



General Meeting Agenda

ASHLAND GENERAL

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE AND EARLY LEARNING AGENDA

Thursday, August 6, 2026

Siskiyou Room - 51 Winburn Way - 10:30am-12pm

I. Call to Order

1. Confirmation of quorum present
2. Approval of draft minutes of 6/4/26 and 6/30/26 meetings (see agenda packet)
3. Suggested additions to today's agenda
4. Brief announcements

II. Public Forum

III. Continuation of Business from Previous Meetings

1. Review of draft Council Communication Staff Report in support of our ACHF recommendation—all (see agenda packet)
2. Approaching the Planning Commission about childcare in the Ashland Mills development—Lisa (see agenda packet)
3. Updating data on existing early learning/childcare slots in Ashland—Nancy

IV. Anticipation of September 3, 2026 Meeting

1. Discuss steps in setting up the ACHF named fund with Stephanie Roland
2. Revisit PC communications if necessary
3. Suggestions for other topics.

V. Adjournment

If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, including electronic attendance, please contact Kerrick Gooden at citymanageroffice@ashlandoregon.gov or 541.488.6002 (TTY phone number 1.800.735.2900). Notification at least three business days before the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.



**ASHLAND GENERAL
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE AND EARLY LEARNING
MINUTES
June 4, 2026**

Siskiyou Room - 51 Winburn Way - 10:30 AM

These are DRAFT minutes until approved by the committee

I. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 10:32am

Present were Committee Members: John Love, Lisa Verner, Jessica Therkelsen, Anne Sebanc, Nancy Seward, and Paula Hyatt.

1. Confirmation of quorum present

Confirmed

2. Approval of draft minutes of 5/7/26 meeting (see agenda packet)

Love offered a correction under 'brief announcements': Change from Sebanc to Therkeslen (for who will reach out to Dee Ann Everson).

Seward moved to approve minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Sebanc. All ayes.

Motion passed.

3. Suggested additions to today's agenda

None

4. Brief announcements

Seward mentioned OSF is in process of offering once-per-month childcare for attendees, called Family Nights, but childcare is still lacking/wanting for actors/employees - committee discussed.

II. Public Forum

None

III. Continuation of Business from Previous Meetings

1. Discussion of potential partnering with the Ashland Schools Foundation or Ashland Community Health Foundation
 - a. Strategies for proceeding
 - b. Impact on City's Childcare Affordability Grants
 - c. Fundraising strategies
 - i. Engaging local businesses
 - ii. Grants
 - iii. Other

Love introduced the topic regarding how this group might continue its work after sunseting as an ad-hoc advisory committee.

Hyatt spoke of a meeting with Deputy City Manager Rooklyn, Heidi Hill of the Ashland Family YMCA, and Joseph Hattrick of the Ashland School District regarding the potential to partner with the Ashland Schools Foundation (ASF). Discussion from that meeting included that a charter change would be needed for ASF to address pre-K childcare and that the ASF board decides funding allocations.

Love, Hyatt, and Sebanc met with staff from the Ashland Community Health Foundation (ACHF), who responded with excitement to partner. Reflections included clear alignment for promoting childcare for all ages, as they define health broadly (holistically). Avenues for partnership could include a fiscal sponsorship format (requires a 501c3) or a named fund that could be earmarked for an identified purpose with parameters. It was noted that Soroptimist is an example that has a named fund with

ACHF.

Love also reflected on meeting with the Oregon Community Foundation regarding donor-advised funds: there may be existing donor-advised funds that may be interested in supporting this work.

The committee reflected on compatibility with these organizations and considered the potential to draft a recommendation to Council for a gift agreement to a foundation with a portion of the remaining childcare grant funds when it reviews applications. If it decides to do so, this body would make a recommendation as a package to send to council for recommended allocations.

2. Approaching the Planning Commission about childcare in the Ashland Mills development.
3. Updating data on existing early learning/childcare slots in Ashland

IV. Anticipation of July 2, 2026 Meeting

The committee discussed difficulties related to the next scheduled July 2 regular meeting, the importance of reviewing grant applications received by the June 19th, 2026 deadline, and the importance of issuing a timely recommendation to Council regarding funding allocations for the Affordable Childcare Grant Program.

The committee decided to move its next meeting to June 30th, 2026 from 9:30-11am. Gooden reserved the Siskiyou Room and will offer Zoom attendance for maximum attendance as requested. Gooden will also secure a substitute staff liaison to attend in his absence.

1. Continue discussion of topics carrying over from today's agenda.
2. Suggestions for other topics.

V. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 11:43am

**ASHLAND GENERAL
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE AND EARLY LEARNING
MINUTES
June 30, 2026**

Siskiyou Room - 51 Winburn Way - 9:30 a.m.

These are DRAFT minutes until approved by the committee

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:30am

In attendance were committee members Paula Hyatt, Lisa Verner, John Love, Jessica Therkelsen, Nancy Seward, Joanie Keller-Hand, and Anne Sebanc (via Zoom)

Also present were staff liaison Alissa Kolodzinski and council liaison Dylan Bloom.

1. Confirmation of quorum present

Confirmed

2. Approval of draft minutes of 6/4/26 meeting (see agenda packet)

This item will be reviewed at the next meeting.

3. Suggested additions to today's agenda

None

4. Brief announcements

None

II. Public Forum

No speakers

III. Continuation of Business from Previous Meetings

1. Discussion of proposed recommendation to City Council for granting a portion of remaining affordability grant funds to the Ashland Community Health Foundation for establishing a "named fund" to support early learning/childcare programs (see agenda packet).

Discussion of proposed recommendation to City Council for granting a portion of remaining affordability grant funds to the Ashland Community Health Foundation for establishing a "named fund" to support early learning/childcare programs (see agenda packet).

Love moved that the committee recommend that the city council create a named fund with the Ashland Community Health Foundation and grant ACHF the amount of \$25,000 to initiate its grant making process. Verner seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

(Note: the committee approved a recommendation to replace this one later in the agenda under 'Vote on allocation of the \$100,000 remaining of the Childcare Affordability Grant funds'.)

The committee discussed a suggestion to Council to end its formation in June 2027 so that in the coming year it can review final reports of current grants. Further discussion included the group's transition to non-city related work, related timing, and how to best place these items on the Council's agenda.

2. Review of the four submitted applications for Childcare Affordability Grants (see agenda packet).

Love provided a summary of the applicants' requests. Committee discussion included requested amounts, available funding, and how awards might provide the best long-term impacts.

Considerations included that while scholarships would provide direct immediate benefit to individual families, staffing and infrastructure support can provide longer-term community impact.

After extensive discussion, committee consensus arrived at allocating \$20K to the YMCA for staffing resources, \$17.8K to Ella's Classroom for infrastructure (contingent on a second bid), \$25K to Avery Street for staffing resources, and \$7.2K to Mountain Star for scholarships. The committee discussed how this allocation would allow an additional \$5K to go along with the previous recommendation of \$25K for a total of \$30K to recommend to Council for a named fund with the ACHF.

3. Vote on allocation of the \$100,000 remaining of the Childcare Affordability Grant funds.

Hyatt moved to award grants for the FY27 Childcare Affordability Grant Program as follows: Mountain Star – \$7,200 for sliding-scale scholarships; Avery Street Montessori – \$25,000 for staffing support; Ashland Family YMCA – \$20,000 for staffing support; and Ella's Classroom – \$17,800 for room enlargement contingent on a second bid; for total of \$70,000. Verner seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion passed unanimously.

The committee then reviewed the memo dated 6/30/26 to the City Council providing background, context, and rationale for recommending that \$30,000 be awarded to the ACHF.

Love moved that the Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning unanimously recommend that the Ashland City Council create a named fund with the Ashland Community Health Foundation (ACHF) by granting ACHF the amount of \$30,000 to initiate its grant-making process. Hyatt seconded the motion. All ayes. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. Anticipation of August 6, 2026 Meeting

Hyatt agreed to draft the council communication for the August 18 City Council meeting, and will provide to Kolodzinski by August 11 for inclusion in the Council Agenda Packet.

Items for review at the next meeting were discussed as:

- Status review of grant funding recommendations
 - Minutes
 - Memo to Planning Commission regarding inclusion of childcare in the Ashland Mills development,
 - Updating data on existing early learning slots in Ashland (Seward)
 - Love will work with ACHF on how to create the named fund in anticipation of Council approval
 - Suggestions for names for the named fund
1. Approaching the Planning Commission about childcare in the Ashland Mills development.
 2. Updating data on existing early learning/childcare slots in Ashland
 3. Suggestions for other topics.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55am



Council Business Meeting

Date: xx/xx/xx

Agenda Item	
Department	
From	Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning

TIME ESTIMATE

Staff time includes a resource to execute the gift agreement with Ashland Community Health Foundation and process fund distribution through our finance department.

CATEGORY

SUMMARY

Created in the summer of 2023, the Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning has been committed to the mission of creating a network of early learning care options within our community, supportive of Ashland working families, the Ashland economy, and most importantly our children.

Over the last four years the City of Ashland has dedicated both time and fiscal resources to this vital work to great effect. Over this time the ad hoc committee has:

1. Researched and compiled an Ashland specific program census.
2. Worked with early learning and childcare programs to build a stronger network of supportive care opportunities for Ashland's working families.
3. Developed educational content in the form of published articles and podcast interviews to help educate communities on this vital work.
4. Worked alongside providers to ensure awareness of local and state level grant opportunities, specifically Business Oregon's Child Care Infrastructure Fund grant program.
5. Supported our Planning Commission in their work to make zoning more inclusive of in-home programs and encourage new, larger scale development to include care opportunities.
6. Administered grants awarded under the city's Early Childcare Affordability Grant Program in the amount of \$235,000 in each of the past two biennium's (2023-2025 and 2025-2027).
7. Together with our partners, worked to increase access in early learning and childcare, specifically preschool seats.

However, in the ever-changing landscape of early learning and care programs, we continue to need additional services for families of toddlers and infants and must continue to support the existing preschool seats to ensure long-term success. The work continues.





Council Business Meeting

The Ad Hoc Committee understands the ever-evolving, dynamic needs of our community, the demands of our city's General Fund, and the legal framework that governs this work. Subsequently, the committee recommends a new path to move this work forward, allow for investment from outside of the city government and continue the vision begun by the Council in 2023 for the long-term.

Specifically, the Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning recommends:

1. Sunsetting the Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning at the end of the 26/27 fiscal year, upon completion of all currently awarded grant reporting.
 - a. The committee will continue to meet until this time and ensure the granted funds are administered in accordance with the grant narrative and associated rules.
2. Use the remaining \$30,000 to create a named fund with the Ashland Community Health Foundation.
 - a. This transition will allow for greater philanthropic work to commence and establish a path for continued support of early learning and care initiatives long-term, without solely relying on CoA investment.

This work is vital to strong, healthy, and vibrant communities. Early learning and care needs are many and transitioning this work away from a municipal ad hoc structure in favor of building on our foundation, facilitating new growth, and perpetuating this vital work long-term under the stewardship and care of the Ashland Community Health Foundation ensures the work continues.

Please find our detailed recommendation attached.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

Community:

- Community affordability, including available housing and childcare
- Belonging through mutual respect and openness, inclusion and equity
- Quality of life that underpins the City's economic vibrancy

Organization:

- Respect for the citizens we serve, for each other, and for the work we do
- Excellence in governance and city services
- Sustainability through creativity, affordability, and rightsized service delivery

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



Council Business Meeting

At the August 1, 2023 Business Meeting of the Ashland City Council, Council approved the Early Childhood Affordability Grant Pilot Program

At the Business Meeting on June 20, 2023, Council confirmed the Mayor's appointment of six members to the Ad Hoc Committee, which also included Councilor Hyatt as committee chair and Councilor Bloom as Council liaison to the committee, an Ashland School District member, and a potential City Manager's Office assigned participant.

On May 16, 2023, the Council voted to establish an Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning to create a tangible network of early learning care options within the Ashland community.

The 2023-2025 BN Budget included funding appropriations of \$240,000. Council approved the 2023-2025 BN Budget at the June 6, 2023, Business Meeting.

The 2025-2027 BN Budget includes funding appropriations of \$235,000. Council approved the 2025-2027 BN Budget at the June 2025 Business Meeting.

In the 2026 Fiscal Year \$135,000 in Early Childhood Affordability Grants were awarded in support of infrastructure investment to expand care, need based scholarships to help address affordability, and investment in key labor resources.

In July of the 2027 Fiscal Year, \$70,000 in Early Childhood Affordability Grants were awarded to local partners in support of increased staffing related to expanding toddler care and improving quality of care, infrastructure investment to increase site capacity and need based scholarships to help address affordability.

At this time the 2025-2027 BN Budget has a remaining \$30,000 in budgeted and allocated funds for the purpose of supporting early learning and care in our community. This recommendation addresses these funds and next steps for the ad hoc committee.

FISCAL IMPACTS

Total fiscal impact amounts to \$30,000. These funds are currently budgeted and allocated within the 2025-2027 biennium budget for the purpose of supporting early learning and childcare access & affordability within our community.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS, MOTIONS and/or OPTIONS





Council Business Meeting

I move to approve the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning and direct staff to work with the Ashland Community Health Foundation to establish a named fund, supportive of our collective early learning and care goals, in the amount of \$30,000.

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

Memo dated 6/30/2026: Recommendation for Moving Beyond the Ad Hoc Committee

DRAFT

June 2, 2026

DRAFT 1

City of Ashland Planning Commission
51 Winburn Way
Ashland, Oregon 97520

Dear Planning Commission members,

On behalf of the City of Ashland's Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning, I am writing to ask you to initiate a legislative change to the City's Land Use Ordinance to include childcare uses as outright permitted uses in Single Family Residential zones. I also ask you to initiate a change to include provision of childcare facilities in the review criteria for required affordable housing for annexations of land into the City of Ashland.

The Committee was formed in 2023 to address the "childcare desert" that is in Ashland. This means that there are fewer childcare slots than children whose families would like to use them. The new state regulations allow childcare uses in Commercial and Employment zones and the City's Zoning Code already allows them in Multi-Family Residential zones; by initiating this change in Single Family zones, we believe the Planning Commission has a great opportunity to help address the need for convenient, stable and affordable childcare for Ashland parents.

Adding childcare uses as one of the criteria for review of the affordable housing required for annexation of residential land will cause developers to consider including it in development proposals. Allowing childcare uses and facilities will add to the affordability of this housing, the stability of tenants and the economic health of tenants' employers. Employers find improved employee morale and productivity, reduced absenteeism, enhanced employee recruitment and retention, and increased employee loyalty and dedication to the company when employees can find convenient, safe, affordable childcare for their young children.

Childcare uses should be 1) permitted outright in all Single Family Residential zones and 2) addressed as part of the Affordable Housing required on residential property annexed into the City. These changes will help mitigate Ashland's designation as a "childcare desert." Thank you for your consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,

John Love, Chair
City of Ashland Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning

June 2, 2026

DRAFT 3

City of Ashland Planning Commission
c/o City of Ashland Community Development
51 Winburn Way
Ashland, Oregon 97520

Dear Planning Commission members,

On behalf of the City of Ashland's Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning, I am writing to ask that you consider the inclusion of childcare/early learning opportunities when you are reviewing and making decisions/recommendations on the new Ashland Mills (Croman Mills) development for the City. Childcare is an economic development tool that is critical to our success as a city.

The Committee was formed in 2023 to address the childcare desert that is in Ashland. This means that there are fewer childcare slots than children whose families would like to use them. With the new state regulations allowing for childcare uses in Commercial and Employment zones and the City allowing for such uses in Multi-Family Residential zones, we believe the Planning Commission has a great opportunity to help alleviate this lack of brick-and-mortar facilities.

We ask that you discuss the following questions with Ashland Mills applicants who come before you in a public hearing or other review session:

1. Have you considered including space for a childcare facility within your development?
2. How does your project add to livability in Ashland, including having childcare facilities available to the community?
3. Others?

More childcare openings across the city will help employers gain employees, will help employees continue to hold down and perform well in their jobs, and will strengthen the economic base of Ashland.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

John Love, Chair
City of Ashland Ad Hoc Committee on Affordable Childcare and Early Learning