

**Phoenix City Council  
Community Services and Education (CSE) Subcommittee  
Summary Minutes  
Wednesday, January 28, 2026**

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

Subcommittee Members Present

Chairwoman Keshia Hodge Washington  
Councilwoman 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 10:03 a.m. with Councilwoman Stark, Councilwoman O'Brien, and Councilwoman Hernandez present. Councilwoman Hernandez and Councilwoman O'Brien attended the meeting virtually.

**CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

None.

**MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

**1. Minutes of the Community Services and Education Subcommittee Meeting**

Councilwoman Stark made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2025 Community Services and Education Subcommittee meeting. Councilwoman O'Brien seconded the motion which passed unanimously, 4-0.

**INFORMATION (ITEMS 2-3)**

**2. Head Start Birth to Five Monthly Report – November 2025**

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

**3. Future Leaders Youth Town Hall**

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

Councilwoman Hernandez asked for clarification that the Youth Town Hall was the item being addressed.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington confirmed that the Youth Town Hall item was being discussed.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked whether the Youth Town Hall happens annually in partnership with other organizations.

Youth and Education Office Director Valencia confirmed that the Youth Town Hall occurs every October and that the current partnership had been in place since 2017.

Councilwoman Hernandez expressed support for this youth program and excitement for the next Youth Town Hall in October.

## **INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION (ITEMS 4-6)**

### **4. Federal Update**

Office of Homeless Solutions Director Rachel Milne and Human Services Department Director Jacqueline Edwards presented this item.

Director Milne provided an overview of the Maricopa Continuum of Care (CoC) overseen by U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) which provides housing subsidies to homeless individuals. Director Milne shared this has allowed the City of Phoenix to focus on outreach and shelter which is not funded by CoC. Director Milne shared changes surrounding CoC Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) which may lead to a loss in housing funding next federal fiscal year.

Director Edwards provided an update on the Citywide Food Relief efforts. Director Edwards shared that Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) are funded through September 2026 and that SNAP now required additional criteria in order to be eligible. Director Edwards provided information on the Human Services Preparedness and Response Plan which was created to help guide City actions when federal funding may be disrupted and had already convened to focus on three major areas: food, housing stability, and healthcare.

Councilwoman Stark asked whether extending the timeline for the food drives has been considered.

Director Edwards shared that the Food Assistance webpage will continue to be available and updated. Director Edwards also shared that work for the Human Services Preparedness and Response Plan around food had already begun to determine best ways to engage staff and residents.

Councilwoman Stark suggested that City Councilmembers may be able to assist in partnering with smaller food banks. Councilwoman Stark asked for more information about the 46 percent drop in calls for housing and utilities assistance.

Director Edwards confirmed that it was a considerable drop in the number of calls for assistance. Director Edwards added she was unsure as to the reason for this drop considering the continued need in the community, but that it may be due to federal government requirement changes.

Councilwoman Stark mentioned the eviction assistance program that the City of Phoenix offers and thanked staff for their work.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington thanked staff for sharing updates with City Councilmembers and the community. Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked about the impact to Maricopa CoC, if it's \$52 million funding award is lost.

Director Milne shared concern that the NOFO would have capped from 2,000 units to under 600 units. Director Milne thanked Maricopa Association of Governments for their work.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked for an explanation of what permanent supportive housing means.

Director Milne shared that a permanent supportive housing voucher is provided to an individual who may need more than just temporary housing assistance. Director Milne clarified that there is no end date to a permanent supportive housing voucher, which differs from temporary housing.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked about changes that would occur from some of the new requirements from the Maricopa Continuum of Care NOFO.

Director Milne highlighted changes that Maricopa was able to implement immediately and then highlighted changes that were more difficult to implement.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked if there is any data on website traffic.

Director Edwards offered that she could share data on the utilization of the webpage with the subcommittee members after she is able to analyze the data.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked about Head Start abandoned applications and asked why people may be declining to join Head Start.

Director Edwards answered that similar to the Rental and Utility assistance program, likely the additional questions added, such as around immigration and legal status, may be a large contributor to the drop in number of applications for Head Start. Director Edwards clarified that there is not a requirement for children or family members to answer questions around legal status.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington voiced support for food, housing, and healthcare to be part of the Human Services and Preparedness and Response Plan. Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked about the feasibility of passing funding bills for WIC and SNAP.

Federal Relations Manager Eric Gudino from Government Relations shared that Congress is currently debating a funding bill.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington cautioned additional federal shutdowns and asked for the Federal Update presentation to include updates about federal shutdowns.

Councilman Hernandez thanked staff for supporting residents through the Human Services Preparedness and Response Plan through social services.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington thanked staff for their work.

## **5. Maricopa County Department of Public Health Community Health Needs Assessment**

Public Health Advisor Yanitza Soto presented this item.

Advisor Soto shared an overview of the Maricopa County Community Healthcare Needs Assessment (CHNA) and the work that the City of Phoenix did following the 2023 survey.

Councilwoman Stark asked whether Maricopa County was doing a campaign to talk about mental health with home bound individuals, especially seniors.

Advisor Soto highlighted the Mental Health Matters campaign that the City of Phoenix started last year, as well as work being done by the county and the City of Phoenix Human Services Department.

Councilwoman Stark offered to help promote mental health at City of Phoenix Senior Centers.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked how the last cycle's survey results were used by the Office of Public Health.

Advisor Soto highlighted that one result of the 2023 survey was the creation of mental health brochures which were available primarily at Phoenix libraries.

Councilwoman Hernandez asked what demographics may be focused on for the 2026 survey and whether the survey is available to the general public.

Advisor Soto answered that the survey is available to the general public between February and April with various outreach plans outlined for the survey.

Councilwoman Hernandez requested a copy of the 2023 survey results.

Advisor Soto agreed to share the previous report with the subcommittee.

Councilwoman Hernandez thanked staff.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked whether demographics would be tracked for the survey and whether any targeted outreach would be done for any areas of the City or demographics that aren't well represented by the survey respondents.

Advisor Soto confirmed that demographics are tracked by Maricopa County and will be shared with the City to allow more targeted outreach to demographics that have not responded to the survey.

Councilwoman O'Brien asked whether social media would be used to promote the survey.

Advisor Soto confirmed that social media would be used, as well as the Office of Public Health website and interdepartmentally. Advisor Soto offered to share materials with Council offices.

Councilwoman O'Brien agreed that materials would be helpful so that the Council offices could help promote the survey.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington requested an explanation of how surveys helped inform the work of the Office of Public Health.

Advisor Soto explained that surveys greatly assist with a community health improvement process. She explained that the County Health department analyzes the survey which then goes to the Health Improvement Partnership of Maricopa County (HIPMC) and is discussed by partnering organizations to inform their work. Advisor Soto explained that the Community Health Improvement Process (CHIP) helps identify the top five priority areas for the next three years. For 2023, the top priority areas were mental health, access to healthcare, access to healthy food, substance use, and housing and homelessness.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington asked what plans there are to promote the survey outside of social media.

Advisor Soto shared that in 2023, the survey was available in paper or on a tablet, and in Phoenix Senior Centers.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington mentioned that she would connect offline with Advisor Soto for an outreach plan and thanked staff for their work.

## **6. Communications and Outreach for Human Services and Youth Programs**

Human Services Department Director Jacqueline Edwards, Youth and Education Director Tim Valencia, and Communications Director Dan Wilson presented this item.

Communications Director Wilson shared an overview of awareness via social media, websites, and other means for the Human Services Department and the Youth and Education Office.

Human Services Department Director Edwards shared a case study of the eviction legal services that launched in January 2025 and shared an overview of targeted community outreach for the program. Director Edwards also highlighted the Phoenix Mental Health Matters campaign and the cross-departmental efforts which promoted the new initiative.

Youth and Education Director Valencia shared an outreach case study of the Partner with a Principal program and Phoenix Achieves program. He shared information on their marketing toolkits, including branding, and outreach efforts.

Director Wilson proposed three focus areas for 2026: birth to third grade, crisis assistance, and seniors. Director Wilson also proposed a multidepartment, bilingual campaign, Helping Phoenix Families, that would encompass programs from multiple City departments to raise awareness of resources.

Councilwoman Stark thanked staff for their work and offered to help promote the campaign via social media and other ways.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington thanked staff for the update on communication and outreach strategies and asked what metrics are being considered to ensure outreach is successful.

Director Edwards explained that for eviction legal services, areas with the highest eviction rates were being targeted for outreach, and then the Human Services Department checked to see whether applications in targeted outreach areas increased.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington thanked staff for their intentional outreach efforts for eviction legal services and highlighted the cross departmental efforts for the Mental Health Matters campaign. Chairwoman Hodge Washington noted the importance of programs like Partner with a Principal and Phoenix Achieves and expressed support for the three focus areas for 2026 that Director Wilson proposed as well as the Helping Phoenix Families campaign.

Councilwoman Hernandez thanked staff and asked about community organization partnerships that were leveraged for outreach efforts.

Director Edwards shared that there were partnerships with community organizations for eviction legal services and Mental Health Matters. Director Edwards highlighted the importance of these partnerships considering since these community organizations were serving the same groups of people that the City is, and collaborative efforts such as resource fairs, are enhanced through these partnerships.

Director Wilson highlighted a Spanish media committee and its efforts to outreach to the Spanish speakers such as through phone banks with Telemundo where the City receives calls to answer questions and a monthly article with Lavos, a local radio program, to talk about City services and programs.

Councilwoman Hernandez inquired about partnerships with schools or daycare programs.

Director Valencia explained that the City shares program information with all 29 school districts in Phoenix, and that pushing information out via other platforms such as Peach Jar was being pursued. Director Valencia shared that the Partner with a Principal works to connect industry partners with school leaders. Director Valencia also highlighted Spanish outreach.

Councilwoman Hernandez suggested partnering with DECA clubs at schools to connect them with businesses since DECA is a career and technical student organization. Councilwoman Hernandez asked if canvassing would be done for outreach.

Deputy Director Gina Montes shared that canvassing would be difficult due to staffing however there might be an opportunity to work with other organizations for canvassing.

Councilwoman Hernandez explained that connecting with individuals at their homes who may work multiple jobs, such as to share information about eviction legal services, could be helpful.

Councilwoman O'Brien thanked staff for their work and expressed excitement for the collaborative plan for outreach.

Chairwoman Hodge Washington thanked staff for their work.

### **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Chanel Lavant expressed appreciation for the services available and expressed concern about the attitude of Head Start staff.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairwoman Hodge Washington adjourned the meeting at 11:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cecilia Alcantar-Chavez  
Management Fellow