



CITY COUNCIL SUMMARY MINUTES

Regular Meeting
January 3, 2022

The City Council of the City of Palo Alto met on this date in virtual teleconference at 6:00 P.M.

Participating Remotely: Burt, Cormack, DuBois, Filseth, Kou, Stone, Tanaka

Absent: None

Special Orders of the Day

1. Election of the 2022 Mayor.

Mayor Dubois explained the procedures for nominations and voting.

NOMINATION: Council Member Kou nominated Council Member Burt for Mayor for 2022.

NOMINATION: Council Member Cormack nominated Council Member Kou for Mayor for 2022. Council Member Kou declined the nomination.

Council Member Kou stated that Vice Mayor Burt has a strong understanding of policy and City Government. She highlighted his past accomplishments as a Commissioner on the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) and prior Councils. He continued to advocate for the City at various Regional Committees and is very knowledgeable on high-priority topics. She requested that the other Council support her nomination of Vice Mayor Burt being the 2022 Mayor of Palo Alto.

Vice Mayor Burt appreciated Council Member Kou's generous words and looked forward to serving the community and Council in 2022.

Council Member Stone announced he will be supporting the nomination and seconded Council Member Kou's comments.

Council Member Cormack commented that 35 percent of the community are Asian-American and 29 percent of the current Council is Asian-American. She emphasized that if Council Member Kou is not elected as Mayor, it will have been a minimum of 10-years since an Asian-American has served as Mayor.

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Mayor DuBois stated that Vice Mayor Burt has provided strong support to him in the role as Mayor. He disclosed that he will be supporting the nomination of Vice Mayor Burt as Mayor.

Council Member Tanaka seconded Council Member Cormack's comment and supported the nomination of Council Member Kou as Mayor. The purpose of the Mayor, or Chair of a Committee, is to make sure the meetings are on time, that every voice is fairly heard, that all different perspectives are heard and debated and that they encourage a diverse set of opinions. Council Member Kou has been very successful in her role as Chair of the Policy and Services Committee and he predicted that fairness would carry over into the role of Mayor. He agreed that it is disappointing that there is not more diversity in the City and that representation is very important. He strongly encouraged Council Member Kou to reconsider her downturn of nomination for Mayor.

Rob Levitsky supported the nomination of Vice Mayor Burt as Mayor of Palo Alto. Vice Mayor Burt is fair-minded, dedicated to Palo Alto, and carefully studies all issues that are to be decided upon.

Ed Lauing spoke on behalf of himself and not as a Commissioner of the PTC. He agreed that the Mayor's job is very complex and they must have strong leadership skills. He supported the nomination of Vice Mayor Burt as Mayor for 2022.

Aram James congratulated Council Member Cormack on her comments regarding Asian-American representation. He requested that Council Member Kou and Council Member Tanaka hold leadership roles soon. He supported the nomination of Vice Mayor Burt as Mayor of Palo Alto for 2022 because he fully invests in every issue that is raised by the community.

Nadia Naik supported Vice Mayor Burt as Mayor because he has been incredibly involved in topics and issues that arise. She mentioned that while diversity is important, Vice Mayor Burt has become allies to all residents in the community, as have all of the Council Members.

Arthur Keller agreed that Vice Mayor Burt will be an excellent Mayor and he seconded all of the previous speaker's comments.

Karen Holman mentioned that she has known Vice Mayor Burt for many years. He has experience in many City topics and processes. The City needs that experience as it navigates through the Covid-19 Pandemic. She encouraged the Council to support the nomination of Vice Mayor Burt as Mayor for 2022.

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Winter Dellenbach stated she will be very pleased to have Vice Mayor Burt as Mayor given his knowledge and experience. She appreciated his voice during the prior year's budget discussions, his advocacy for climate change measures, police reform, affordable housing and his overall vision for the City.

Keith Reckdahl spoke on behalf of himself and supported Vice Mayor Burt as 2022 Mayor of Palo Alto. He shared that he is impressed by Vice Mayor Burt's knowledge and how he solves problems.

Penny Ellson appreciated Vice Mayor Burt for dedicating his retirement to serving the community. She valued his ability to bring folks together, engage the community and facilitate consensus. As a former PTC member, he understands transportation and land use planning.

Laine Wheeler explained that during tough times the Mayor is required to have extraordinary smarts, poise, communication skills, a sense of purpose, creative ideas, experience and deep knowledge of the community. She supported Vice Mayor Burt as Mayor for 2022.

Craig Lewis, Executive Director of the Clean Coalition, stated that Vice Mayor Burt is one of the most sophisticated municipal leaders that the coalition has worked with. He highly recommended Vice Mayor Burt as Mayor.

Evan Laurie thanked all of the Council Members for their leadership. He announced his support for Vice Mayor Burt as Mayor. He stated Vice Mayor Burt is visible, balanced, seasoned, accountable and a data-driven decision-maker.

Bob Wenzlau supported Vice Mayor Burt and his nomination as Mayor. He appreciated Mayor Dubois and his service as Mayor. He expressed that the community is impacted when there is no unanimous support among leadership members. He looked forward to a time when there is common endorsement of leadership.

David Coale shared his support for Vice Mayor Burt as Mayor. He looked forward to Vice Mayor Burt's leadership in climate change and the Sustainable Climate Action Plan.

Bob Moss thanked Mayor Dubois for his efforts in an extremely difficult year. Vice Mayor Burt has a lot of experience in the community and as a Council Member. He supported Vice Mayor Burt as 2022 Mayor of Palo Alto.

NOMINATION FOR COUNCIL MEMBER BURT AS MAYOR FOR 2022 PASSED: 6-1, Tanaka no

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Mayor Burt spoke to his acceptance and took over as Chair of the meeting.

2. Election of the 2022 Vice Mayor.

NOMINATION: Council Member Stone nominated Council Member Kou for Vice Mayor for 2022.

Council Member Stone stated that Council Member Kou has been serving as a fierce advocate for sustainability, affordable housing and has always offered a passionate voice for the City's residents. Council Member Kou has shown strong leadership skills through her role as Chair of the Policy and Services Committee. Council Member Kou shows kindness, respectfulness, and empathy to everyone she speaks to.

Council Member Kou thanked Council Members Stone, Cormack and Tanaka for their kind words. She expressed excitement about supporting Mayor Burt in his role as Mayor and was honored by the nomination.

Council Member Cormack supported the nomination of Council Member Kou as Vice Mayor and stated that it is long overdue. She commented that the process of selecting a Mayor and Vice Mayor has become opaque and is unnecessary. She strongly encouraged the Council to move to a rotation process for Mayor. She recommended that Council read the City's Equity Mission Statement and think about whether the current process provides a respectful, fair and professional workplace.

Former Mayor DuBois strongly supported Council Member Kou as Vice Mayor. He appreciated her focus and her connection to the concerns of the community.

Council Member Tanaka restated that he wished Council Member Kou had accepted the nomination as Mayor but supported her nomination as Vice Mayor. He agreed with Council Member Cormack's comment regarding a rotation process.

Liz Kniss congratulated Council Member Kou on her nomination and shared that she is the second Asian-American woman to serve as Vice Mayor. While she supported Council Member Kou's nomination, she stated that Council Member Cormack would have provided an excellent balance with the new Mayor. She strongly supported having a rotation process for Mayor and Vice Mayor.

Rob Levitsky strongly supported Council Member Kou as Vice Mayor as she has demonstrated strong support for the underserved in the City, she brings an international perspective to the City and she understands social justice.

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Arthur Keller announced his support for Council Member Kou for Vice Mayor and hoped that she becomes Mayor in 2023. He appreciated her work on emergency preparedness.

Aram James recalled the work that Council Member Kou had done for emergency preparedness and he supported the nomination wholeheartedly. He wanted to understand in more detail the comments from Ms. Kniss and Council Member Cormack regarding unfair treatment.

Keith Reckdahl spoke on behalf of himself and announced that he supports the nomination of Council Member Kou as Vice Mayor. He shared that Council Member Kou researches topics thoroughly and she fully understands complicated issues.

Karen Holman remarked that Council Member Kou will apply her hard work and commitment skills to the role of Vice Mayor. She strongly encouraged the Council to support the nomination. She remarked that the pairing of Mayor Burt and Vice Mayor Kou will bring diversity and collaboration to the City.

Winter Dellenbach recalled Council Member Kou's work on renter protections and she appreciated Council Member Kou's persistence on the matter. She agreed with the previous comments that Council Member Kou has strong skills in listening to the community. She expressed her shock about the comments regarding how Mayor and Vice Mayor should be elected.

Terry Holzemer congratulated Mayor Burt on his position and he sincerely supported the nomination of Council Member Kou as Vice Mayor. Council Member Kou showed strong advocacy for land use and development within the City as well as leadership on airport noise.

Mayor Burt supported Council Member Kou as Vice Mayor for 2022.

NOMINATION FOR COUNCIL MEMBER KOU AS VICE MAYOR FOR 2022: 7-0

3. Adoption of a Resolution Expressing Appreciation for Outstanding Public Service as Mayor to Tom DuBois.

Mayor Burt read the Resolution that detailed Former Mayor Dubois's accomplishments and the City's appreciation for his service into the record.

Council Member Filseth thanked Former Mayor Dubois for his service as Mayor. He stated that Former Mayor Dubois has been thoughtful,

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pragmatic, balanced, a voice of reason and creative during an extremely hard year.

Council Member Stone appreciated Former Mayor Dubois for his leadership as a new Council Member. He agreed that under Former Mayor Dubois's leadership, the Council was able to work well together with kindness and respectfulness.

Vice Mayor Kou thanked Former Mayor Dubois for his hard work on representing Palo Alto. She commented that Former Mayor Dubois is practical, authentic, inclusive, transparent and fair.

Council Member Cormack appreciated Former Mayor Dubois's skills in traversing through a year of many changes, including hybrid meetings.

John St. Clair III, Vice President of La Comida: Senior Nutrition Program, recalled that the kitchen was shut down when one of the cooks contracted Covid-19. Former Mayor Dubois volunteered his time to help the program get back up and running.

Supervisor Simitian thanked Former Mayor Dubois for his service and expressed what a pleasure it was working with him. He congratulated Mayor Burt and Vice Mayor Kou on their appointments.

Aram James mentioned that Former Mayor Dubois helped with the safe parking program.

Terry Holzemer sincerely thanked Former Mayor Dubois for his support for residents and his dedication to the Palo Alto community.

Isabelle LaSalle spoke on behalf of Assembly Member Mark Berman and conveyed his heartfelt thanks to Former Mayor Dubois.

Josh Becker added his thanks to Former Mayor Dubois for his leadership and the extra work that has come with a challenging year.

Winter Dellenbach commented that Former Mayor Dubois showed grace under pressure. She thanked him for his leadership on police reform, the Tree Ordinance and his work on forming a Sister City.

Arthur Keller thanked Former Mayor Dubois for his leadership and his stewardship of the bike bridge project over Highway 101.

Karen Holman stated that Former Mayor Dubois lead the City with the concept that people come first, public service is not about ego or power and

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provided the right balance between personal, political and what is the right thing to do.

Mora Oommen stated that Former Mayor Dubois was wonderful to collaborate with.

MOTION: Council Member Burt moved by unanimous consent to adopt Resolution 10011 expressing appreciation for outstanding public service as Mayor in 2021 to Tom DuBois.

MOTION PASSED: 7-0

Vice Mayor Kou spoke to her appointment as Vice Mayor. She spoke of the residents and their strong desire to protect the environment and promote inclusion. She remarked now is the time to facilitate discussions about local space, transportation, traffic, sensible housing growth and many others. She intended to work closely with the Mayor, Staff and residents to achieve a livable Palo Alto.

Former Mayor DuBois spoke to his service as Mayor. He mentioned the accomplishments that Council was able to achieve and shared heartfelt comments about each Council Member. He encouraged the Council to continue working on the Sustainable Climate Action Plan and continue with the Sister City relationship.

Mimi Wolf congratulated Mayor Burt and Vice Mayor Kou on their appointments. She expressed frustration that nearby residents were not invited to the preliminary hearing that was held in November 2021 for the project located at 739 Sutter Avenue. She did not support the proposed concessions that the project was requesting and foresaw many problems if they are approved.

Carolyn Garbarino shared that her residence abuts 739 Sutter Avenue. She mentioned that the project does not comply with the Sustainability and Climate Action Plan. Residents have not been invited to any of the preliminary hearings or notified when those hearings are being held. She stated that public health and safety, daylight plan encroachment, removal of multiple large trees, property values for residents who reside on San Carlos Court, open space, concessions and exceeding height limits are several concerns among many that the residents want addressed.

Esther strongly seconded the comments regarding Former Mayor Dubois. She congratulated the new Mayor and Vice Mayor and the Council Members for their service. She remarked that her elderly neighbors have been waiting for an in-home vaccination of the Covid-19 vaccine for over a month.

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She requested that Palo Alto paramedics again provide an in-home vaccine booster shot to her neighbors much sooner than in the 6-week timeframe her neighbors were given.

Aram James stated that his number one priority for the Council is to fire the current Chief of Police. He remarked that the Police Chief is covering up his destruction of the public's constitutional right to have transparency and respecting First Amendment rights.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 P.M.