractor agreements in other cities facing similar heat challenges.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked when the plan will return to Council for action.

Ms. Montes responded the plan could be presented to Council after being finalized.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked for clarification on strategies concerning substance use within the plan.

Ms. Witt replied that the plan involves partnering with the Maricopa County Health Department to implement training on substance use across cooling centers, addressing stigma and misconceptions. She added training will cover safety and provide accurate data and information on substance use disorders.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked what services are available at cooling centers and during extended hours for individuals seeking assistance with substance abuse or addiction.

Ms. Witt outlined that the respite centers in partnership with CBI will provide navigation services for individuals with substance abuse issues, guiding them towards treatment, referral, or recovery resources. Additionally, she added partnerships with overdoses and disease prevention organizations will aid in spreading heat risk messaging to this population and facilitating access to necessary services.

Ms. Milne added that CBI has a network of community members, services and treatment programs, enabling them to provide comprehensive referrals for individuals in need.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked about the extension of CBI services beyond the overnight centers.

Ms. Milne explained that CBI will deploy a floating navigator to the three libraries open until 10 p.m. and on Sundays, allowing them to address any issues and connect individuals to the overnight sites if needed.

Ms. Witt added the City is teaming up with university partners to train volunteers, focusing on healthcare beyond substance use, and utilizing transportation services.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked about accessing services at the Cholla Library, clarifying whether patrons could receive assistance or simply cool off.

Dr. Hondula confirmed patrons could primarily use the space for cooling off, with trained personnel available to guide them to other resources as

needed.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked whether staff at those centers would actively encourage individuals to seek services.

Ms. Montes respond that the primary goal is to provide respite for safety, with access to CBI staff for assistance, and additional staffing can be considered based on Council feedback.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked whether there would be navigation services available during the extended hours of the cooling centers.

Ms. Montes replied that navigation services would be provided by the roving case navigators from CBI.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked whether the navigators from CBI would be stationed at the three additional centers with extended hours or if they would need to be called out to those locations.

Ms. Milne explained that the navigators from CBI could either be called from a specific extended hour location if needed or rotate among the different locations.

Dr. Hondula added that City staff and trained volunteers would lead efforts during the extended hours of the cooling centers.

Councilwoman O'Brien stressed the need for improved data collection methods to capture the diverse range of individuals utilizing the cooling centers and the services required, to ensure an understanding of the center's impact.

Ms. Montes said existing cooling sites within regular business hours may not have dedicated staff to track visitors, improvements in data collection will be implemented at enhanced sites offering extended hours and overnight services to monitor the individuals accessing the facilities and the services required.

Dr. Hondula discussed Maricopa County Health Department's efforts to

evaluate cooling centers by deploying additional personnel to gather data on visitors last summer.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked about the City's policy regarding the use of illegal drugs at all cooling centers.

Ms. Milne answered that illegal drug use is not permitted at any time.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked whether any form of illegal activity would be permitted at the centers and, if so, how staff would respond.

Ms. Milne responded that CBI would be supported by security, and if any criminal activity were to occur, the Police Department would be alerted.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked if it is mandatory for CBI to alert the Police Department if criminal activity occurs.

Ms. Milne replied yes.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked about the effectiveness of enforcement measures regarding air conditioning and evaporative cooler systems.

Ms. Montes answered that regarding the cooling ordinance, there is the capability to enforce the ordinance, as well as services available to assist individuals in working with their landlords.

Councilwoman O'Brien stated that individuals are encouraged to come into compliance without penalties, but for those who choose not to comply, there are enforcement options available that carry consequences.

Neighborhood Services Director Spencer Self stated that the City has the authority to issue citations for each day of non-compliance.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked about stakeholder engagement regarding potential new contract regulations or future contract rules impacting workers' safety initiatives.

Ms. Bays respond that three stakeholder meetings have taken place, with plans to follow up with the same stakeholders to provide further

information as the process moves forward.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked whether stakeholders are providing feedback on how potential changes may impact them.

Ms. Bays replied yes.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked about the \$450,000 in grants allocated to heat relief partners, seeking details on the guidelines and training provided to these partners.

Dr. Hondula detailed guidelines for the heat relief grants, which focus on alignment with the goals of the heat response plan and compliance with federal regulations under the ARPA.

Councilwoman O'Brien expressed appreciation for the progress made since 2022 in protecting citizens from heat-related issues but raised concerns about using Cholla Library as a cooling center, citing recent developments in the Metrocenter area that have seen increased homelessness and crime. She then shared the importance of a balanced approach that considers the impact on families and businesses, suggesting the involvement of precinct commanders in future discussions.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked if the operation of the respite and cooling centers were solely conducted by the City or if they were privately operated.

Dr. Hondula responded that grant funding was allocated to support external partners for the operation of cooling centers and respite centers.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked if external partners will operate cooling and respite centers this year.

Dr. Hondula confirmed that external partners would have a role in the heat response plan.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked for the number of facilities

designated as overnight respite centers.

Dr. Hondula respond that the planning cycle is still relatively early but there may be additional updates in the future.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked for the availability of the overnight rest facility at the Garcia Welcome Center.

Ms. Montes respond that the Garcia Welcome Center is open 24 hours.

Ms. Milne added that the Brian Garcia Welcome Center is funded to be open for people to access water, use restrooms, and cool down, though it is not classified as a respite center. She added that visitors are not permitted to stay for long periods.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked how the overnight respite center will operate.

Ms. Milne answered that the Senior Opportunity West Center would not interrupt senior services. She added that the purpose of the overnight respite center is to navigate individuals to the services they may need, stating these sites are not shelters.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked about the procedure for individuals using the facility overnight, and what will happen when it is time for turnover in the morning.

Ms. Milne answered that individuals would ideally have been navigated to other services by CBI during the night. She added that individuals at the center in the morning would be provided with transportation to other locations if necessary.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked about the destination for individuals after Harmon Library closes.

Ms. Milne replied that individuals could seek additional heat respite at the Senior Opportunities West site if needed.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked about the criteria staff used to select the locations for the overnight respite, navigation center, and extended hours cooling center.

Ms. Montes replied staff considered various factors such as identifying hotspots, ensuring life safety measures were in place, and selecting facilities that were not being used by others.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked if there was a scoring mechanism or if the selection was based solely on matching criteria.

Ms. Witt explained that the selection of locations for the respite centers involved various factors and considered a half-mile radius around all City facilities. She added that the approach aligns with Maricopa County's strategy and aimed to address hotspots with the highest concentration of heat-related health issues.

Mr. Kreis stated that the criteria guided the selection process for the sites.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington asked if calls for service originating from the area around the Human Services Campus were excluded when assessing the need for cooling centers. She then requested information on the scoring of all considered facilities.

Mr. Kreis replied that scoring was based on the heat map which indicated which sites would have the greatest impact.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington expressed concern about the selection process, which might not have considered changes in circumstances given the improvements made outside the Human Services Campus and the decision-making process for selecting locations in 2024.

Ms. Witt stated that staff did not exclude any heat-related calls from consideration but instead used additional indicators.

Councilwoman Hodge Washington requested the site selection list.

Councilwoman Pastor asked if the National Weather Service (NWS) starts issuing excessive heat warning days at 9:00 a.m.

Dr. Hondula replied yes.

Councilwoman Pastor asked if the excessive heat warning policy was in effect year-round.

Mayor Gallego confirmed that the policy was in effect.

Parks and Recreation Director Cynthia Aguilar explained the increased trail closures and stressed an increase in trail rescues occurring earlier in the day.

Councilwoman Pastor asked why specific trailheads were affected by the closures.

Ms. Aguilar responded that these trailheads were selected as strenuous mountain areas, making rescues by the Fire Department more challenging.

Councilwoman Pastor asked whether staff is exploring options or if the City plans to draft specific language.

Ms. Bays confirmed that there is draft language for an ordinance related to trailhead closures that will be presented to Council at a later date.

Councilwoman Pastor recommended all Council members be included in the process. She added the importance of having written plans approved by City departments.

Ms. Bays confirmed that plans for each department are in place, and will be shared with the full Council to review in detail.

Councilwoman Pastor noted that initially there was only one cooling center open. She then asked if there are three libraries designated as cooling centers, and whether they also serve as respite and navigation centers.

Dr. Hondula affirmed that was correct.

Councilwoman Pastor expressed concern about the selection of a library in her district as a cooling center, citing existing challenges in the area. She added the need for inclusion in decision-making regarding such selections to address the potential impact on the community and ensure sufficient resources are available to manage the situation effectively.

Ms. Montes responded that the intention is to work closely with all relevant departments and services to ensure the safety of the chosen areas. She added that the selection of libraries as cooling centers builds upon existing practices and aims to extend hours to better accommodate those in need.

Councilwoman Pastor expressed her concerns about the potential increase in problems in the chosen areas. She then questioned the effectiveness of a floating navigator concept and recommended having a navigator stationed at each library to better address community needs.

Ms. Montes ensured the presence of both staff and security guards at the libraries. She shared the possibility of adjusting staffing levels as needed, based on the volume of activity during the summer.

Councilwoman Pastor discussed concerns regarding staffing, liability, and resource allocation for the cooling centers and navigation centers. She shared concerns about relying on volunteers to handle potentially challenging situations and questioned the effectiveness of security without enforcement capabilities.

Ms. Milne stated that a private security company will be partnered with CBI overnight.

Councilwoman Pastor asked if the same security staffing would be extended to the three additional sites.

Dr. Hondula replied library locations plan to use existing municipal security guards.

Councilman Waring expressed his concerns about utilizing libraries for extended services, citing issues with behaviors witnessed at libraries, safety concerns, and the strain on resources.

Councilwoman Ansari commented on the severity of heat-related issues and expressed hope for increased support from federal agencies to address heat-related challenges effectively.

Mayor Gallego expressed gratitude for the collaborative effort in developing the plan to provide safe and cool spaces with necessary services.

Mayor Gallego opened the floor to public comment.

Casey Purington expressed gratitude to firefighters for their hard work in protecting citizens and emphasized the importance of offering more help to those in need. He shared his personal experience of facing tough situations and highlighted the significance of access to water, especially in extreme heat conditions. He expressed his love for Phoenix and his desire to see positive changes for future generations. He acknowledged the challenges of collaboration between agencies and encouraged leaders to uplift and support those in need, emphasizing that everyone is striving towards the same goals.

Mayor Gallego closed the floor to public comment.

## **ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Gallego declared the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.