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**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
February 28, 2017
CITY HALL
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California**

13 **Commissioners Present:** Anne Cribbs, Jeff LaMere, Don McDougall, Keith Reckdahl, Jeff
14 Greenfield, David Moss

15 **Commissioners Absent:** Ryan McCauley

16 **Others Present:** Adrian Fine

17 **Staff Present:** Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Rob de Geus, Peter Jensen, Kristen
18 O'Kane

19 **I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY:** Catherine Bourquin

20 **II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

21 Commissioner Reckdahl: Next is any agenda changes, requests or deletions. Does
22 anyone have any changes they want to make? Failing that, we'll move on to Oral
23 Communications.

24 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

25 Commissioner Reckdahl: We have David Carnahan. David is going to speak to us now.

26 David Carnahan: Thank you, Commissioners. David Carnahan in the City Clerk's
27 Office. Normally you see me here when we're recruiting for Boards and Commissions.
28 We're almost ready to do our spring recruitment, but we're not quite organized enough yet
29 for me to have that information for you. I'm here tonight to present a Proclamation and a
30 gift of appreciation to Commissioner Reckdahl. These gifts and Proclamations are
31 typically prepared annually for each Board and Commission Member. Unfortunately, our
32 event this year was held on a night where there were so many competing City events;
33 numerous folks were not able to attend. I, on behalf of the Mayor, on behalf of the City



1 Council, am presenting a Proclamation and a gift to you. I promise I will not read the
2 whole thing.

3 Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you. David and Anne, you attended?

4 Commissioner Cribbs: Yes, we were there.

5 Commissioner Reckdahl: You're ahead of me then. Thank you. A collector's item
6 signed by Mayor Burt. Now, we'll move on to—failing any other Oral Communications,
7 if anyone has any subject they want to talk with us on the agenda or not, please fill out a
8 card and hand it over to the secretary. We'll move on to business.

9 **IV. BUSINESS:**

10 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the December 14, 2016 Parks and**
11 **Recreation Commission.**

12 Approval of the draft December 14, 2016 Minutes as presented was moved by
13 Commissioner Cribbs and seconded by Commissioner Moss. Passed 3-0.

14 **2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair.**

15 Commissioner Reckdahl: We'll move now to election of the Chair and Vice Chair.

16 Kristen O'Kane: Commissioner Reckdahl, I thought it might be helpful if the
17 Commissioners introduced themselves. The majority of our Commissioners are new,
18 which is exciting. We thought it would be good to have some introductions and just a
19 brief background on why you applied to be on the Parks and Rec Commission and maybe
20 what your interests are, and then we'll do the same here from the staff end.

21 Commissioner Reckdahl: We'll start on the left. Jeff, do you want to start?

22 Commissioner LaMere: My name is Jeff LaMere. My interest in the Parks and
23 Recreation Commission stems from a background in college athletics. I spent 19 years in
24 college athletics and have seen the impact that the outdoors and doing things as a group
25 but also what exercise can do for people and for a community. I also have a 5-year-old
26 who loves going to the parks. I've seen the value of what the Palo Alto parks can do for
27 people. I think the parks here are tremendous. After reading through the proposed
28 Master Plan, I'm very excited to be a part of this Commission and try to see some of these
29 initiatives through.

30 Commissioner McDougall: I'm Don McDougall. I've recently been on the Library
31 Commission and am very happy to be now on the Parks and Recreation Commission.
32 My interest is more associated with the habitat, the Baylands, the Foothills. I'm heavily



1 involved with environmental volunteers. We take kids on hikes into the Baylands and
2 into the Foothills as well. I'm involved with Audubon, and I'm involved with Point
3 Lobos as a docent. The natural habitat is my interest, and we have such a wealth of that
4 in the City.

5 Commissioner Cribbs: I'm Anne Cribbs, and this is my second year on the Commission,
6 so I'm one of the old guys, I guess, now. I'm really looking forward to working with all
7 the new Commissioners. I'm happy to take this time to welcome everybody. As for
8 background, I'm an Olympian from 1960, a 35-year resident of Palo Alto, raised my kids
9 here, played in the parks here, worked for recreation at one time, and absolutely love
10 recreation and working on this Commission. It was so exciting to do the Master Plan.
11 Looking forward to getting it all approved.

12 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm Keith Reckdahl. I am now starting my fifth year with the
13 Parks and Rec. I joined 5 years ago just because growing up with my kids or raising my
14 kids, the park system was such an important part of our family life. I wanted to make
15 sure that that kept on, the high quality of the Palo Alto parks everyone else could enjoy.
16 David.

17 Commissioner Moss: I'm David Moss. This is the beginning of my second year. Like
18 my two predecessors, I have been here for 30-plus years. My wife and son are out there.
19 The five of us have used the parks forever, and we still use them all the time. Like Don,
20 we are especially appreciative of the open spaces, and we'll do everything we can to
21 promote them and to protect them.

22 Commissioner Greenfield: I'm Jeff Greenfield. I'm a new Commissioner. I have an
23 interest across the parks and rec spectrum. I've been a Palo Alto resident for 19 years,
24 have a couple of daughters. My younger daughter is a sophomore in high school now at
25 Gunn. I've been a long-time member of the local soccer community, a board member and
26 past president of the Palo Alto Adult Soccer League. I've been a youth coach and referee.
27 I'm refereeing high school games now in soccer. Also, very interested in the outdoor side
28 of things. I hike regularly in the local open spaces. In Foothills Park, Los Trancos Trail
29 is my favorite. I can't wait until it's open again, but it's going to be a while. I also
30 volunteer regularly with Canopy, and I'm working with Grassroots Ecology on some
31 invasive species removal at Foothills as well. Interested in a lot of different things and
32 excited to be a part of this.

33 Council Member Fine: Hello. I'm Adrian Fine, just a neighborhood kid who turned into
34 City Council and grew up in our parks here and always loved them and the trails and the
35 ways to get around the City. I'm really interested to serve with all of you and learn what
36 you think our City could do and the opportunities and the wonderful benefits we have
37 here. A lot of folks have mentioned our open space, and I think that's absolutely vital and
38 just so great about Palo Alto. There's also just interesting urban interfaces too, and I'd



1 just love to see what our Parks and Rec is capable of in the City compared to many
2 others.

3 Rob de Geus: Good evening, Commissioners. I'm Rob de Geus; I'm the Director of
4 Community Services, the Department in which Parks and Recreation falls among other
5 things. We'll talk a little more about the Department later. Congratulations to all of you
6 and Keith for returning. I'm glad you're back on, because we've got a lot of new folks
7 here. It's a real privilege to work with all of you. I think one of the most exciting things
8 about working in Palo Alto, I find, actually is working closely with the residents of Palo
9 Alto. They're so engaged and so interested in what we do and passionate. In all the
10 places you could choose to volunteer or serve, this is by far the best one, right here, the
11 most impactful and the most fun, and you've got these two who are really great
12 individuals, Kristen and Daren.

13 Ms. O'Kane: Thank you, Rob. Good evening and welcome. I'm Kristen O'Kane. I'm an
14 Assistant Director of the Community Services Department, overseeing parks, recreation,
15 open space and golf. I've been with the City just a little bit over a year and working with
16 the Parks and Rec Commission during that whole time. I'm really excited to get to know
17 all of you and work with all of you. We have some really exciting things coming up this
18 year. We're looking forward to working with all of you on those. Thank you for being
19 here.

20 Daren Anderson: Hi, my name's Daren Anderson, and I'm the Division Manager for
21 Open Space, Parks and Golf. It's been my privilege since 1999 to help serve and protect
22 and enhance the open space and parks. The love of my life is taking care of open space
23 and parks. Looking forward to working with you to keep making it better and better.
24 Thanks so much for letting me work with you.

25 Commissioner Reckdahl: Now, we'll move on to the election of the Chair. The Chair
26 every week meets with or talks at least on the phone with Kristen—back in the old days,
27 it was Rob—to look at the agenda and figure out what we're going to talk about and what
28 are we ready to talk about and what we need to bump to next week. You may have to
29 interface with other groups, whether it be the Council Members or other ad hocs, and
30 accumulate all the information that we want to present to the public and get that in about
31 a week ahead of time so that can be released. Then, during the meeting the Chair runs the
32 meeting and organizes both the speakers from the public and also the speakers within the
33 Commission. Now, we're opening up the floor for nominations. You can nominate
34 yourself. We are—go ahead.

35 Commissioner Cribbs: I'd like to nominate Commissioner Reckdahl for a number of
36 reasons but certainly because of your experience over the past 5 years. I know you've
37 been a very good steward of the Commission, have had a lot of experience in the work



1 that we've done. I would feel very comfortable with you as the leader this year. I know
2 we haven't talked about this.

3 Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you. I would be interested. I was Chair 2 years ago,
4 and it was a reasonable amount of work, but it was worthwhile. I would be willing to do
5 that again.

6 Commissioner Moss: I nominate Anne Cribbs for Vice Chair.

7 Commissioner Reckdahl: We first vote on Chair. Any other nominations? Failing that,
8 we will now vote for Chair.

9 Catherine Bourquin: Six for Reckdahl for Chair.

10 **Keith Reckdahl elected unanimously as Chairman.**

11 Commissioner Cribbs: Congratulations.

12 Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you. I was nervous about that one. The next action is
13 to nominate people for Vice Chair. Do I hear any nominations?

14 Commissioner Moss: I would like to nominate Anne Cribbs for Vice Chair. She has
15 been involved in this group for over a year and even before that. She has always been
16 very fair and honest and not afraid to give her opinion. I think she would be an excellent
17 Vice Chair.

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: Commissioner Cribbs, are you interested in being Vice Chair?

19 Commissioner Cribbs: I'm actually interested in knowing if David would like to serve in
20 that capacity. I think that would be a good idea this year as I seek to get used to my new
21 shoulder. Thank you very much.

22 Commissioner Moss: Okay.

23 Commissioner Reckdahl: David does accept the nomination. Any other nominations for
24 Vice Chair? Failing that, we will vote for Vice Chair.

25 Ms. Bourquin: Six for David Moss for Vice Chair.

26 **David Moss elected unanimously as Vice Chair.**

27 Commissioner Reckdahl: Congratulations David.

28 Commissioner Cribbs: Congratulations.

1 Commissioner Moss: Thank you.

2 Commissioner Reckdahl: One of the things that's nice about the Parks Commission is
3 that it is very flat. The Chair and the Vice Chair do not do the majority of the work. It
4 really is spread out quite a bit. All the newbies will have to, like it or not, be relied on to
5 do a lot of work.

6 Commissioner Cribbs: Speaking of that, could we ask that Jeff trade places so that he's
7 not so far away from all of us? There's a person in there that's not here.

8 Commissioner Reckdahl: Do we know is Ryan ...

9 Mr. de Geus: He's not able to make it.

10 Commissioner Reckdahl: He's not able to make it. Move in please, so we are more
11 intimate here.

12 Commissioner Cribbs: That would be nice.

13 Commissioner Reckdahl: Are we planning the retreat this month in the upcoming month
14 or is it after the next meeting?

15 Ms. O'Kane: We'll talk about that at the end of the agenda. We do need to pick a retreat
16 date today.

17 Commissioner Reckdahl: Will we do a Doodle poll or will we try and do it tonight?

18 Ms. O'Kane: We can try to do it tonight.

19 Commissioner Reckdahl: We'll give it a shot and see how people's schedules are. In the
20 past sometimes, if we have scheduling problems or people don't know their schedules,
21 Cat will send out a Doodle poll, and then we'll figure out the date. A bird in the hand is
22 always better.

23 Ms. O'Kane: (inaudible)

24 Chair Reckdahl: One important thing we want to do is get assignments for the ad hocs.
25 We have ad hoc committees here. Because of the Brown Act, we can't have a majority,
26 but we can have two or three people go together and study an issue and talk with staff and
27 gather facts and then assemble facts and present it as a time-saving measure for us. A lot
28 of those ad hocs, that's where the work is really done. Go ahead, David.

29 Vice Chair Moss: For the newcomers, that was a real education at that retreat,
30 understanding all the subcommittees that have already been created and really deciding

1 what area you want to focus on. Bearing in mind that you really have to deal with all of
2 the areas, there are some that you can focus on. There's a lot to be done, especially since
3 we've got this huge Master Plan that has a lot of work to be done. We have to carve it up
4 into some meaningful chunks. I encourage everybody to come to the retreat.

5 Chair Reckdahl: Sometimes people can't make the retreat, which is a shame, because we
6 really do get a lot of work done during the retreat. It's also good just to get in a different
7 environment. Do we think it's going to be in Foothills this year? Do we know? Or down
8 in ...

9 Ms. O'Kane: We haven't discussed logistics yet.

10 Chair Reckdahl: The tradeoff is up at Foothills is a different environment. It's a little
11 more relaxed, but it's also more of a schlep up there. It's a tradeoff.

12 **3. New Commissioner Orientation.**

13 Chair Reckdahl: Moving down to new business. Next is new Commissioner orientation.
14 Kristen is going to give us an orientation, which sounds—actually something I wish had
15 been done 4 years ago.

16 Mr. de Geus: Chair Reckdahl, I thought I'd just kick this off real briefly here. Again,
17 Rob de Geus, Director of the Department. As we talked about, this first meeting has a lot
18 of new Commissioners. We thought it would be good to take a little bit of time to talk
19 about the Department and what's involved with the Department, specifically related to
20 parks, recreation, open space and the golf course. We've prepared a presentation—
21 Kristen really has done the presentation. She'll go through that and lay out some
22 questions that you might have. Secondly, we'll talk about the Master Plan, probably the
23 biggest project we've worked on for the last couple of years. With regard to the
24 Department, I also would say getting out and doing a tour with the staff is a good thing.
25 We do a lot, and we're all over town. Just getting out with Kristen or Daren and walking
26 some of the trails and talking about some of the issues that we're going to be facing or
27 talking about as policy matters is just a great way to get to know the park system and the
28 recreation system. I encourage you to do that. The presentation will focus mostly on
29 parks and recreation, but it goes beyond that. We have a dedicated Art Center, as you
30 know, a dedicated Children's Theatre, a Junior Museum and Zoo. We have three
31 theatres. It's a large Department; there's 80 full-time staff and several hundred part-time
32 staff. Depending on the season, that can get as high as 300. I like to think that anyone
33 who's working in this field couldn't work in a better place than Palo Alto. The reason for
34 that is because of people like you, and for decades and decades Councils and
35 Commissions have dedicated time and energy and resources toward dedicating parkland
36 and investing in facilities like an Art Center and a Junior Museum. We've got these
37 amazing assets to work with. The focus for this Commission, though, really is in parks,

1 open space and recreation. The focus of the Commission is really policy oriented. I
2 think that's important to understand and appreciate. The Commission is advisory to
3 Council and helping staff as we come across challenges sometimes where there are
4 competing interests of community members. We try and figure out how we best either
5 create access or other issues. There may be a policy issue that comes to play. That's
6 where the Commission is really important for us and for the Council. With that, I will
7 add again I think you're very fortunate to have Kristen and Daren as your guides as a
8 Commission because they really do a fantastic job. Kristen, I'll pass it on to you.

9 Ms. O'Kane: Thank you. Before I start, I did fail to introduce our two staff to my right;
10 we couldn't we do any of this without them. Do you want to quickly introduce
11 yourselves?

12 Ms. Bourquin: I'm Catherine Bourquin. I've been an assistant to the Parks and Rec
13 Commission since 2002. I've been with the City for going on 27 years. Now, I'm
14 handing it over to Tonya, but I'll be her backup. She won't be alone.

15 Tanya Schornack: Hello. My name's Tanya Schornack. I've been working for the City
16 for the past 4 years. My husband and his dad grew up in Palo Alto. I'm now raising my
17 daughter in Palo Alto as well. We are big fans of the Baylands and Foothills Park.

18 Ms. O'Kane: You may receive quite a few emails probably from Tanya. If we receive
19 correspondence from the public, they may come from Tanya directly as opposed to me,
20 just so you know. Good to put a face to the name. On that note, I'll start just an
21 orientation, like Rob said, on the Department focusing on parks, recreation, open space
22 and golf. The mission of our Department is to engage individuals and families in creating
23 a strong and healthy community through parks, recreation, social services, arts, and
24 sciences. We have five different divisions within the Department: Administration; Open
25 Space, Parks and Golf of which Daren is the Division Manager; Recreation; Human
26 Services; and Arts and Sciences. This is just an overview of our Administration Division
27 with Rob being the lead. I am on the top there, Assistant Director, along with Daren
28 alongside me. Rhyena Halpern, you may see her once in a while throughout the year.
29 She's the other Assistant Director, overseeing Arts and Sciences, so the Art Center,
30 Public Art Program, the Junior Museum and Zoo. We also have a strategy and operations
31 team who does a lot of our analyst work and budget management. I'm going to turn the
32 next slide over to Daren.

33 Mr. Anderson: I'll just share a little bit about Open Space, Parks and Golf. We have
34 4,000 acres of open space, which is really special and unique. It's due to foresight and
35 vision on behalf of our Council from many years back. They had the idea of preserving
36 these areas when other people were still using them as landfill. We're really grateful to
37 have it. This 4,000 acres is spread over Foothills Park, Baylands Nature Preserve,
38 Pearson-Arastradero, and Esther Clark Park. Esther Clark Park is one of those seldom-

1 used open space areas that we're looking forward to doing something with when we do
2 our Comprehensive Plan in FY '19 for that area. More to come on that, I hope. We've
3 got 43 miles of hiking trail. It's a challenge to take care of it, and we're doing the best we
4 can. As Commissioner Greenfield pointed out, we've got one trail right now partially
5 closed because of the storm. We're actively working on fixing it. We've got 32
6 neighborhood parks with 174 acres. There's 30 playgrounds within those parks. A lot of
7 assets. At one point, we tallied every single one of our sprinkler heads that our irrigation
8 team goes out and manages. The point is there's just a tremendous number of assets for
9 people to enjoy, and we get to take care of. Lastly, we've got our Palo Alto golf course,
10 which should be fully renovated and back open for business in October or November of
11 this year. We're excited about that. Fun fact, 9 out of every 10 residents has been to one
12 of our parks. On this next slide, we have some of the assets broken down. I've already
13 mentioned that we've got 30 playgrounds, basketball courts, tennis courts, sports fields—
14 that's 32 sports fields; some of those include the PAUSD fields as well—39 different
15 picnic areas, the two pools, three dog parks. Hopefully we'll be adding another one very
16 soon with your help. We've got the three interpretive centers at Foothills Park, Baylands,
17 and Pearson-Arastradero. The other fun fact, one we've been working on increasing, 93
18 percent of our residents are satisfied with the quality of Palo Alto's parks. We're shooting
19 to increase that.

20 Ms. O'Kane: Thanks Daren. Recreation Services, this is quite a large division within our
21 Department, and it includes our three community centers, all of which are very different.
22 Cubberley Community Center, the City only owns 8 acres of that entire site. The rest of
23 the site we lease from the Palo Alto Unified School District, but we operate it as the
24 community center. We also use the fields for various community events. We have
25 Mitchell Park Community Center, which includes the Teen Center, and Lucie Stern
26 Community Center, which is actually under renovation right now and should be back
27 open April 1st or 2nd. Our recreation has quite a few programs, classes for the
28 community. We have an aquatics program that operates year round. We also have adult
29 fitness programs. Our recreation programs as well as our summer camp program, which
30 is very popular. We're kicking that off really soon. I'm sure you're all aware of the
31 process called the draw, where people put in their requests for summer camps, and it's a
32 lottery as to which camps they get selected to participate in. We also have numerous teen
33 programs, many of which are operated out of Mitchell Park Community Center. The
34 Recreation Division also plans and manages many of the City's special events, the May
35 Fete Parade, the Chili Cook-Off. There's an Earth Day Festival that we're participating in
36 coming up in April. A lot of events that we also manage through Recreation. There are
37 some fun facts, as Daren says, on the bottom of this slide as well. 84 percent of residents
38 rated recreation classes positively, and 81 percent rated recreation centers or facilities
39 positively. There's two other divisions within the Department that I'm going to talk about
40 very briefly. Our Human Services Division provides resources for the community. A lot
41 of our partners in our Human Services Division are listed on this slide. These are groups



1 that Human Services works with directly or receives grant funding through this division.
2 Arts and Sciences, as Rob mentioned earlier, we have the Palo Alto Art Center, the
3 Public Art Program, theatres, the Cubberley Artist Studios as well as the Junior Museum
4 and Zoo. I wanted to mention that a lot of what we do, we do with our partners, pretty
5 much everything we do. We can't do it alone. We do it with our City departments as
6 well as other Commissions. The Parks and Rec Commission is one and probably the
7 most frequently, obviously, Commission that we partner with. We also work with the
8 Human Relations Commission as well as the Public Art Commission. There's also three
9 Friends groups that we work with frequently, as well as the Palo Alto Recreation
10 Foundation and the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation. Of course, we couldn't do it
11 without the members of the community. As Rob mentioned, the community is why we're
12 here, but they're also a big part of helping us proceed with our projects and advance our
13 projects. I wanted to go a little bit into Community Services by the numbers. Rob
14 mentioned we have about 82 full-time staff, but we have hundreds of hourly staff, many
15 of which are hired just in the summer months. We really rely on our hourly staff to get
16 our work done and to keep our programs operating. The Department has an annual
17 operating budget of about \$25 million. Our revenue for fiscal year '17 is projected to be
18 almost \$6 million. Our annual capital budget on average is about \$2.1 million. This slide
19 just breaks down our operating budget by division. You can see that Open Space, Parks
20 and Golf this year is about \$8.9 million. The golf course, as you know, is under
21 construction right now, so that number is a little bit deceiving because of that. Our
22 Recreation Division operating budget is about \$6.6 million. This slide I'm just going to
23 touch on at a very high level. We'll go into this in more detail at our retreat. When we do
24 the retreat, we'll talk a lot about what we'll be doing in 2017. As Commissioner Moss
25 and Commissioner Reckdahl said, we'll be putting together a lot of ad hoc committees
26 that will help staff advance these projects and programs forward. Just briefly, these are
27 some high-level things, big policies and programs and park improvements, that will be
28 coming your way probably in 2017. The Parks, Trails, Open Space and Recreation
29 Master Plan, I'm going to go into quite a bit more detail on that in the next presentation.
30 We're getting close to wrapping that one up, very, very close. It's just right there; we're
31 almost there. We'll also be doing some master planning for the Cubberley Community
32 Center. As I mentioned, we own 8 acres of that. We've been working with the School
33 District to think about what we might want to do with that property in the future, either
34 the City in itself or in partnership with the School District. We also are kicking off a
35 Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan. Also, there is a 10-1/2-acre site at the
36 Baylands Athletic Center that we need to look at and determine what the best
37 opportunities for that site are moving forward. We also have a 36-1/2-acre piece of
38 property within the Baylands that was the former ITT property. The City now has full
39 ownership of it. Again, that's a site that we need to look at how we're going to manage
40 that site, what we're going to do with it moving forward. We also have some changes
41 coming in the aquatics program. Also, there's a Buckeye Creek hydrology study that
42 Daren's been working with a consultant on. That's something that will be coming



1 probably next month, I believe. There's also various park improvements that will be
2 coming your way, a new dog park, possibly a park restroom. There's a 7.7-acre parcel up
3 at Foothills Park that, again, we are in a stage where we need to identify what the best use
4 of that site is. Also, the Junior Museum and Zoo is going to be rebuilt. That is located
5 within Rinconada Park, so that will require a Park Improvement Ordinance. There's also
6 possibly some pickleball discussions coming your way. Commissioner Cribbs is very
7 excited about that. There could be some other Park Improvement Ordinances coming
8 your way as well. There's a lot of exciting things, big master planning efforts underway
9 and kicking off that we'll definitely need the Commission's input on. The next part of this
10 presentation I'm shifting a little bit. Rob and I thought we would talk about the
11 Commissioners' role within the City process and also responsibilities. The Commission
12 is an advisory body to Council. The intent is for that advice to be on policy-related issues
13 specific to, of course, parks, recreation, open space and golf. I have three examples here.
14 We're going to go through these examples to show what staff's role is, the Commission's
15 role, and Council's role in these different examples. Do you want to kick off the field and
16 tennis court use policy, Rob?

17 Mr. de Geus: This is an interesting one. It's related to athletic fields and parks and
18 access to the parks and who gets to use them. Before I even get into that, these policy
19 matters can come up in a variety of ways. A lot of times they'll come up through staff.
20 We're trying to be good stewards of recreation and park assets and want to be sure that
21 the community is inclusive and has full access, but there's some type of competing
22 interest of the community. We really don't want to resolve that on our own; we need to
23 resolve that with the community. That's partly the Commission's role, to help us think
24 through the tradeoffs of one course or the other. Sometimes it'll come from the City
25 Council; the City Council will see an issue or hear an issue and ask the Commission to
26 look into this a little deeper because the Council's got a million things going on. You can
27 dive in that way. That will happen from time to time. Other times, Commissioners
28 themselves will—you're out in the community, eyes are open, ears are open to all issues
29 related to parks and rec because you're engaged and involved. You'll hear policy-related
30 issues that you'll bring forward for discussion. This particular one, access to athletic
31 fields, came to us from a lot of different angles. The Commission heard about it; we
32 certainly heard about it; I think even the Council did. We have a great park system, but
33 we are a very built-out community. We have a very athletic citizenry here in Palo Alto.
34 We have a lot of sports being played, a lot of clubs, kids playing as young as 3 years old,
35 a lot of adults and seniors wanting access to athletic fields. We have a great balance of
36 gender on our fields, which is fantastic. We're also dealing with new sports entering into
37 the area. We recently have people wanting to play cricket and want us to have—I'm a
38 little partial to that being from Australia. No, I'm kidding. Lacrosse is starting to get big
39 and other sports like that, pickleball. We have sports now being not seasonal but year
40 round. Soccer is not fall; it's all year, and baseball all year round. In any case, we're
41 faced with how do we balance the interests of all of the different folks that want to have



1 access to the fields. We know that we can't give everybody space fully, equally or
2 certainly to the extent they want it. What is the appropriate criteria for allocating the
3 space throughout the year, children versus adults, different neighborhoods? Even parks
4 themselves, they're not all equal we discovered. Some parks and athletic fields are close
5 to neighbors, where we've got neighbors right up against the athletic fields. Other fields
6 are away from the neighborhood and can actually sustain more play. We have synthetic
7 surfaces and regular grass. This was a really good example where the Commission
8 played an integral role in helping staff figure out how we might develop a set of
9 guidelines and policy for the Council to consider to allocate space in a reasonable way—
10 not that everybody gets everything they want—that appreciates all the different tradeoffs
11 and interests. It's not perfect, but it's a good example where we were able to develop a
12 pretty extensive policy that's easy to understand and bring it to Council. They then
13 approved that. We check in on that policy every few years. We thought this was a good
14 example. Again, it goes through this process of identifying the policy issue at hand.
15 Staff will often do some pre-work for the Commission, so that you have something to
16 react to and respond to. It goes back and forth with the Commission and staff. More
17 often than not, we decide that we need to talk to the community and have a public
18 meeting or a forum or something. We'll have an ad hoc committee maybe that'll do some
19 extra work on the side. Once staff and the Commission most often come to alignment on
20 what we think is an appropriate policy recommendation, then it will go to Council for
21 review. Sometimes Council will say, "Thank you, but we're going to go in a different
22 direction." That's their authority. More often than not they're really interested in what
23 the Commission has done and the thinking of the Commission. It weighs heavily on their
24 deliberation and decision. Sometimes it will come back.

25 Chair Reckdahl: This graphic is nice, but I wish it was that simple. In this particular
26 case, in real life, we bounced around between those top two boxes for a long time,
27 including the ad hoc and having public input, because we didn't know the right answer.
28 Staff didn't know the right answer. We really had to work back and forth, back and forth,
29 and back and forth. It took us months to figure out what we thought was a good solution
30 and made the public happy.

31 Mr. de Geus: That's a really good point. We want it to be simple so it can be understood,
32 but it is more complicated than that. One thing we talked about just this afternoon and
33 what's not obvious here is the community engagement is throughout this process, at every
34 step of the way. The Commission's always had this perspective and staff has too and tries
35 very hard to think about—it's not an easy answer always—what is in the best interest of
36 Palo Alto residents where you get 66,000 residents with lots of different interests. Trying
37 to navigate the different data sources and come up with a recommendation for what is
38 truly in the best interests of residents as a whole is challenging at times, but certainly
39 impossible unless you really talk to the community.



1 Chair Reckdahl: One of the things I didn't appreciate is I thought people just cared about
2 slots. It's not just slots; they wanted priority. For example, they wanted to cluster them
3 together. They wanted all the (inaudible) at one time so the rest could go from game to
4 game and parents go from game to game. That makes a lot of sense. We were doing it
5 with a lottery system, so you would do one field at a time. It made it hard. In retrospect,
6 we should have thought of that. In the end, we got something that made people happy.

7 Ms. O'Kane: In this case, the Commission's role is to review the policy. Where staff
8 writes the policy, drafts it, the Commission would review it. Like Commissioner
9 Reckdahl said, it may go in cycles where it goes back to staff for revision, and that may
10 happen a few times. The Commission doesn't actually approve the policy. The
11 Commission would review it and then recommend to Council that Council approves the
12 policy. I'm going to move on to the next example, which is the Master Plan. Again, I
13 know this makes it look really simple. It went this smoothly, didn't it? In this case, staff
14 did along with the consultant a lot of the data collection, community outreach, drafted the
15 goals, policies and programs, and prepared the Master Plan in and of itself. There was a
16 Master Plan ad hoc who contributed quite a bit outside of Commission meetings. We sat
17 together, staff and the ad hoc group, and wordsmithed policies to get them just right.
18 There is that level of detail that occurs. For the Commission overall, the role was to
19 review the goals, policies and programs; provide input; ensure that those policies are
20 reflective of the community's needs and desires; and also review the Master Plan; and
21 then eventually recommend to Council that Council adopt the Master Plan. In this one,
22 we did include the arrows that show it's a cycle, that it went around quite a few times as
23 well with Council. We've been to Council many times with the Master Plan at various
24 stages, requesting input, and then that goes back to staff.

25 Mr. de Geus: As long as there is an exit ramp eventually.

26 Ms. O'Kane: Yeah, it's not a continuous, infinite loop. That's our goal. City Council
27 provides feedback, like I said, and ultimately would adopt the Plan. Again, this is an
28 example where the Commission is the advisory body to Council, where the Commission
29 has reviewed the Master Plan, has worked with staff throughout the process, and then
30 gets to a point of being comfortable with the Master Plan to recommend to Council that
31 Council adopt the Master Plan. It goes back to staff for implementation. We know that
32 continues on. As we start to implement the Master Plan, there are going to be times
33 where we come back to the Commission as well as Council to approve or recommend
34 approval of specific items that come out of the Master Plan. Really, I wanted to focus
35 that the Commission's role here was to help with the policy piece of that and also advise
36 Council on their acceptance of the Master Plan. One thing that we added to this side was
37 on the left side, that bar that says community. This is an example where the community
38 and specific stakeholder groups have been involved all along the way. This Master Plan
39 is really by the community and for the community.

1 Mr. Anderson: The dog park example, that we're going to go through, has a similar
2 process as the others. Staff and usually an ad hoc from the Commission will work an
3 issue. Unfortunately, we've been stuck in those first two boxes now for many, many
4 years. We made good headway with our last ad hoc committee. There were two
5 Commissioners working with me directly, putting in a lot of effort, especially tied to our
6 endeavor on the Parks Master Plan. With that bigger outreach that was connected to the
7 Master Plan, I think we've got a good way forward. We've held some public meetings
8 recently, again as part of that Box 1 of reaching out to the community. I think there's
9 light at the end of the tunnel, and we're ready to move on to the second and third boxes,
10 where we can come back to the Commission soon. I'll be, a little later tonight, asking
11 you to re-form that ad hoc committee and asking for a couple of Commissioners to help
12 me work this issue a little bit more. Hopefully come back next month for the full
13 Commission to have a robust discussion. The following month—do you see that little
14 note, prepares PIO? That's called a Park Improvement Ordinance. Any time there's any
15 construction or fundamental change in a park, you're required to do this ordinance that
16 has to be approved by Council. We'll build some consensus with our ad hoc, come back
17 to discuss it in March. If everything goes well, I bring you a draft Park Improvement
18 Ordinance in April. You'll take a vote on that and decide whether you'd like to
19 recommend that move on to Council for their approval. At that point after Council
20 reviews it and decides to approve it, there's a certain waiting period, and then we're
21 allowed to construct that dog park. I'm really looking forward to working with you on
22 this one.

23 Ms. O'Kane: That concludes our presentation. We're here to answer questions, if anyone
24 has questions on all that information we just threw at you. Any questions?

25 Commissioner Cribbs: I really liked the presentation. Thank you very much for putting
26 it together. I'm wondering if you're posting it any place.

27 Ms. O'Kane: We could post it. I could also email it.

28 Commissioner Cribbs: Email would be good. For the broader picture, maybe there's
29 some things that are unique to the Commission. Just in terms of information about Palo
30 Alto, it's another way of putting out communication.

31 Ms. O'Kane: We could post it on the Commission's website. Thank you.

32 Commissioner Cribbs: Thank you.

33 Chair Reckdahl: It's very nice. I wish I had that 4 years ago, because it does give you a
34 bigger picture. One thing that we did was the tour with Rob. Are you going to try and
35 schedule that with the new Commissioners?

1 Mr. de Geus: Yeah.

2 Chair Reckdahl: You'll do that by email and find a time that's good?

3 Ms. O'Kane: If anyone would like a tour of—I started, I think, when Commissioner
4 Cribbs and Commissioner Moss started, and I was on their tour as well. Daren is a great
5 tour guide. Just let us know, and we'd be happy to take you on a tour.

6 Vice Chair Moss: I have one comment. It's incredible to work with your staff. I found
7 last year things went really, really smoothly. Also, with the Council, you pretty much
8 sheltered us from the Council. I appreciate that, but I hope we can continue to have a
9 smooth working relationship with the Council so that things move as quickly as possible
10 and that we're not off in a vacuum doing our own thing. We're relying on our
11 representative here to keep us honest and you people as well. As you mentioned, we
12 really have no power. We just advise. We want to make sure that our work is useful.

13 Council Member Fine: Thank you for that, Vice Chair. In some ways, it's the other way
14 around, that you actually keep us honest. It'd be so helpful if this Commission filters up
15 information. I really appreciate staff's presentation. Coming from Planning Commission,
16 it seems like you guys have a much better process about how things work here and how
17 the Commission and staff work together and move things forward. I think that efficiency
18 is really valued. I would say people do say that these Commissions are advisory. If you
19 hear something in the community—it doesn't have to be policy related—filter that up
20 because that matters. Layering that information is really helpful.

21 Commissioner McDougall: On page 9, when it lists the partners, does it makes sense—
22 coming from the Library Commission—to include the Library as a partner? It seems to
23 me that you do things in conjunction with them or is that a conflict?

24 Mr. de Geus: It's certainly a partner, a part of the City of course. Our Department and
25 libraries are increasingly working more closely together. Certainly, you see that at
26 Mitchell Park where we're right next door. Don, as you know having been on the Library
27 Commission, libraries are going through a transformation about who they are. It's a
28 whole lot more than books. It's a lot more like Community Services and gathering
29 places. I actually think it's an exciting time for libraries and Community Services to
30 think about how we can collaborate and work together.

31 Commissioner McDougall: I do too. I think it would be worth calling out to call our
32 attention to. It's a real opportunity. A different question. The thing that the Library
33 Commission does is assign what they call Council buddies to individual Commissioners.
34 Sometimes it really works well. I had a relationship with Marc Berman that was really
35 good. Sometimes it doesn't work so well. It was a way of reinforcing and making a

1 connection. I'm very pleased that we have Council Member Fine as our delegate. Some
2 plan like that—it turned out to be useful. We also had a Council representative as well.

3 Ms. O'Kane: I'd be interested in hearing more about that, maybe after the meeting.

4 Commissioner McDougall: Thanks, Kristen.

5 Chair Reckdahl: There are a couple more things I wanted to mention. If you look at the
6 agenda for tonight, for example, we have action items and we also have discussion items.
7 When we put together the agenda ahead of time, we have to know are we just going to
8 talk about this or is there going to be some vote. If we want to have some binding vote,
9 for example sending our recommendation to the Council, we have to ahead of time put
10 that down as an action item. Sometimes we put down a discussion item and then, half
11 way through discussion, we say we want to tell the Council this, and then we have to put
12 that off to next week. Keep in mind when you look at the agenda, when it says action or
13 discussion, that actually means something. We also have to post this. What's the
14 requirement, 7 days in advance?

15 Mr. de Geus: Seventy-two hours.

16 Chair Reckdahl: Seventy-two hours in advance. We usually go for a Thursday morning
17 to get it out. If you at the last minute have some—if you're an ad hoc and you have some
18 data, you can bring it and distribute it, make copies and give it to the public and then
19 hand it out at the meeting, but we prefer to have it 72 hours in advance so it can be part of
20 the packet that goes out to the website. Finally, the last thing is Brown Act. Do you want
21 to say a few words about the Brown Act?

22 Ms. O'Kane: We thought we would get into that at the retreat and get into those ...

23 Chair Reckdahl: The short answer is that you can't have a meeting outside of a meeting.
24 You can talk to one or two people, but you have to be careful they don't talk to one or two
25 people because that becomes a serial chain. That's something to be aware of for new
26 Commissioners.

27 Vice Chair Moss: I have one more comment based on what Don just said. One of the
28 things I realized in this past year is how many different stakeholder groups are interested
29 in our work. They certainly come out of the woodwork. It's absolutely dozens and
30 dozens and dozens of stakeholder groups. I don't know how you keep it all straight.
31 When you had that bar over there that said community, you're not just talking to
32 individuals; you're talking to groups that represent a whole lot of other individuals. I
33 think that's a really powerful concept, and we have to take full advantage of it. Having
34 that somehow on the slide—when we go through the Parks and Rec Plan, some of those
35 will start coming up. Going to any meetings with the public, you find out who they are.

1 Commissioner Greenfield: One thing I'd just add to that, that I don't think got touched on
2 within the process, is you're dealing with lots of groups of stakeholders. They often have
3 competing interests. Part of the magic of the process is getting the stakeholders with
4 competing interests to work together and sort out priorities and compromises themselves
5 and do the heavy lifting with the group, and then hand the answer forward. That's
6 certainly an approach that is worth modeling and works well. Keep it in mind.

7 Mr. de Geus: On the Brown Act question, I know that staff has put together or is putting
8 together a manual for each of the Commissioners, that has a lot of background, a lot of
9 information about the Brown Act and some of the rules around Robert's Orders. There's
10 also training that the City provides annually on conflict of interest and the Brown Act.
11 We'll let you know when that happens. It usually happens here that you can attend. We
12 also, of course, have a City Attorney's Office. If you have questions about the legality of
13 anything, you can work through staff, and we can get you in touch with our Attorney's
14 Office.

15 Chair Reckdahl: The most dangerous part, I think, is when you're on an ad hoc and you
16 have two or three people working on that. You have to be very disciplined not to talk to
17 someone else. Sometimes you know that someone has worked on something, and "I want
18 some advice for this." You have to be very careful that it doesn't end up breaking into a
19 bigger meeting that would violate the Brown Act. Very good, we'll move on to the next.

20 **4. Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan.**

21 Chair Reckdahl: Parks, Trails, Natural Open Space and Recreation Master Plan, we'll
22 have a discussion.

23 Mr. de Geus: I'm just going to kick this off again, Chair Reckdahl, real briefly before
24 Kristen goes into the presentation. I did want to say that this is probably the most
25 significant work the Commission has worked on for the last 2 years or a little more. We
26 talked about our process, very community focused and many, many stakeholders.
27 Bringing them together and trying to find common interests takes a lot of time. You end
28 up with a better product at the end, but it does take time. We're happy to have done that,
29 but especially happy that we're at a point where we think we have a Plan that is not
30 perfect but pretty darned good. We're ready to get this in front of the Council so we can
31 really start working off the Plan. It really represents a vision for the future of parks,
32 trails, open space and recreation facilities. I think it's been a labor of love for prior
33 Commissioners and many community members and staff that have been engaged in this
34 work. It's intended to be a 20-year Plan. The last thing I'll say before I hand it over to
35 Kristen is one of the most interesting and challenging parts of working on this and putting
36 this together, which is not uncommon for any kind of master planning process, is trying
37 to strike the right balance between aspiration and specificity so that it's providing
38 sufficient guidance to actually be meaningful when you're faced with options. We've



1 tried to do that. We spent a lot of time thinking about that. I think we've got a good
2 balance here. I think it's just very relevant, even the conversations around the
3 Comprehensive Plan and how detailed do you go versus not. It's a very difficult thing
4 actually to do. You can go too far one way, too prescriptive. It's in some ways a
5 snapshot in time because it's our understanding of conditions today and the environment
6 today with the best information today. We know tomorrow it will be different; certainly
7 next year it will be. When it's a 20-year Plan, a whole lot is going to change so how
8 specific can you be with programs and other things. On the other hand, you can easily go
9 the other way too, where it's just too aspirational and anything goes and you can make it
10 fit anything as long as you can be creative. That doesn't work either. It's just a reality we
11 have to face with any master planning project, recognizing that it'll never be 100-percent
12 perfect in a lot of ways. It ought to be, I think, a working document that we continue to
13 work and refine throughout the term of the Plan as we get new information and continue
14 to work and discuss with the public where their interests lie. In any case, I think we've
15 got a pretty good Plan here. I'm really interested to hear the new Commissioners'
16 perspective once they have a chance to really take a look at it. Kristen.

17 Ms. O'Kane: First, I'd like to apologize to the three Commissioners who've heard this
18 presentation ad nauseam and could probably give it as well. Thank you for sitting
19 through it one more time. This is a big program, a big Master Plan that we've spent a
20 considerable amount of time on. We thought it would be good to provide some
21 background. I wanted to also introduce to my right Peter Jensen. He's the City's
22 Landscape Architect, and he's in the Public Works Department. He's been quite a
23 contributor to this Master Plan and the process as well, so he's going to help me out with
24 this presentation. I will kick it off. The purpose of the Plan is to guide decision-making
25 for future development of our system, parks, trails, natural open space as well as
26 recreation. The elements of the system that this Master Plan cover are, just as I
27 mentioned, parks, trails and open spaces, recreation facilities, and recreation programs.
28 I'd like to point out that open space piece. The intent with this Master Plan is not to go
29 into the conservation piece of our open spaces. That's being done separately in the
30 Conservation Plans that we're working on, the Baylands being the first one that we're
31 doing. It will only be the developed part of the open spaces, the picnic areas, restrooms,
32 things like that. The last bullet there is recreation programs. There's sort of two
33 components to this Master Plan. There's the "what can we do to improve things" that are
34 more capital projects, and then there's also the programming side of it. All of that is
35 included in the Master Plan. The process that we went through is really a three-phase
36 process, the first being analysis and engagement. We did quite a bit of technical analysis,
37 looking at what we have existing, where parks are in relation to where people live, how
38 do people get to parks, what sort of natural environment exists within our parks. We also
39 did considerable community engagement both online and in person, at different events, at
40 specific community meetings. We gathered all of this information together, and we came
41 up with our needs and opportunities, what did we want to accomplish with our Master

1 Plan. That led us into Phase 2. We used that information to develop some goals.
2 Following those goals, we have some policies to help us achieve the goals. Even further,
3 we have programs to help us achieve the policies. The third phase is how are we going to
4 implement it and then also just getting the Master Plan adopted. I'm going to kick it over
5 to Peter right now.

6 Peter Jensen: New and old Commissioners, good evening. Peter Jensen, Landscape
7 Architect for the City of Palo Alto. I've been working on the Parks Master Plan with the
8 staff here and with the Commission before and looking forward to working on it with you
9 as well. I'm going to review with you the first few chapters of the Master Plan report.
10 The report is broken into five different chapters. The first three focus on the early aspects
11 of the master planning process, the actual analysis and community engagement that went
12 into getting the feedback and information that we need to start to create the Master Plan.
13 As Kristen said, Phase 1 was a proactive community engagement process. It had a
14 comprehensive inventory and analysis of all the parks and open spaces, looking at the
15 physical conditions and the elements in the parks that we had. It is the basis of Chapters
16 1-3 of the Master Plan. I'm going to say as the presentation before talked about
17 community engagement, the community has been engaged throughout the entire process
18 as well as the Commission itself, even starting with the initial Request for Proposal that
19 went out and delving into it at that stage. The Commission has been a key factor along
20 with the community of putting the Master Plan together. Phase 1 also included, once we
21 had the analysis work, looking at opportunities, what were the opportunities to enhance
22 or make the system better for parks and open spaces and for programming. It shouldn't
23 be lost that the Master Plan not only looks at physical aspects and facilities but also looks
24 at the program aspects of it. Out of that analysis, there's a series of slides here that looks
25 at different park search areas. The first one basically is looking at the City of Palo Alto.
26 You can see the blue areas are where we're lacking parkland that is a distance away from
27 walking. These would be the areas that we would start to focus on. If we were to add
28 amenities or to add parkland, these would be the places to look at. This slide pops up,
29 and you can see that the areas do have different aspects of them as well. You can see
30 that, I believe, "E" down at the bottom has the highest population density. One of them
31 has higher population, and then the lowest. These geographic analyses help us
32 understand where we should start to provide more funding for more enhancement to our
33 park system. The next two slides are very similar. They start to route different
34 connections between the parks and link the park systems. Not only should the parks be
35 thought of as just one standalone entity but trying to connect those entities so they
36 become a vast and broader system, especially in Palo Alto where our City is pretty much
37 built-out and it's hard to produce parkland. The idea of connecting the parkland and
38 providing those clear links together is a main aspect of optimizing the space that we have.
39 This does that in the same way, but it starts to look at the natural systems and, along those
40 major connection points, also establishing some type of environment either extending the
41 park along the streetscape, planting native trees along these routes that can connect



1 habitat to each of the parks. This is another geographic analysis to look at to understand
2 how the actual full park system links together. In the analysis, there was the key findings
3 from the community engagement. We did a lot of different types of that, intercept
4 groups, meeting people out in the parks. We did multiple surveys, community meetings,
5 of course the PRC meetings that we had, Council updates. There was a lot of
6 engagement with the community to get feedback on what the park system needed. Of
7 course, the technical assessment was all the assessment of our physical aspects that we
8 have in our park system. That led to the needs and opportunities finally distilled down to
9 a part that we did work on for a while. When you have that much analysis done and that
10 much information, there is a lot of information and how you distill those things into what
11 we really want to focus on and the enhancements and improvements that we want to
12 make in our park system. The led us to the development of these areas of focus. There's
13 12 of them altogether. These areas of focus represent those things that we want to
14 concentrate on to enhance the system. They were also used as an aspect of a community
15 survey to get feedback on what the community felt were the top areas of focus to look at.
16 When we start to talk about what is recommended and what has high priority, those
17 things all come with a price tag, of course. Not everything is free; most of it is very
18 expensive. Those areas of focus help us narrow down not only how we want to
19 recommend but how we want to spend the funding that we have. Phase 2 is the goals,
20 policies. It starts out with development of the principles, and the eight principles
21 represent the collective direction provided by the community. It's building on our assets,
22 our vision of the future, and what we'd like to have and see for our park system. You can
23 see they are—this is a broader aspect of what our aspirations are of the park system. As
24 we narrow it down to the goals and the policies and the programs, they each become
25 more specific along the way until you do get to programs that lead you to doing specific
26 projects or adding specific programs. Along with the principles, the next phase was
27 developing the goals. There are six goals altogether. These are very important in how
28 the framework of the Master Plan is formatted. The goals, like the Comprehensive Plan
29 that is being redrafted, follow the same structure as the City overall Comprehensive Plan.
30 We do have a set of goals, and off those goals we build policies and programs that guide
31 future development. These six goals are to provide high-quality facilities and services
32 that are accessible, inclusive, and distributed equally across Palo Alto; enhance the
33 capacity, quality, and variety of the use of existing systems of the park, recreation, open
34 facilities and services. Goal Number 3 is to create environments that encourage regular
35 activity and passive activities to support health, wellness, and social connections. Goal
36 Number 4 is to preserve and integrate nature, natural systems, and ecological principles
37 throughout Palo Alto. Goal 5 is to develop innovative programs, services, and strategies
38 for expanding the system. Goal 6 deals with how we maintain our system and make that
39 more efficient. It's manage Palo Alto's land and services efficiently, effectively, and
40 sustainably, which is also very important, using quantitative and qualitative measures.
41 Not only trying to do that but also setting up parameters that we can understand if we're
42 meeting those goals and what the quality of us meeting those goals are, and how we



1 quantify that we're meeting them. As I said before, that leads us to policies and
2 programs, which again is the same basis that our City Comprehensive Plan is set up on.
3 There are six goals; under each one of those six goals is a policy. Under each one of
4 those policies is a program. As you go down into the programs—a program is where you
5 start to get into specific projects or expanding the system. Those are the main ideas that
6 you can act on to enhance the system. Of course, also in the last presentation, there are
7 some very unique opportunity sites in Palo Alto that either require further study or just
8 require more sensitivity because of their natural systems. Of course, the Cubberley
9 Community Center is a large one. As Kristen pointed out earlier, that's going to start
10 undergoing its own master planning process. The Baylands Athletic Center is a new
11 10.5-acre parcel of land that was created when the golf course was redeveloped, which is
12 very exciting. Like I said, it's very difficult to create new parkland in Palo Alto because
13 of the way it's built-out. The Baylands Nature Preserve has the new ITT property,
14 another 36.5 acres that could eventually become part of the Baylands and will become
15 part of the Baylands and restored that way. Of course, the 7 acres at Foothills Park and
16 what to do with that.

17 Chair Reckdahl: ITT is not dedicated yet?

18 Mr. Anderson: Not yet.

19 Chair Reckdahl: Our plan is to rehabilitate it and then dedicate it or dedicate it and then
20 rehabilitate it?

21 Mr. Anderson: Dedicate it first.

22 Chair Reckdahl: What timeframe is that?

23 Mr. Anderson: I'm hoping we get it in the next couple of months.

24 Ms. O'Kane: Phase 3 is the phase we're in right now. It includes development of the
25 final chapter, which was implementation as well as review of the Plan by Council and
26 adoption of the Plan. It also includes California Environmental Quality Act review,
27 which is something we didn't have included. We weren't clear that we needed to have
28 that step completed for the Plan, so we started that a little bit late. It's underway right
29 now. I'll be going through that schedule towards the end of this presentation. Chapter 5,
30 like I said, is implementation. This was a difficult chapter for us to put together because
31 there's a lot in the Master Plan. Like Rob said, it's aspirational. We're not necessarily
32 going to complete everything in this Plan; it would be nice if we could. Realistically, it's
33 probably not feasible. Everything, like Peter says, does have a price tag associated with
34 it. We need to go through that process annually to start to implement the Master Plan.
35 How we do the prioritization process moving forward, we really struggled with that. We
36 have these five sort of criteria that we're looking at as we go through prioritization. The

1 first one is fill existing gaps. For example, on the map that we saw earlier, where there
2 are areas of high population density but there isn't a park in close proximity to residents,
3 that is a gap we might need to fill. Another might be a pool on the south side of Palo
4 Alto; a gap we need to fill. All of these things we consider higher on the priority side.
5 Also, responding to growth is a criteria, addressing community preferences, maximizing
6 public resources. Completing a project that might meet multiple benefits would allow us
7 to use public resources more efficiently, which is the final bullet as well, realizing
8 multiple benefits. We also list in the Master Plan in Chapter 5 high priority projects and
9 programs. These are ones that, we learned through the process, are considered to be high
10 priority. We know this. The Commission agrees. The community agrees. These are
11 ones that we feel either need to be started and completed in the nearer term or for longer
12 process projects—for example Cubberley master planning, that's not something that can
13 be done quickly, but we recognize that the process needs to start soon. These are all
14 described in that chapter as well as considerations like how much they will cost to plan,
15 how much would they cost to implement. Also, potential funding options is something
16 that we've also included in this chapter, and how we're going to evaluate future projects.
17 This is what we know today in the Master Plan, but there's going to be things that might
18 come up, that we don't even know about. When those do come up, how do we address
19 those and how do we incorporate those into the Master Plan? Finally, how do we report
20 on our progress every year? That's Chapter 5 in a nutshell. Like I said, we're really close
21 to the finish line here. We've done significant community review. Also, the Parks and
22 Rec Commission did review. I have approval up there; I'll explain what I mean by that.
23 First, I want to go quickly into the most recent online community review that we did.
24 This was the draft Master Plan, the one that you have in your packets. It went out to the
25 community for review in November and December. We received responses from 82
26 people; 96 percent of the respondents were residents. What we did is we gave them some
27 questions to answer. Instead of making it an open forum for comments, we asked them
28 specific questions. The first being which of the principles is most important to them.
29 What we were trying to accomplish here is just circle to the beginning of the process and
30 ensure that where we started and where we ended up still align. What we found is that
31 over half of the respondents felt that health was the most important principle we had with
32 the Master Plan. Sustainable and nature being the second and third. This really does
33 align with what we've heard throughout the process, especially most recently when we've
34 done community outreach. We also asked which of the goals are most important to them
35 and should guide the City's implementation of this Plan. The goals that received the
36 highest rating was Goal 3, which is supporting health, wellness and social connections,
37 and Goal 4, which is preserving and integrating nature and natural systems and
38 environments within our parks and open space system. On December 14th, we came to
39 the Commission and asked them these specific questions. They took action, and I will
40 admit it's worded a bit odd. The reason for that is because we don't have the CEQA piece
41 done yet. Our legal advice from our City Attorney was that the Parks and Rec
42 Commission couldn't put their formal stamp on it without understanding what the



1 environmental impacts of that could be. The action that was taken was to accept the draft
2 Master Plan as the embodiment of the programs and policies that are tentatively
3 recommended by the Parks and Rec Commission and then requesting that staff perform
4 CEQA analysis. That action was voted unanimously. That was the final step in the Parks
5 and Rec Commission's role in the Master Plan as far as the goals, policies and programs.
6 Back to this slide. Those first two steps are done. The CEQA review is underway, and
7 we anticipate the public review period will be March 20th to April 18th. During that
8 period of time, we will have a public hearing. We anticipate that public hearing will be at
9 the March Parks and Rec Commission meeting, which is March 28th. Following that, we
10 do have a Council meeting where we are on the agenda; it's April 3rd. This will be an
11 action. It's similar to what we've had in the past, which were Study Sessions, but this one
12 will be an action in that we're asking for the Council to actually provide us comments that
13 we would then act upon in the Master Plan. This allows the Council—sometimes what
14 happens in Council meetings is a Council Member will make a comment, but they don't
15 close the loop on whether that's the Council's direction to us to make that change. By
16 having an action, it allows that to happen. We will know if Council is agreeing on that
17 change for the Master Plan. We're tentatively planning on Council adoption on
18 May 29th.

19 Chair Reckdahl: Parks and Rec has to review it after CEQA?

20 Mr. de Geus: The final adoption.

21 Chair Reckdahl: Our final adoption will be somewhere before 5/29?

22 Ms. O'Kane: Correct. I would imagine it would be the April Parks and Rec Commission
23 meeting.

24 Mr. de Geus: Chair Reckdahl, if I could just add one thing. Just a thank you to the
25 Commission. It's great to have Commissioners Cribbs and Moss join the team and
26 contribute a lot in this last year to get us to the end, and Chair Reckdahl from the
27 beginning has been there. A couple of Commissioners that really carried a heavy load are
28 not with us anymore but just contributed really significantly; that's Commissioner
29 Jennifer Hetterly and Ed Lauing, who was chair for a couple of years. They worked
30 tirelessly really with staff and with the community and on ad hoc committees. Just a big
31 thank you to all of you.

32 Chair Reckdahl: Not only a lot of work, but a lot of thoughtful work. They just didn't do
33 the simple stuff; they thought about it and really tried to think what's the best way to
34 attack this. We are very grateful for that.

1 Vice Chair Moss: If the CEQA review is not done before the Council review, is that an
2 issue? Will you know enough about the CEQA review to give the Council enough
3 information during their review?

4 Ms. O'Kane: Are you referring to the April 3rd meeting?

5 Vice Chair Moss: Yes, as opposed to April 18th, the end of the CEQA review.

6 Ms. O'Kane: The meeting on April 3rd is really to have them provide feedback on the
7 Plan itself. There's been changes made since the last Council meeting, many of which
8 were in response to Council comments. We'll be sharing those. They'll have the
9 opportunity to review the CEQA piece at the May 29th meeting. The CEQA component
10 isn't required for the April meeting. They're really looking at the Master Plan as it is
11 written, not what the potential environmental effects could be.

12 Chair Reckdahl: I don't have any CEQA experience. Are they going to come back and
13 actually change the Master Plan conceivably or would there be some appendix that we
14 have to add, that would be these are the impacts of the Master Plan?

15 Ms. O'Kane: I don't think the Master Plan would necessarily change. The CEQA
16 document will describe the potential impacts of the Master Plan. Because it's a Master
17 Plan, there's going to be in the future—for example, the CEQA document will be an
18 environmental assessment of what we know. For example, restrooms, we don't know
19 necessarily which parks will get a restroom, so there may be further environmental
20 analysis that has to be done later. It's really a programmatic CEQA document. There
21 may be additional CEQA that has to be done later, depending on what comes out of this.
22 For example, even Cubberley, if we do something at Cubberley or, say, we construct a
23 new pool somewhere, the CEQA document that's done for this Master Plan isn't going to
24 cover the environmental impacts of those projects. There will have to be additional
25 CEQA done. It's pretty high-level CEQA that's done for this. I can't imagine it would
26 change anything in the Plan itself.

27 Chair Reckdahl: It still seems strange that you need something like CEQA for an
28 inspirational document, but I guess I'm preaching to the choir.

29 Ms. O'Kane: Any other questions?

30 Mr. Jensen: I would like to add that there is a project webpage, paloaltoparksplan.org.
31 Right now, on the front of the page it's real easy to open the document and look at it, if
32 you'd like. If you scroll down to the bottom on the right-hand side, there is an appendix
33 that you can click on. It starts to follow through the full analysis work. If you're
34 interested in seeing some of the analysis work that went on, that's a good place to follow
35 the progress. That's where everything is stored to look at. The webpage is a good tool to

1 use if you want to do more research about the Master Plan. As you can see, if you click
2 that review box, the document is located there, and you can open it up and see it. There's
3 the actual document to look at. Back on the webpage, if you click on this top one, each
4 one of these is a link to that analysis work that went on. If you want to see demographic
5 work or the analysis of the actual parks and what's in there, the analysis of all the
6 programs and how many are there, they exist right there. You can click on the link and
7 open that up. That's an easy way to look at it. You can see Kristen's binder in the back;
8 that's basically the size of the analysis work that went into the project. It does entail quite
9 a bit. It's easier to look at it in this respect.

10 Mr. de Geus: More than just analysis, it's the public input process. I think there was
11 probably 15 different sources of public input that we gathered. I think people were tired
12 of hearing about the Parks Plan by the end. We asked the question about people's
13 interests in a whole variety of different ways, which was actually quite interesting. A
14 Mapita program where it was an interactive map where people could pick their favorite
15 park or recreation facility and then tell us about it, why they like it. Intercept surveys.
16 We even had towards the end a survey where we understood the priorities and were
17 testing them against the public, but then gave them a certain amount of money that they
18 could spend on all those priorities, and how would they allocate that funding. That was
19 fascinating, to get that input. Just a whole lot of different ways. I think it was effective
20 in the end. It's worth going to the website and taking a look and just exploring those
21 documents.

22 Chair Reckdahl: It was interesting. There were some topics like dog parks that most
23 people didn't want to fund. Those who wanted to fund it really felt strongly about it. The
24 same with accessibility. If you look at the survey, accessibility is fairly low, but there's a
25 lot of people that feel very strongly about accessibility. We have to balance that when we
26 look at it. You can't just look at—it's not simple.

27 Mr. de Geus: One of the challenges of doing this outreach is that often you have a whole
28 number of new questions once you get the survey results back. That's part of what the
29 Master Plan is, a guide. As we get into implementing and executing on a project, it's
30 back to the public again and making sure that we got it right, that we understand it
31 correctly before we actually start building.

32 Chair Reckdahl: Thank you very much. That was good to hear one more time. It's like
33 an oldie on the radio station.

34 **5. Other Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates.**

35 Chair Reckdahl: The next one is ad hoc updates. David or Anne, do you have any ad
36 hocs?

1 Commissioner Cribbs: Jim and I were on the gym sharing space ad hoc committee. I
2 think once we got into the Master Plan and started talking about some of the goals and
3 objectives, that committee seemed to be either redundant or not important. I think we
4 don't really have an update. In fact, I'm not so sure we need that committee, but we can
5 talk about that at the retreat.

6 Vice Chair Moss: I was involved in two committees. One of them was about Matadero
7 Creek bike or pedestrian path. I just wanted to let people know that when we had the last
8 set of storms, I happened to be on the Greer Bridge over Matadero Creek. The water was
9 all the way up to the top. It makes it pretty clear that it's a very difficult challenge to have
10 a path along that creek because flood control is such an important part. I'm not sure how
11 we're going to solve that or if we're going to solve that. It became abundantly clear that
12 flood control is a tremendous aspect of that challenge.

13 Chair Reckdahl: We had the same challenge on the Adobe underpass, and we were able
14 to work and get that through. Obviously, it's not going to be a year-round path, but I
15 think half the year we can have an underpass at Matadero that's still possible. You also
16 had ...

17 Vice Chair Moss: The second item was we started working on the Baylands
18 comprehensive plan. I wanted to know when you'll come back with the first information
19 about that. Is there any update?

20 Mr. Anderson: Yes. We just finished the process of interviewing and selecting the firms
21 that will lead that plan. We've got a company that we're just entering the contract with
22 them now. The expectation would be we'd get them onboard in probably 2-3 weeks, I
23 think. We'll start reaching out to stakeholders. One of the core elements will be the ad
24 hoc from the Commission to join that along with some other environmental stakeholders
25 around the Baylands.

26 Vice Chair Moss: Will the new ITT property be part of that comprehensive plan?

27 Mr. Anderson: Yes, it will, but it won't include elements—Commissioner Moss and I
28 had looked at this in-depth, and we realized to some degree it needs a great deal of
29 hydrology study, of what's happening in that wetland area. It won't get into an in-depth
30 scientific study of the hydrology. It'd be more broad than that, I believe, but it'll tie into
31 the overall context of the Baylands Preserve, which will be great.

32 Vice Chair Moss: We talked about some low-hanging fruit, about being able to connect
33 to the regular part of the Baylands. If we can talk about that, that would be great. One
34 other thing. You're doing a tremendous amount of work out there at the Baylands Center.
35 Will that be part of the Baylands comprehensive plan or will it be separate?

1 Mr. Anderson: No, that will be included too. The analysis of how it functions in
2 coordination with the environmental volunteers, EcoCenter—because we've got these
3 dual interpretive centers in the same preserve, we want to make sure they're
4 complementary and spreading the right kind of interpretive messaging. Also the signage
5 around the center itself and within itself will be tied into the overall preserve and making
6 sure that they're in concert and telling the full story.

7 Vice Chair Moss: That's all I have.

8 **V. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

9 Chair Reckdahl: We'll move on to Department Report, dog park update and selection of
10 new ad hoc committee.

11 Mr. Anderson: I mentioned a little earlier in our discussion about the Parks Master Plan
12 our process in the City and that we're working on adding a new dog park. In fact, we've
13 been working on it for almost a decade. Before we even started the Parks Master Plan,
14 we've been talking about adding dog parks. As I mentioned, we've made some good
15 headway. We held public meetings in December to look at two nearer-term options.
16 When I say nearer-term, the concept was—before we had the turnover on the
17 Commission, there was a will on the Commission to see if we could make a dog park
18 happen in advance of the Parks Master Plan actually being approved. They knew very
19 well the process takes time to get through all the iterations. They knew the CEQA
20 process would be lengthy. They didn't want to wait because we have a very patient but
21 very sincere group of stakeholders advocating for dog parks. As I've mentioned, they've
22 been doing this for years, and their patience is wearing thin, and they are expecting some
23 action. We'd love to help make it happen. Because this is such a longstanding need, it's
24 nothing we didn't know about long before we embarked on the outreach of the Parks
25 Master Plan. It's not like this was an unknown; it's a very well-known need for our
26 community. With that knowledge, the Commission sent a memo to Council saying,
27 "We'd like to proceed and have approval to go ahead and pursue a nearer-term dog park
28 in advance of your approval of this Parks Master Plan." The Council seemed to indicate
29 that they agreed with that, so we proceeded. We held these public meetings.
30 Unfortunately, we couldn't move on because the Commission wasn't filled yet. Now that
31 we're filled, what I'm asking tonight is if I could have a couple of volunteers to join an ad
32 hoc committee, work with me directly. Hopefully we can move this forward relatively
33 quickly and come back for the March meeting for a full discussion. Shortly thereafter, if
34 there's the will and the agreement both with the Commission and our community on a
35 way forward, make that happen. I should also note that Commissioner McCauley
36 indicated that he might be interested in serving on this if there wasn't anyone else who
37 was really interested.

38 Chair Reckdahl: Anyone interested?

1 Commissioner Cribbs: I am definitely interested.

2 Chair Reckdahl: Any other interests? Any other dog people here?

3 Council Member Fine: I'm a dog person, so keep me in the loop.

4 Chair Reckdahl: We'll have Commissioner Cribbs and Commissioner McCauley, if he's
5 still interested. We can revisit this at the retreat, but let's go forward with those two.

6 **VI. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

7 Chair Reckdahl: A couple of questions. We are now to Comments and Announcements.
8 Aquatics, that was passed. You want to give us an update on the aquatics?

9 Mr. de Geus: Chair Reckdahl, we've talked about aquatics a couple of times before the
10 new year. As we discussed, we were planning to go to the City Council with a contract
11 for the swim lesson component of the aquatics program, which we did. It was approved.
12 Very happy to report that we'll be able to offer almost twice as many swim lessons in
13 2017 as we did in previous years. That's really great for the public. More lessons during
14 the summer period but also in advance of summer, so families and kids can learn to swim
15 before the summer is underway, starting in April and May and then also swim lessons
16 that will go into October, August, September and October. Thrilled with that. The next
17 step on the aquatics program is thinking about a one-firm operator for the entire
18 program—as you know, we're looking at Team Sheeper for that—and comparing that
19 against what would it take if we kept it in-house and what would that look like and what
20 would the cost be for doing that. We're going through the analysis of that, and we'll be
21 back to the Commission to discuss that and hopefully go to Council and have a
22 recommendation through the spring, which really ties to the operating budget process that
23 we're just beginning now.

24 Chair Reckdahl: We might revisit this in a couple of months? What's the timeframe?

25 Mr. de Geus: Within the next couple of months certainly. We continue to work with the
26 lap swimmers, with the Rinconada Masters, with the Palo Alto Swim Club and others that
27 are interested in this, and meeting with them and getting Team Sheeper and them together
28 to try and figure out if there is a way to come up with a set of terms and use of the pool
29 that works for everybody.

30 Chair Reckdahl: I think this is a solvable problem.

31 Mr. de Geus: I think so too.

32 Chair Reckdahl: I think we can come to a solution. This is again public input; it takes
33 time.

1 Mr. de Geus: It does.

2 Vice Chair Moss: Did you say that the number of swim lessons during the summer will
3 be about the same, but you're going to offer them in April and May and early June and
4 September and even October? That's how you're going to double the number of lessons.
5 Is that right?

6 Mr. de Geus: Yes, but we will have more swim lessons in the summer as well. What we
7 haven't done in the past is have swim lessons on Saturdays and Sundays. That's
8 something that we know the community is interested in. We will be providing Saturday
9 and Sunday swim lessons this summer. We'll have more swim lessons in the summer as
10 well as the extended swim lessons during the year.

11 Chair Reckdahl: Another subject, that AT&T property. There was talk about buying that
12 and having that be Boulware Park expansion. What's the status on that?

13 Mr. de Geus: I don't have an update on that. I haven't heard much about that.

14 Chair Reckdahl: I heard a lot, and all of a sudden it went quiet.

15 Mr. de Geus: Right, it's been quiet for us too. I know that our Office of Real Estate was
16 looking at that and had been in contact with the property owner. I don't know more than
17 that at this point.

18 Commissioner Greenfield: I have another question going back to the swim lessons.
19 Often there will be lessons at another pool in addition to Rinconada, whether it's Gunn or
20 JLS. Are there plans for that this summer? Will Team Sheeper be leading those lessons
21 as well?

22 Mr. de Geus: Great question. We rent a School District pool every summer. We really
23 like to do that in south Palo Alto because we know we have a lot of families down there.
24 Unfortunately, this year we couldn't get any south Palo Alto pool. The only one we could
25 get was Jordan, which is fairly close to Rinconada Pool, but it is an additional pool. We
26 will have swim lessons throughout the summer at that pool. Yes, Team Sheeper will be
27 providing the lessons.

28 Vice Chair Moss: You're talking about the pool at JLS. You used to do lessons at JLS.

29 Mr. de Geus: Right. JLS is under construction, so we couldn't get that pool. We couldn't
30 get Gunn High School or Terman pool either. Jordan pool was the only one available to
31 us, so we took it.

32 Vice Chair Moss: Back to the AT&T property. One of the challenges that we have is
33 obviously that we want to expand the parks. Properties come up with very little notice,

1 and they're gone with very little notice. How do we expedite this particular property
2 before it goes away?

3 Mr. de Geus: I'll have to get back to the Commission on this. There's a lot involved with
4 buying a piece of property, that the Council needs to be very involved in. I know the
5 Council is aware of this, that there is a potential opportunity here. I don't think it's clear
6 yet, though, whether the property is actually for sale. At this point, I feel like I just don't
7 have enough information to answer the question specifically. I will find out and get back
8 to the full Commission, or Kristen will.

9 Vice Chair Moss: One of the challenges is going to be not just looking at this one
10 property but a fast-path process and maybe a slush fund of some sort that's available for
11 immediate use and that we develop that ahead of time and not just in reaction to a
12 particular property. I met with the Friends of the Palo Alto Parks. They don't have very
13 much money. They'll talk about benches and picnic areas. To buy a piece of property is
14 not something they've talked about in the past. They might change. That's why it would
15 be nice to continue to pursue this quickly.

16 Mr. de Geus: I had a couple of other announcements. I'm just taking advantage of the
17 time, because I'm not at every one of these meetings, (inaudible) most capable staff over
18 here. I did want to be here, for sure, at this meeting. I'm here a lot actually. A couple of
19 other announcements. We do have our summer camp fair this Saturday. That's a chance
20 for families to meet all of the different camp providers and meet counselors and meet
21 Team Sheep, the new swim instructor firm. Is it at Mitchell Park? It's at Mitchell Park
22 Community Center from 11:00 to 1:00, I believe. If you could share that with your
23 networks. I also wanted to let you know that the—most of you probably know this. The
24 Centers for Disease Prevention and Control came to Palo Alto and did what's called an
25 Epi-Aid study on the teen suicide clusters that we have experienced as a community since
26 2009. They were called in initially by the School District with the support of Palo Alto
27 and Project Safety Net at the beginning of 2016. The report is now complete and will be
28 released this Friday. That's a pretty lengthy, detailed report with a number of
29 recommendations. That will be interesting, I think, for the Commission to take a look at.
30 Certainly all the Project Safety Net partners and all the folks involved with youth and
31 teen wellbeing and suicide prevention will be engaged in that. There is a Project Safety
32 Net meeting planned for March 22nd. The location is to be determined, but it is from
33 4:00 to 6:00. That's the topic of that meeting. If you're interested in attending, it's open
34 to the public. There will be a summary of the report and other things. You may be
35 interested in that. The last thing I wanted to share is ...

36 Vice Chair Moss: Wait. What about the ...

37 Commissioner Cribbs: What's the date of that?

1 Vice Chair Moss: ... that thing on Friday?

2 Mr. de Geus: It's March 3rd. The Santa Clara Public Health Department is our interface
3 with the CDC. The report will be published on their website, and we'll make sure to send
4 a link to the Commission. Then, you can just click through and also call us if you have
5 any detailed questions about that.

6 Chair Reckdahl: The Project Safety Net meeting is when?

7 Mr. de Geus: It's March 22nd from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

8 Commissioner Cribbs: Would that be an appropriate presentation for a Commission
9 meeting agenda or would it be redundant?

10 Mr. de Geus: I think what might be better is to have maybe Mary Gloner, the Executive
11 Director of Project Safety Net, come and talk about the collaborative, all that's happening
12 within the collaborative and the partnerships, and then also speak about this study and the
13 future of the collaborative and what this particular study means for how we might change
14 what we're doing or do things with a little more emphasis in one way or another. We can
15 certainly set that up. We'll add it to the plan. You had other questions on that?

16 Commissioner McDougall: I don't know if it's ever been done, but that sounds to me like
17 a great opportunity for a joint meeting with the Human Resources Commission and the
18 Library Commission or whatever, where Project Safety Net would get to embrace
19 everybody.

20 Mr. de Geus: That's not a bad idea at all. Any other questions on that? I had one last
21 thing. I think some of you may have seen this. One thing that I'm particularly interested
22 in is doing a better job of performance management and being able to tell the story of
23 what we do as a Department and why we do it and what the outcomes are. It's very
24 motivating for staff to know that, to have this compelling scoreboard, if you will, that
25 we're making a difference. Also of course, in order to make decisions you need to
26 measure how you're doing. It's hard to know whether you're being effective. A lot of
27 what we do is certainly something staff are proud of, that residents are proud of. They
28 love our parks and recreation programs. We thought what if we did an annual report with
29 a calendar and actually created a calendar where every month we highlighted the Art
30 Center or our open space properties or our parks and playgrounds, Human Services. This
31 is the first year doing that. We're a little late; it took a long time to get it done, but we got
32 it done. It's still imperfect, but it's something I think you'll appreciate. Some of you may
33 have got it in the mail already. It talks a little bit about the Department, and it talks about
34 outputs and outcomes of the Department. Also what we tried to capture, which is the
35 most meaningful, is the impact. The way we tried to get at that was by the voices of the
36 community, of residents, of kids that actually go to a park or participate in the Children's

1 Theatre. In each page, you'll see at the very bottom a quote from a parent or a child,
2 someone. I think that's the most meaningful part of the calendar. We tried to put in dates
3 and things, special events and other things, that we know about and that would be helpful
4 for the community. Mainly, we're using the calendar for those that are most close to our
5 Department. What we'd like to do is build on this and make it available next year with a
6 new one that's more broadly shared with community members generally. This is a first
7 pass. The last four pages of the calendar is the annual report. As you heard about all the
8 different divisions within the Department, each page has a division and some highlights
9 and key statistics related to 2016 and a description of the Department. I'll pass it over to
10 you, Council Member. Take one. I've been meeting with all of the staff in the
11 Department, all the different work groups, and sharing the calendar and annual report
12 with the staff so they can see, as a sense of pride for themselves, the work they do and
13 understand the impact they have. I'm also asking staff to share it with people they know,
14 that visit their center often or contribute in some way, to say you can take a calendar.
15 You can do the same thing with a neighbor or someone that cares about parks and rec.

16 Vice Chair Moss: It's really great to see, because we had the discussion, I think, in
17 November or December that you had about five special events, when really you have
18 dozens and dozens of events on this calendar for every month. When we started to list
19 them, it's unbelievable how many events we have that you don't really take credit for.
20 Really, you need to include them, and you've done that. That's a fantastic thing. I bet
21 that if we kept this going, we would probably double it, the number of events. It's a great
22 first start.

23 Ms. O'Kane: I had a few announcements as well. I'd like to mention another event that is
24 coming up in March. I guess I didn't write down the actual date. I apologize. This is our
25 Cubberley Day. If you drive by Cubberley, it's—you have it on there, great.

26 Chair Reckdahl: Saturday, the 25th.

27 Ms. O'Kane: The 25th. Cubberley Day is a day for the community to see what goes on
28 behind the doors of all those rooms at Cubberley. We're basically taking all those
29 programs and bringing them outside. The community can come and learn about them.
30 There's performances; there's tree planting. A lot of the artist studios open their doors, so
31 you can go inside and see what goes on there. It's really a neat event. If you drive by
32 Cubberley, you see some cars, but you're not really sure what's going on. It's just a great
33 way to promote their programs to the community and for the community to learn about
34 them. That's happening in March as well. I also wanted to report on some things that
35 Daren provided to me. With the winter storms we had combined with some king tides
36 within the Bay, there were some flooding issues at the Baylands Nature Preserve. The
37 rangers deployed almost 900 sandbags to protect the levee from damage in the Baylands.

1 It was also a team effort with some other departments and some other agencies to make
2 sure that the levees were staying intact.

3 Chair Reckdahl: Was this one spot or do you know where it was?

4 Ms. O'Kane: It was one spot. Rob and I looked at the video. There's actually a hole
5 through the levee where water started seeping through. They got into action right away
6 and put some sandbags there, so that the levee wouldn't fail completely.

7 Chair Reckdahl: Kind of by the old golf course?

8 Ms. O'Kane: Yeah.

9 Vice Chair Moss: Do you have some volunteer organization that you could draw on or
10 just City staff? Is there some kind of hotline where you could get Canopy or Acterra or
11 other volunteers to help out? That would be great for community building if we have a
12 situation like that again.

13 Mr. de Geus: We have the Office of Emergency Services led by Director Ken Duecker,
14 who does a fantastic job. We did activate the Officer of Emergency Services office
15 during some of the heavier storm events. Mostly, it was Community Services staff and
16 Public Works staff that were deployed to resolve this. To your point, we do have a list of
17 all of those partner agencies. They are on the ready to support and help under emergency
18 circumstances.

19 Ms. O'Kane: During those storms, there was also a 2-mile section of Los Trancos Creek
20 at Foothills Park with some damage as well as many trees down. We're probably going
21 to wait until the end of the rainy season to do those repairs. That 2-mile stretch is going
22 to remain closed for the rest of winter. In addition, the Byxbee Park Hills renovation is
23 nearly complete. There's new trails, benches, and interpretive signs. There's a few more
24 interpretive panels that are going in, in the near future, and then that renovation will be
25 completed. Finally, Sarah Wallis Park was renovated by park staff. There is new
26 pathways, landscaping, seating, trash and recycling containers. That is all I have.

27 Chair Reckdahl: The gathering spot up at Byxbee is done. It looks nice. Although, the
28 north-south compass is not north-south. It's northeast; it's almost like 45 degrees. It's
29 aesthetic, not scientific, I guess. It looks nice. We had a lot of debate about that. It
30 ended up being a good decision. I was looking at this. One thing I wanted to add is the
31 Boardwalk is coming back. I'm not sure if that was June coming back. We should put
32 that on the list, so that doesn't fall between the cracks. The Lucy Evans Boardwalk is
33 going to be returning in summer for a design update.

1 Ms. O'Kane: Another thing I'd like to mention about the calendar of future agenda topics
2 that's in your packet is if there's something that any of the Commissioners would like to
3 hear about or learn about, we'd be happy to come and share that. We can use this to keep
4 track of what we're doing throughout the year. If you mention something and we feel like
5 August might be the appropriate time because we know of something that's happening
6 associated with that topic, we can put it on this list. That will remind us to agendize it in
7 the future.

8 Mr. Jensen: There are a few projects that you will see this year, that are fairly large scale.
9 The 101 pedestrian bridge over the 101. Of course, the Junior Museum and Zoo will
10 come back to you with its redesign. A Buckeye Creek hydrology study, which is actually
11 the creek along with Los Trancos that runs through Foothills Park, will be done too.
12 We'll be looking at those projects as well.

13 Commissioner Cribbs: As we're talking about partnerships, I don't know if this is
14 appropriate, Rob, for agenda setting. It would be really great for me to hear a
15 presentation by the Friends of the Park, just short, about what they're doing and what
16 their goals are, and also the Palo Alto Recreation Foundation. Those two seem to have a
17 lot to do with what we do. I really don't know much about them. That would be great. I
18 was wondering why the Junior Museum was so far off. It seemed like we were going to
19 talk about that earlier in the year. Are they just not ready?

20 Mr. Jensen: Like the Parks Master Plan, it's also going through its own CEQA review.
21 They also reduced the size of the construction scope as well because of the high cost of
22 construction right now. To meet the budget they have, they've gone through some
23 redesign of that. I do anticipate fairly soon that we will be able to see something.

24 Commissioner Cribbs: Thank you.

25 Vice Chair Moss: Along the lines of the Friends of Palo Alto Parks, they have their
26 monthly meeting or maybe it's a quarterly meeting sometime in the next 2 weeks.
27 Because I showed an interest in the last meeting—I think it was the one you led at
28 Mitchell Park Community Center—they invited me to listen to what they're doing. If I
29 can get that date and time to you, can you pass it along to everybody else, see if anybody
30 else wants to go?

31 Ms. O'Kane: Sure. Just send that to me, and I'll send it out.

32 Vice Chair Moss: I have a couple more items that have come up in this meeting. It
33 sounds like in April you're going to put the CEQA approval before us. That's going to be
34 in April. The approval of dog parks is going to be in April or maybe in May, I'm not
35 sure. It would be nice to have something about the ITT park dedication. When you find
36 out about that, it would be nice to talk about it.

1 Mr. de Geus: On the ITT site, I think the Commission's already voted on that
2 unanimously. Staff (crosstalk) in agreement ...

3 Vice Chair Moss: Just coming back to us.

4 Mr. de Geus: I think it's probably just reporting to you. We're on our way to Council to
5 make that happen.

6 Vice Chair Moss: You have the Team Sheeper meeting sometime in April or May.
7 That's it.

8 Chair Reckdahl: We can talk at the retreat about do we want an ad hoc for the aquatics.
9 There may be need if there's community input. We can talk at the retreat about that.

10 **VII. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR MARCH 28, 2017 MEETING**

11 Chair Reckdahl: Agenda for next month. We are looking at—Buckeye Creek is
12 bouncing to next month, and then a dog park discussion. Anything else?

13 Vice Chair Moss: AT&T.

14 Chair Reckdahl: Rob or Kristen will provide an update on the AT&T/Boulware
15 expansion property. Are there any other topics that people want to talk about next
16 month? Do you have anything else for next month? Any other comments?

17 Commissioner Greenfield: Were we going to talk about the retreat date?

18 Chair Reckdahl: Yes. Historically, we've always had it on a Friday morning. Do you
19 have dates that you would want to investigate?

20 Ms. O'Kane: March 10th, which is not too far away, March 31st or April 7th.

21 Vice Chair Moss: I cannot make the April 7th, but the 31st would be great.

22 Commissioner Cribbs: Yes on April 7th for me, but not the 31st. Sorry.

23 Commissioner Greenfield: April 7th is during the PAUSD spring break, so that might
24 not be a great time. That's a no for me. The early date in March, 10th, I'll be out of town
25 that day as well. Was it the 28th or something?

26 Chair Reckdahl: The 31st was another option.

27 Commissioner Greenfield: The 31st is okay for me, the day before spring break.

28 Commissioner McDougall: When you say morning, what is morning?

1 Chair Reckdahl: Some years, we've started, I think, as early as 9:00 or 10:00. Other
2 times we've started ...

3 Commissioner McDougall: I'm more worried about when does it end.

4 Mr. de Geus: It's usually 9:00 to 1:00. We have lunch, and it's a working lunch.

5 Commissioner McDougall: It's not 9:00 to 5:00.

6 Mr. de Geus: No.

7 Commissioner McDougall: That's okay with me if it is.

8 Mr. de Geus: It usually ends between 1:00 and 2:00.

9 Chair Reckdahl: I think last year some people had morning commitments, so we started
10 right about lunch and went 'til 4:00 or something like that. I think in general it works out
11 better if we start at 9:00 or 10:00 and do the 4 hours over lunch.

12 Commissioner Greenfield: Would March 24th be a possibility? That would be the
13 Friday before the next Commission meeting.

14 Ms. O'Kane: I'm actually on vacation that day and the Friday before.

15 Commissioner Greenfield: Point well taken.

16 Commissioner McDougall: My vote would be the 31st, but I would prefer 9:00 to 1:00
17 or 8:00 to—the earlier the better.

18 Ms. O'Kane: We might have to send out, like you said, a Doodle poll with some other
19 options. We'll go ahead and do that.

20 Vice Chair Moss: The meeting with the Friends of Palo Alto Parks is March 21st at noon
21 at 1950 University.

22 Chair Reckdahl: March 22nd you said?

23 Vice Chair Moss: March 21st at noon.

24 Commissioner McDougall: Would they really want us all to show up or would they
25 prefer a delegate to show up?

26 Vice Chair Moss: I don't know; I'll be there. I can certainly represent us.

27 Mr. de Geus: This is a board meeting, right? This is the Friends board meeting.

1 Vice Chair Moss: Yes.

2 Mr. de Geus: They would appreciate knowing if there's going to be people there.

3 Vice Chair Moss: They wanted to tell me stuff. They didn't want me to tell them stuff;
4 they wanted to tell me stuff. I can report what I hear.

5 Mr. de Geus: I think that'd be great, to have a representative from the Commission attend
6 and report back.

7 Commissioner McDougall: Should we in fact appoint an official representative so that he
8 has some responsibility to us and authority with them?

9 Mr. de Geus: I think that's a good idea.

10 Chair Reckdahl: Any other comments, questions?

11 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

12 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Cribbs and second by Commissioner
13 McDougall at 9:12 p.m.