



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Regular Meeting – **MINUTES**

Thursday, August 28, 2025

City Hall Kiva Forum

3939 N. Drinkwater Boulevard

Scottsdale, AZ 85251

PRESENT: Chair Roger Lurie, Vice-Chair Mary Jung, Commission Members Jeff Jameson, Lee Cooley, Cynthia Hill, and Sheila Roe

ABSENT: Commissioner Neal Shearer

STAFF: Mary Witkofski, Interim Human Services Director; Sue Oh, Human Services Manager; Chad Beougher, Housing Supervisor; Eugenio Munoz-Villafane, Human Services Manager; Deanna Owens, Human Services Manager; Kristy Hahn-McDonald, Human Services Manager; Jessica Rapp, Human Services Manager

Call to Order

Chair Lurie called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present as listed above.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting: August 14, 2025

COMMISSIONER COOLEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 14, 2025, HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES. VICE-CHAIR JUNG SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0) BY ROLL CALL VOTE. CHAIR LURIE, VICE-CHAIR JUNG, COMMISSIONERS JAMESON, COOLEY, HILL, AND ROE VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSIDENTING VOTES.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

1. Scottsdale/Paradise Valley Family YMCA, YMCA Outreach Program for Aging Seniors (YOPAS) OPAS and Youth Development through YMCA Early Learning and Childcare programs

Amanda Siegal, Executive Director of Scottsdale/Paradise Valley Family YMCA, provided an update on the status of the FY 2025/2026 General Funds YMCA Outreach Program for Aging Seniors (Y OPAS) and the FY 2025/2026 Scottsdale Cares Youth Development through YMCA Early Learning and Childcare programs. As part of her presentation, she highlighted services offered to seniors through the Y OPAS program, which include free services such as transportation to basic necessities and social events, as well as technology and household assistance. Efforts are being made to bring on more volunteers and expand the program. Ms. Siegal highlighted aspects of the Y Academy and Y School Age Childcare programs, as well as the benefit of the financial aid scholarships provided to Scottsdale families. She provided statistical information for each program.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Ms. Siegal said that the Y OPAS program revolves around volunteers who are primarily in their late 50s and 60s, many of whom are snowbirds. They are working to build the number of year-round volunteers so the program will be less affected during the summer season. Volunteers are vetted through a platform called "Volunteer Matters". Ms. Siegal explained that there has been an overall \$7 million dip in grant funding for locations throughout the valley over the past year. Programs being discussed are funded primarily through community partnerships and individual donors, and they do not rely heavily on federal grants. She noted that many executive and medical professionals use the childcare program, as well as those families who qualify for full scholarship funding.

2. Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center, SARRC Community School-Paiute Campus

Beatriz Orr, Director of Community Schools, provided an overview of the Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center (SARRC) Community School-Paiute Campus program and its accomplishments for the Scottsdale Cares FY 2024/2025 contract. Her presentation included the history of SARRC, which was established in 1997 and works to advance research and provide lifetime support for individuals and their families. She highlighted the Community School preschool/intervention program accomplishments for the past year and City of Scottsdale program support, which helped support 33 full-time equivalent positions, and she noted that the program not only serves children without autism, but it also offers a 25 percent discount to City employees and collaborates with Paiute Neighborhood Center partner agencies.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Ms. Orr clarified that the bulk of SARRC's funding comes from medical insurance, because they are a medical treatment provider. She said that it is difficult to get authorization from insurance to provide treatment to adults with autism, leaving SARRC to rely on other sources of funding for adult treatment. She said that the program includes community care training, which includes danger awareness and pool safety. SARRC has partnered with VirTra to develop a program that enhances autism awareness for police officers, leading to more positive interactions between police and people with autism.

Ms. Orr noted that SARRC has a research department, a board for applied behavior analysis, registered behavior technicians working directly with the children, and a behavior analyst in every classroom. Ms. Orr remarked that SARRC has not been impacted by the new federal grant funding regulations as the majority of SARRC's funding comes from medical insurance and donations.

3. Tempe Community Action Agency, Congregate Meals, Home Delivered Meals, and I-HELP Programs

Phillip Scharf, Chief Executive Officer at Tempe Community Action Agency (TCAA), provided an overview of the Congregate and Home Delivered Meals programs' accomplishments for Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community FY 2024/2025, as well as an update on the Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program (I-HELP) program funded through FY 2025/2026 Community Development Block Grant funding. His presentation highlighted the congregate lunch program statistics and the impact of the food pantry; the Health Start program, which aims to improve community health needs; the I-HELP program, which aids homeless individuals with job placement, emergency, and permanent housing; and the TCAA 24/7 Emergency Shelter.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Ms. Scharf said that the 24/7 shelter will take the place of I-HELP once it is completed. In response to new federal regulations, TCAA is working with partners to establish a way for faith-based groups to continue providing support. Currently, all services funded through federal passthrough contracts require that identification be provided in order to receive services. Mr. Scharf explained that one issue with homelessness is that many homeless individuals do not have identification. TCAA will rely on faith-based partners to provide services to those individuals. The current plan will designate a percentage of the available cots to be "owned" by the faith-based partners in order to continue serving those homeless individuals.

Mr. Scharf said that none of TCAA's faith-based partners are located in Scottsdale, and all Scottsdale participants are sheltered in Tempe and assisted by Tempe-based interfaith partners. He explained that because of the transient nature of the homeless community, the location individuals identify as where they are coming from changes. Mr. Scharf estimated that once the new 24/7 shelter is completed, the annual funding needs for all program operations will increase to approximately \$5.5 million after the changes in federal funding.

Brief discussion ensued regarding the homeless community and those individuals who accept services but refuse to go into a shelter. Mr. Scharf said that many people are not able to deal with the restrictions of a shelter, which requires them to give up their autonomy, follow restrictive rules, and give up the familiar community they have on the streets. He reviewed statistics of homeless individuals, noting that adults 18 to 54 are the highest percentage and that seniors over 55 have the fastest growing overall number. TCAA currently has 10 veterans in the shelter, and Maricopa County has approximately 542 homeless veterans.

4. Director's Report

Interim Director Witkofski provided an update on activities in the Human Services Department. Her presentation highlighted the following items:

- Youth and Family Services

- Scottsdale Unified School District's (SUSD's) collaboration with human services for Red Ribbon Week. The drug-free education program will be offered through five high schools in partnership with the Substance Abuse Coalition and various other community agencies.
- SUSD's coordination between school resource officers, school principals, social workers, and the Restorative Justice Intervention program.
- Human Services' newsletter consolidation.
- Opioid Settlement Funds Strategic Plan will kick off on Tuesday, September 2nd. Focus groups for internal staff and for external partners will be scheduled.
- Regional Veterans' Court. Youth and Family Services is receiving referrals directly from Tempe's Regional Veterans Court. New processes and new records system forms are being implemented.
- Mayor's Youth Council. Five students represented Scottsdale at the League of Arizona Cities and Towns Conference on Wednesday, August 20, 2025. Students participated in a statewide flag ceremony, engaging with public officials and networking with student advisory boards. Two Mayor's Youth Council representatives will participate in this year's funding process.
- Vista del Camino
 - The Food Bank has received a new box truck with a bigger lift gate. The truck will be retrofitted with refrigeration as funding allows.
 - The Food Bank has received Gold Certification through Leah's Pantry Nutrition Pantry Program.
 - A new trolley stop is being initiated on Thursday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. to serve people signed up for the Brown Bag program and who have appointments to pick up food boxes.
 - Recreational programs.
 - Social Services. Vista del Camino announced that clients are being assigned case workers and are processing rent and utility assistance within five to ten business days from submission of application. The average wait time had been six weeks.
- Granite Reef Senior Center
 - Hosted the 2025 Back to School Day for 445 families, providing school essentials for 927 children.
 - Food Bank and Brown Bag trolley route fliers have been distributed at Granite Reef Senior Center.
 - A pilot project for the senior lunch program will run from October 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025. Fresh meals will be prepared for seniors at Granite Reef Senior Center using the center's commercial kitchen. Lunch will be served from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

- **Paiute Neighborhood Center**
 - Hosted community workshops including the Little Scientists, Books Can... program based on Arizona's Infant and Toddler Guidelines and Early Learning Standards, Paiute Legal Night on July 8, 2025, and a back-to-school event.
 - News and Events. Community recreation classes will start in September and will provide programs in creative movement for toddlers, Tai Chi for adults, a Young Rembrandts workshop for youth ages 8 to 13, and ESL programs.
 - Staff training and connections. Paiute Neighborhood Center staff had a tour of the Neighborhood Outreach Access to Health facility on July 18th.
- **Housing and Community Assistance: Year-End Housing and Urban Development Reporting Requirements**
 - Section Eight Management Assessment Report has been completed. The Human Services Advisory Commission will receive a presentation during September's Housing and Governing Board meeting.
 - The Financial Data Schedule is due on Friday, August 29th.
 - The Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report is due September 30th.
 - Human Services will participate in the Fall Festival on October 18, 2025, at Civic Center Plaza. The theme for the event is "Apples and Gingham".
- **Via Linda Senior Center**
 - A summer memory camp for Scottsdale residents experiencing memory loss was hosted at both senior centers during the summer. The program provided structured, engaging activities and offered emotional support and resources to participants.
 - Home Energy Assistance Fund demand remains high, reflecting the ongoing need for utility assistance in the community. Critical support has been provided by APS, SRP, and Southwest Gas.
 - Via Linda Senior Center expansion bond project draft floor plan design is underway. Eugenio Villafane-Munoz, Human Services Manager, gave updates on the square footage and capacity increases that can be expected with completion of the project.

5. Identification of Future Agenda Items

Upcoming agenda items could include:

- Commission elections
- Homeless outreach update
- Discussion on available senior services to the North Scottsdale area
- Volunteer opportunities

6. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER ROE MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER COOLEY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0) BY ROLL CALL VOTE. CHAIR LURIE, VICE-CHAIR JUNG, COMMISSIONERS JAMESON, COOLEY, HILL, AND ROE VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Recorded and Transcribed by eScribers, LLC.