MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
January 23, 2018
CITY HALL
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California

Commissioners Present: Anne Cribbs, Jeff Greenfield, Jeff LaMere, Don McDougall, David Moss, and Keith Reckdahl

Commissioners Absent: Ryan McCauley

Others Present: Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Peter Jensen

I. ROLL CALL CONDUCTED BY: Catherine Bourquin

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:
Chair Reckdahl: Next is Agenda Changes, Request, and Deletions. I think we're going to keep everything as is, no changes.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:
Chair Reckdahl: The next—for the public, we like to see you here. One of our charges is to facilitate communication with the public. You're the public, so we're very glad you're here. If you want to speak on any topic, whether it's on the agenda or not, you fill out a speaker card and give it to Catherine. Also, all the handouts are over there. If you do not have the handouts, please go over and pick them up. We have four speakers. We're going to start with David Carnahan.

David Carnahan: Thank you, Chair Reckdahl and Commissioners. David Carnahan, Deputy City Clerk. As you are probably well aware, I am here to talk about Board and Commission recruitment. The Clerk's Office comes out to all Board and Commission meetings to encourage both our Commissioners to reach out to the community when the City is recruiting for Boards and Commissions, but also to spread the word with the public. The City is currently looking to fill one position on the Historic Resources Board,
three on the Human Relations Commission, three on the Public Art Commission, and two on the Utilities Advisory Commission. These are great ways to help impact your community, influence your community, and help give back and help make Palo Alto continue being the great place that it is. I'm going to have flyers for each of you. I can't give all of you homework, but their homework is to reach out to at least two community members and encourage them to apply. The deadline is March 20th to apply. There is a residency requirement for a few of these. Several of them including the Public Art Commission, you're not required to be a Palo Alto resident. I'll leave these for the Commission. These will be over at the back for members of the public if you're interested in perhaps volunteering on a Board or Commission yourself or know someone in the community that you think would be a good fit. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you, David. Now, we'll move on. Lynn Kiapela [phonetic] wants to talk about Hoover dog fence height. Lee Caswell's on deck.

Lynn Kiapela: I'm Lynn Kiapela. I have a 10-pound dog, kind of a little Chihuahua. She can easily jump the fence at Hoover Park. It's 27 inches high. The big dogs just walk over the fence. She jumps the fence. The benches placed—if I guard the fence so she can't jump, the benches are placed so that any dog can get up on the bench and just step over and run through the park, for which we then get tickets. Now, I've been banned from Hoover Park because she gives the idea to other dogs to jump the fence and chase squirrels or whatever they see out there. I would appreciate if that would be put on some kind of maintenance schedule to put that at least to the 3 1/2-4-foot height. It varies completely around the little dog park. It goes from 27 inches to 34 inches, and it may be higher somewhere else. I have pictures, and I've actually gone out and measured all over. That would be very helpful. Maybe I could take her back in the park, and they won't kick me out again. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: That is a good suggestion. Daren, what is the height on the new dog park?

Daren Anderson: Five feet.

Chair Reckdahl: Five feet. We eventually will be getting all the dog parks up to that height. We've had this complaint before, and we need to address it. Lee Caswell.

Lee Caswell: I'm Lee Caswell. I'm a longtime Palo Alto resident and also a longtime competitive tennis player as well; although, I'm holding something that looks a little foreign. This is a pickleball racket. I'd just like to say although I played college tennis, most recently I've been playing pickleball. I was brought into the sport by my son, who's 18. What's interesting about this as a longtime resident is that all the people here, who I've played with, I've never met before; although, I've lived in Palo Alto for over 25 years. I met them through pickleball. The way we met was my son and I went down to

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play. There are two courts that aren't quite pickleball courts down in Mitchell Park. While we were there, we heard this distinctive sound. It was just heartwarming to go across and find almost 100 people on Saturday and Sunday mornings going to play. As we basically looked, what's interesting is it could be because of the sound that people come over to figure out what the heck is going on over here. You've got all these new people coming in. It is a community-building experience. We see routinely people coming in to go say, "What are you doing?" They come in at the end of the courts. Right now, the courts are not ideal. They are tennis courts that are converted every week. People slog out a set of basically nets that they build and construct each week. It's a labor of love, I would say. What you'll find is that you're watching not just all ages play together. When was the last time you saw a competitive game between an 18-year-old and an 83-year-old? I saw it; it happened there. It's amazing. Between different sexes, genders. Certainly there are people who are from Palo Alto, some not. It's that building together that makes Palo Alto great. Thank you very much.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you, Lee. Tom Foladare is up next.

Tom Foladare: Good evening. As you can see, we have a pretty large contingent of pickleball players here tonight. We've decided instead of having everybody speak for 3 minutes that we would just have two of us speak so that everybody can go home and not be here for breakfast. Several months ago I addressed the Commission on the status of our group. Tonight I'm going to spend a minute or so just giving you guys an update. First to start off with some national statistics. Pickleball now has 2.8 million players in the U.S., and that's growth of about 12% year over year. It continues to grow. To give you some of our stats. We ended this year at 350 members. Our growth rate month over month is 10%, so we're doing fairly well there. We anticipate losing some members because the courts are becoming oversubscribed. We're finding when people have to wait more than one game on the bench they tend to leave and not come back as often. We also anticipate losing some members because other communities around here have started building dedicated courts. We're now seeing that most of our new members are from either the Palo Alto area or some of the adjoining communities. We're not seeing people come over from the East Bay or come down from San Francisco as much. We do believe that our growth rate is going to be greater than our attrition rate. We think it'll still grow even though we are declining in some areas. The other issues that came up in the last meeting was the Board was concerned about participation rate. This is just for last week. On Monday we had 48 players; on Tuesday we had 44 players; on Wednesday we had 36 players; on Thursday we had 46 players; on Friday we had 20 players; on Saturday 59 players; and on Sunday 92 players. This is using three tennis courts. That's pretty much it.
Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Jenny Chan, you're up next, followed by Margaret Lawrence.

Jenny Chan: Hi. My name's Jenny, and I'm a tennis player. I have occasionally played pickleball. I do recognize that a pickleball community is growing. However, Mitchell Park, those three courts are not the right place for it because the tennis community do need those courts. I was just there tonight at 6:00 p.m. Out of those three courts, two were taken by tennis player. One was taken by eight pickleball players on one court. You can see tennis player do need those courts. Last Sunday I was there over the long weekend. It was 8:30 in the morning. All three courts, two of them were taken by tennis player, and one was unutilized. There was not one single pickleball player. I do feel that the City needs to find a win-win situation for both groups and build brand-new pickleball players somewhere else but not at Mitchell Park tennis.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you, Jenny. Margaret Lawrence followed by John Park.

Margaret Lawrence: Hi. My name is Margaret Lawrence, and I'm a Palo Alto citizen. I work in Palo Alto as well. I also play tennis at Mitchell Park. Everybody here—I'm just motivated because everybody wants to do activity. I don't like to see pickleball against tennis, but I have to say that I've been to the tennis courts many Saturday mornings. There's nobody playing pickleball. Tonight I was there; I came right off the courts. Nobody was playing pickleball. I do want to emphasize that the pickleball courts are not lit, so that could be one of the reasons. I don't think Mitchell Park is a place for pickleball. I like to hear that the community is growing up pickleball, but it does concern me that 95 people were on the pickleball courts. Where are they parking? That's a lot of people on our courts in our community. Ninety-five people from Palo Alto especially are there; I get concerned about that. I'd like you to consider that. Thank you.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you, Margaret. John Park followed by Tre [phonetic].

John Park: Hi. My name is John Park. I'm a 40-year resident of the Bay Area. I am a tennis player. I'd like to address our point of view. Tennis has been great for me. I've been playing tennis 35 years. During that time, I've met so many different people from different professions. In my personal group, we have about 20 tennis players in our group alone. Of course, we don't all show up at the same time. We may have as low as two people, up to 20 people. When we come to Mitchell Park to play tennis, two courts are taken by lessons during the evening. Sometimes you have the pickleball folks taking one court. Sometimes we have available about two courts. When it gets really crowded, sometimes in my group we have maybe ten people on one court. We have to alternate. We're actually kind of a good user of the tennis courts in that we play in the evenings from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. We're professionals and students across the Bay Area who come from very far away. Tennis has been a great opportunity for us professionals who meet. When we have time available, it's a good time for us to meet and discuss things around
our social life and all that. It's an incredible time for us to exercise and get together. We like the opportunity. Thank you very much.

Chair Reckdahl: We're going to move on to Tre.

Tre: Hi. My name is Tre. Real quick, I'm the tennis ladder organizer at Mitchell Park. Obviously, we love to play tennis there. Just a quick history. Since we've been there the last couple of years, we notice that pickleball people have come and started utilizing courts 5-7. We're all for you guys. Additionally, you guys had it in a manner where you tape the courts. Initially, we thought that was very dangerous because we may trip and fall, but we did not bring it up to the City. We did not make a big deal out of it. We thought we could share these courts as long as you guys are done, take it off, we're good to go. Even better now, you guys redrew all the lines. It's a little confusing overall for tennis players, but we also did not complain. We enjoy the fact that you guys would like to access these courts at a certain time, and I think that's wonderful. Now, the quick thing I wanted to mention was let's practice inclusivity here. We're open-minded. We let you guys do what you needed to do to these tennis courts. The issue of these courts are underutilized by tennis players, I want to correct that. I have a list. We have a petition going, and we have more than 112 people that signed up already.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. We're moving onto Kay Carey please.

Tre: Please know that there are a lot of people that have—we want you guys to do what you guys do, but we recommend a better solution than just to get rid of courts 5-7.

Chair Reckdahl: Kay, you have—no applause please. We have limited time. Please no applause. You're wasting our time. Move onto Kay Carey. You have 1 minute please.

Kay Carey: Hello. I'm Kay Carey. I'm a 30-year resident of Palo Alto. We also have our law firm here. I've been past president of the Palo Alto Tennis Club where our big project was to get the Cubberley courts lit. At that time, we were able to show the City that there is a serious shortage of lit tennis courts where they're really needed at night. You might think about lighting Cubberley. With respect to the pickleball court, since there is such a tremendous shortage of lit tennis courts and they're a precious commodity, first you should consider who is using the courts. The Palo Alto residents are the majority members of the Palo Alto Tennis Club. Many residents buy homes here so they can play tennis. You're talking about local people using courts. The study that was conducted by the City only measured permits. That is for a different type of tennis use. That is not the neighbor who comes out with friends and plays on tennis courts. It is underreporting the usage of tennis players. You should also consider using the area with the little courts at Mitchell Park. You could maybe convert those to pickleball courts. You wouldn't have to tear down the handball fence.
Chair Reckdahl: Thank you, Kay. We'll move onto Carrie Woollett [phonetic]. No applause please.

Carrie Woollett: I'm a member of the Palo Alto Tennis Club. We play every Tuesday night. I've been playing for a long time, enjoy the tennis courts. I think there's room for pickleball too, but I think we need to share it. Right now there's a shortage of lit courts. There's two courts next to the other courts, the lower number courts, that could be used for pickleball, but there's no lighting on those. I think there might be some other work that needs to be done to adjust to pickleball. The main thing is I think there's room for everybody. Taking away lit courts for tennis, which are at a big, big premium right now, is not the way to go. I think it's finding another place for pickleball so they can enjoy it and that both groups can continue to enjoy the sports.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. Thank you for all the input. We do appreciate it. We understand the pickleball people love pickleball and tennis people love tennis. We have limited resources here, and we have a lot of work to do to figure how to optimize the use of these. We are not going to make any knee-jerk decisions. This will probably be a long and painful process, but we have a lot of work to do to figure out how best to use the courts. We're going to ask you for more input later on. This is not the last we're going to talk about this. We have one more speaker, Rulong Zo [phonetic]. Rulong, you have 1 minute.

Rulong Zo: Hi. My name is Rulong. I'm a tennis player. We've been using the tennis court in Mitchell Park for more than a decade. It's always been very crowded and very limited for usage. We always have some people there. Mainly, we're doing this for our kids, especially during the afterschool time. I've been asking my kids if there is also a lot of kids playing pickleball as well. The answer is pretty much no. I haven't seen any juniors playing pickleball. However, on the tennis side, definitely a lot of time that we all have kids on the court. You can see parent, and you can see kids play each other. The resource is very limited. I wanted this committee and also both tennis and the pickleball community understand each other. We have this tennis court there. We want to share with the pickleball community. Definitely, we don't like the idea of converting the very limited tennis resource permanent to pickleball. Basically our kids will suffer. That's all.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you very much. All I'll say is keep your ears tuned. We will have more on this. It will be a discussion item in future meetings where we will propose different things, and we'll want more public input. Like I said, we're not going to make any knee-jerk decisions. We have a lot of work to do to optimize the use of these courts. Thank you. We'll move on.

IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chair Reckdahl: The next … Next is Department Report.
Mr. Anderson: Good evening. Daren Anderson, Open Space, Parks, and Golf. I've got a couple of notes to share with you. One is about the Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan. That project is moving on nicely. The next—can you guys hear me okay? The next community meeting is on February 15th at 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Mitchell Park Community Center. You're welcome to come to that. We have that same large group of stakeholders that are attending and participating. It's moving along well. I also plan on bringing the Commission a report on where we're at with the project as a discussion item soon. That one on the 15th is 6:30-8:00 p.m. That is February 15th from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Mitchell Park Community Center. I think I might wait just a second. I had mentioned we have the upcoming Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan meeting. I'll bring you more information on that soon. Again, our public meeting February 15th, 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Mitchell Park Community Center. Still working on the closed trails at Foothills Park. I know we've talked about that one for a while. The current status is we're having a dialog back and forth with the Planning Department, the City's own Planning Department. When we did those original surveys, there was one plant that wasn't in flower, and we have to do another plant survey to identify that plant. Sometimes these little sticky things get in the way, but I'm going to do my best to keep pushing that forward. We'll get that done as soon as possible. The Park Improvement Ordinance for Peers Park dog park goes to Council on the 29th. Peter Jensen and I are working on that, putting out the bid almost concurrently. As soon as they approve, the bid goes out, and we get that whole project moving forward. I'm excited about that. June 29th, Monday, June 29th. I'm sorry, January 29th.

Vice Chair Moss: Best case, when would you be able to start development?

Mr. Anderson: I think it'll largely be driven by when we get the bids back and get the contract in place, less so on the—2 weeks after the first reading of the PIO, there's a second reading, and then there's a 30-day window before you can start construction. It'll be largely driven by the response from the bidders on the project. We're guessing the whole process will be about 3 months. Commissioner McDougall had asked if I'd provide a brief update on the status of the non-native plant called stinkwort. Give me 1 second, and I'll pull up a photo of this. This is what that plant looks like before it flowers. It's shaped like a little tiny Christmas tree. This is it with its yellow flowers. Sometimes it'll grow a little bushier, but oftentimes they're like a Christmas tree. You'll see it all over. It was in the news recently as a big issue with this non-native plant. I'll give you a little bit of facts and where we stand and what we personally are doing about it in Palo Alto open space in particular. The scientific name is Dittrichia graveolens. I only say that because there are so many different kinds of stinkworts and stinkweeds. Dittrichia is the word we use most commonly within the industry, with open space staff. The Dittrichia is an invasive weed. It comes from California. It came here in the 1980s. When I say invasive, what does that mean? It's an invasive non-native. It's native to southern Europe and northern Africa. It came over here in the '80s probably with nursery
It starts to spread and out-competes areas. It loves disturbed areas. Any time we've got areas that earth has been moved—the greatest example is Byxbee Park where all 120 acres were freshly turned over when we converted it from the landfill to a park and had to bring it back to grade so it'd drain properly. It just invited in all those kinds of weeds, especially this one. It's also got very, very resinous plants, so the seeds stick to wheel tires. As vehicles come in like the landfill that had to get hundreds of thousands of yards of soil to get it to grade appropriate, all those seeds came in on those tires. That's where we see it, up and down 280 and where vehicles are coming in and to some degree even on bicycle tires or so I'm told. Why is it a problem? Invasive weeds in general are a problem because they interfere with our flora and fauna. They displace our native wild plants, our native plants that so much of our wildlife is dependent upon. They've co-evolved with these species of plants. As we displace those and get mono-cultures of ones like this Dittrichia, the stinkwort, they start crowding out all those natives. This is not something our native wildlife grew up with. It doesn't support our insect population. Consequently, we start pushing that wildlife out, and it degrades the habitat. That's the big problem. When did it first arrive in Palo Alto? I found it in 2005 at the Baylands Nature Preserve. I was working as the Supervising Ranger at the time, and we got an alert from Santa Clara County saying, "There's this new weed coming out. Keep your eye out." We found it. It's a longstanding restoration technique that you attack vigorously and aggressively new invaders because you've got a chance to control them is the concept. We did that. We devoted everything we had. In those first 2 years, 2005 and 2006, there were times where we got rid of every plant in the Preserve. The problem is some of these plants will put off 70,000 seeds. If you miss one or they come in on more tires and that kind of thing, you're in a lot of trouble. Even though we controlled those early years really well, we're experiencing exponential growth, 300% growth the first year, even more the next year. In certain years, we do okay on the control. We do work at like Byxbee, where we regraded that, and invited all these other weeds. Another common question is where is our stinkwort problem most acute right now. It's at the Baylands, largely at Byxbee Park. It's tough. A lot of people want to say, "How many acres do you have?" It's difficult because it's intermixed with so many different other species of weeds and some natives too. It's hard for me to put an acreage on it. I'm hesitant to because I think it's misleading. I will say it's a significant problem and something we are still putting our best effort towards, although not exclusively. What happens a lot is a new weed will come out or maybe even an older one catches the public attention. Everyone says, "You've got to drop what you're doing. Everything should be focused on that." That's not entirely true. Cal-IPC, the California Invasive Plant Council, rates this weed as moderately invasive. It is a big deal, and we do care, and we are working towards it. I spoke with one of the Baylands rangers today to say, "Of the amount of work you're putting towards invasive weeds, how much would you say is towards this particular one?" She said about 20%. There are a lot of invasive weeds that are either as concerning or more. A couple of examples are the spartina, the non-native cord grass.
You might have heard of this one before. There was an entire team Bay-wide. Federal, state, local, county agencies all doing whatever they can to go aggressively after this one weed. It doesn't get the attention perhaps that this one does most recently, but it's a big deal. It has the potential to clog up your wetlands to the point where there's no shore birds, no mud flats for them to feed on. It would preclude your clapper rail, your federally endangered species. That's an example where the entire Bay came together and worked towards eradicating that. We've made strides, but it's still not done. I guess I say that in the context of this update to say there are other important weeds too that we focus on and a myriad of others that I could tell you about. Stinkweed's got the attention right now, which is good, because we want people to pay attention to the harm that invasive plants can have on our ecosystems. It's good to know—I just want to temper that with there's other important ones too that we want to pay attention to and plan.

Chair Reckdahl: How does the City attack this? Do we have volunteers or do we pay consultants at all or contractors?

Mr. Anderson: That's a good question. Primarily it's through staff, contractors and volunteers. We have a significant number of volunteers. For example, we have 8,000 volunteer hours at the Baylands annually, 8,000 volunteer hours. While the staff contribution in terms of time and hours is much less, oftentimes if we time it right you can do things like hit it with a tractor mower coming through. This particular weed is difficult. If you don't time it just right, all you'll do is get it to grow much shorter and flower at like a 3-4 inch height rather than it's normal 1 1/2-2 foot, which makes it very difficult to eradicate with that technique. Most commonly, it's hand weeding. That's where you get those advantages of bringing in a group of 50 people with a guided expert, either a ranger or maybe someone from our partner organizations. Grassroots and Save the Bay are our two main organizations that facilitate those programs and are instrumental really in the control that we have achieved. I'll say this too; this is something you'll not hear very often. You'll hear, "Yes, we've got to get rid of it. We've got to pull it." The problem is there's typically weed succession. This is growing in a disturbed site typically, where we haven't had natives or it's been turned over or vehicles have gone through or something to that effect. When you pull it, you've disturbed the soil even more, especially if you've gotten in and dug it out for any reason. All that does is encourage the next weed to come in. If it's not stinkwort, it's going to be another invasive weed taking its place, unless you do what we do. We have two nurseries in both Foothills, and one at the Baylands. We grow 10,000 plants a year in that Baylands facility to plant in the Baylands. What we do is as we pull out those weeds, we end up replanting. The ultimate defense to this kind of thing is to have a dense, healthy stand of native vegetation where it can't get a hold. That's the real long-term solution. Endlessly pulling it and only having the next weed come in, perhaps the same weed come in the next year, is not a very successful restoration technique in my opinion. I did it for a decade at the Baylands and got to see what happened. Restoration is slow, and that's kind
of frustrating, especially when you look at Byxbee where we've got 120 acres of land. Dittrichia is probably spread out and mixed over a third of it. It's a really, really significant infestation. We're going to keep working on it. We're going to keep using new techniques. The latest we're looking at is a more aggressive agricultural steamer, no herbicide, no hand pulling. You drive over it with superhot water and cook this thing. Looking at techniques like that, continuing with our volunteers, continuing with our experts at Save the Bay and Grassroots to target this, and hopefully learning more from our neighboring agencies too. That's kind of the status of the stinkwort. Any questions on that, that I can help answer for anybody? That concludes the report.

Commissioner McDougall: I just want to say thank you for being so responsive.

Mr. Anderson: That concludes the Department—yes, sir.

Vice Chair Moss: I have one other subject, and that is the tennis versus pickleball. Is it possible for you to get a group together from both of those groups to privately, like you did with the Rinconada pool—that was so successful the way you worked out a compromise—and then come back to us in a month or …

Commissioner Greenfield: Actually the ad hoc has been working with Daren and with Adam on this already.

Mr. Anderson: Good suggestion. That's often the success (crosstalk).

Chair Reckdahl: Who's in the ad hoc? You?

Commissioner Greenfield: And Anne and Don.

Chair Reckdahl: Thank you. We'll move on.

V. BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the December 19, 2017 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

Approval of the draft December 19, 2017 Minutes was moved by Commissioner McDougall and seconded by Vice Chair Moss. Passed 6-0 McCauley absent

2. Election of Chair for 2018

Chair Reckdahl: Next is election of Chair for next year. Let me first give a quick description of what the Chair actually does. Each month, we get together—it's usually virtual—get the agenda and figure out not only what needs to be done but also can we fit it in the meeting and then pass that out. We work with Kristen on developing that agenda
each month. The Chair runs the meeting each month and also represents the Commission at the Council if needed. The Chair and the Vice Chair together organize the retreat every year. There's a yearly meeting where the Vice Chair and the Chair meet with the Mayor and Vice Mayor and just talk about priorities and just exchange thoughts. Finally, that Council study session that we usually have about once a year. Those are the responsibilities of the Chair. I've enjoyed being the Chair. I would prefer not to do it next year. I encourage others to volunteer. I was nervous when we had all this turnover last year that we'd be able to get some leadership. I think the new people have come up and ramped up very quickly and become very useful. I'm confident that we can find someone who will be not only a good Chair but will have different ideas and have new things to talk about and a new outlook on things. Do we have any nominations for Chair?

NOMINATION

Commissioner Greenfield: I'd like to nominate Don to be the Chair. Besides our current Chair, he has the most Commission experience having come from the Library Commission. I think he's been very solid and steady in the past year on the Parks and Rec Commission. I've enjoyed working with him, and I'd encourage him to accept the nomination.

Chair Reckdahl: Don, do you accept the nomination?

Commissioner McDougall: It's very flattering. Thank you, Jeff. I do accept the nomination. I think this is an important committee, and I'd like to continue to do as much as I can. Thank you. Yes, I will.

Chair Reckdahl: David, do you … Any other nominations? Failing that, fill out the votes for …

Catherine Bourquin: You can just circle. I had a copying problem there.

Chair Reckdahl: Just circle the name.

VOTE

Ms. Bourquin: Six for Commissioner McDougall. [McCauley absent]

Commissioner Cribbs: Could I just, as one of the Commissioners, say how much I have appreciated your being the Chair and your steady guidance and all the work you've put into this. I just wanted to thank you very much, Keith.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you. I enjoyed it. Like I said, I was nervous about this Commission, but I've been very happy. It's been a very productive year, and I appreciate
all the work you guys do. It's good to have good Commissioners. The Council did a good job selecting some very high caliber candidates. Thank you.

Chair McDougall: I only accept this position with the assumption that I can trust you to help me as I need help. Thank you, Keith. You've done a great job.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you.

Chair McDougall: The other thing I'd like to do, before we get started, just to make sure—Chinese New Year's coming up, and it'll be the year of I'm not sure what. I'd like to declare this the year of the stinkwort for the Board.

3. Election of Vice Chair for 2018

Chair McDougall: I guess we should now have nominations for Vice Chair. Do I have any nominations for Vice Chair? David.

NOMINATION

Vice Chair Moss: I nominate Jeff Greenfield. He's been on a number of subcommittees and has been another steady influence. His growing leadership is really good. I recommend him.

Chair McDougall: Are there any other nominations? Do we have a ballot for this or shall we use a show of hands?

Ms. Bourquin: There were two ballots.

Chair McDougall: I do have a ballot. If you would then please fill out your ballot. I guess first I should make sure—Jeff, are you happy to accept this nomination?

Commissioner Greenfield: Thank you for the kind words, David. I do accept the nomination. I would be honored to support Don and the rest of the Commission in this regard. Thank you.

Chair McDougall: Thanks, Jeff.

VOTE

Ms. Bourquin: Six for Commissioner Greenfield. [McCaulley absent]

Chair McDougall: Congratulations, Jeff.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Now, we can move on with the agenda. Jeff, I understand you'd like to leave.
Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes, I have some family business to tend to. Thank you.

Chair McDougall: Thank you for being here.

[Vice Chair Greenfield left the meeting.]

4. Update on Buckeye Creek Hydrology Study and Recommendation to Council

Chair McDougall: The next item, Item Number 4, we have the update on the Buckeye Creek hydrology study. I would like to note to staff and to members that there are five items with some of them saying half an hour. If we take half an hour for everyone of these, we'll be here at 11:00. I'm sure we're willing to do that. I'm not sure we're willing to do that to you. We'll try and be careful with our response to your reports.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you. Daren Anderson, Open Space, Parks, and Golf. I'll try to keep my presentation brief and pithy as well. I'd like to introduce Megha Bansal. She's a Public Works Engineer. Thank you for being here, Megha. Curt Dunn, Supervising Ranger at Foothills Park. Tonight we're here as an action item. We are recommending that the Commission recommend to Council three things. One is to receive the Buckeye Creek hydrology report, which was attached to your staff report. To direct staff to explore outside funding opportunities to implement the Wildhorse Valley and grade-control structure portions of the plan. I'll explain that in more detail as we get on. Lastly, to direct staff to add $150,000 to the capital plan in FY '22 for design and permitting for replacing the grade-control structures and pedestrian bridge. It's been a while since we've discussed this, and we might have some people in the audience who aren't as familiar. I'm going to start with orientation to the site and where we're at, discuss the key problem that we sought to address through this hydrology study, discuss the key findings of the recommendation of the study, and then explain the rationale behind the staff recommendation. It's helpful to look at this in terms of three areas. Boronda Lake is up here. As we look at this area that I'm highlighting with the cursor, this is Wildhorse Valley. Towle Camp is near it. In the middle next to the Interpretive Center is Las Trampas Valley. Over here, circled in yellow, is the 7.7-acre area. This is a vantage point looking up Wildhorse Valley towards Towle Camp. The creek is on our left, over here. Over here, we've got a natural grassy area with a few trees. The important aspect of this photo is to highlight that this is the utility corridor that I've mentioned a few times in previous meetings. It's really important because it calls to part of the recommendation. Why we have it is protecting this utility corridor, where we've got water, we've got sewer, we've got electric, phone, all running right along the edge of a failing creek that's got an erosion problem. Does that make sense?

Commissioner Reckdahl: That's connecting Page Mill to the Interpretive Center?

Mr. Anderson: Perhaps my colleagues, Curt, can explain in a little more detail.
Curt Dunn: The main utility besides electric is water. There's a little over 3 million gallons of stored water from this point going up the hill towards Monte Bello plus the service for the telephone, fiber connection, and the sewer. It's that extra water that comes in handy for our residents during the daytime, high demand.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Is this just going through the park?

Mr. Dunn: Yes, it does.

Commissioner Reckdahl: It's not that the park uses any of this. It just happens to be a …

Mr. Dunn: We use a fraction of it.

Mr. Anderson: A small part. This is Las Trampas Valley. We're looking from the perspective of the maintenance shop towards the Interpretive Center. The Interpretive Center would be up to your left. Again, the creek was long ago in the 1940s pushed off to the side of this valley, when historically it probably went right down the middle. It's off into this right, vegetated tree area. This is a shot looking at the 7.7-acre area. The creek wraps around that tree area to the right offscreen and then eventually follows the cursor and leaves the property. That's the creek spot. The problem that we sought to address through this study was this historic issue of erosion, down-cutting, and sedimentation problem, which really started in the 1940s when the creek was straightened. It was channelized to make room for agriculture. During heavy storms, what would happen is the water flows down, causing the creek to down-cut, causing erosion, and sending that sediment downstream to various locations, most poignantly at the 7.7-acre parcel. It can lead to flooding and obstructing downstream culverts, some private properties. This problem does date back to the 1940s. That's an important part, and I'll also importantly point out that in the '70s they tried again to fix certain parts because the problem started to exacerbate with these grade-control structures that I'll show you in a moment. The deepest section, in the mid-1970s the creek was 7.4 feet below grade. If we fast forward to current day, it's about 20-22 feet, a dramatic increase in down-cutting, which of course leads to the creek collapsing in different areas and a litany of other problems.

Commissioner Reckdahl: What year was that?

Mr. Anderson: Mid-'70s when it was measured at 7.4. I should also point out this pedestrian bridge. We reference it in our recommendation as part of what we're calling for. The footings on either side, because of that erosion, will soon be exposed and compromise the stability of that bridge. It'll have to be replaced probably along the same timeframe as those grade-control structures, which I'll show you photos of again. Some are in that 5-10-year span is the best guess. Again, more photos of the erosion and deep down-cutting. Here's a shot where the water's flowing. This is where we get to the
gabions and the grade-control structures. The gabions are those wire-enclosed areas where you've got the rock inside, intended to stabilize the levee or the creek side. I've got a few photos of these. Here are some wood styles. These are all in the '70s to '80s that these were put in. You could specially see in this photo where the water is starting to defeat it and creep around the edge. That was the problem that we've identified. The solution was we hired a consultant. We hired ENGEO to study the hydrology and give us recommendations on what we're going to do to fix this erosion problem. We held community meetings to make sure that the stakeholders and park users were part of this solution in contributing ideas. We met with the regulatory agencies to get their feedback and understand (a) what they'd recommend and (b) what they'll permit, which is a really important thing to be looking at early on rather than at the end of the process. The key takeaway from those meetings with the regulatory agencies was that they as much as possible want to see creeks realigned to their historical alignment. That means, if you come in with a heavily engineered solution that pushes the creek to the side, it's going to run into problems. During the ad hoc discussions, we said how much could a regulatory agency really enforce their will upon the City into doing what they're asking. I only look at recent examples. We look at the golf course that ran into multiyear delays because the Water District had big problems with not having enough creek and flooding protection into the golf course. They wanted us to look endlessly at different opportunities. No matter how much we studied it, it wasn't enough. We're talking about year delays. I say that in the context of it's important to be considering their perspective early on in the design process. Using all this feedback from the stakeholders and those agencies, the consultant developed what we called a preferred alternative design to resolve the creek's problems. It's really broken down into three core areas. You've got this upper reach in Wildhorse Valley. The key solution there was to create a new creek channel. The old creek channel would remain in place; although, the grade-control structures would be retrofitted. The new creek channel would flow through that open valley. That grass valley that we talked about would now be a meandering creek. This middle area, Las Trampas Valley, would be a little different solution. Look at the next slide. This area in blue on top is what we currently have, a very channelized, narrow spot. What we would get is—if we did this section, you would widen it out. You're basically just scraping out the dirt, creating a wide floodplain where this creek could now slow down the water flow and stretch out over this bigger area. The solution to that one would take up about half of that turf in front of the Interpretive Center, the element of the Las Trampas section. Here's a little blow-up on the upper right of that Las Trampas Valley and what it would look like and where it would stretch. The 7.7-acre solution was much the same in that we'd just broaden and widen out that floodplain and create an area for the creek to flow out. I don't want to belabor that too much because ultimately those two didn't fall into the staff recommendations. I'll get to that in just a second of why. That full remediation, which the consultant had looked at and said, "This is going to solve by large your erosion and sedimentation problems if you did all of those." He also included options to look at segments of that recommendation or portions of it. I want to discuss that a little bit and
some of the options. The first option is the City could take no action, which is basically status quo since the 1980s. If we did that, what would happen is those grade-control structures would fail in about 5-10 years, and we'll have compromised utilities and our hands would be forced to do something. Taking no action is really not viable in my opinion. The other option, the second option, that we were looking at was you could at a minimum just do those grade-control structures. About eight of them are in that upper stretch in Wildhorse Valley and about two in Las Trampas and about two in the 7.7-acre area approximately. If you did that project, if you came in and just retrofitted that with a more naturalized grade control, typically larger, natural boulders and that kind of thing and widened it slightly, very slightly, it would cost you $1.57 million, and that would include replacing that pedestrian bridge, which is going to have to be spanned at a slightly greater length. The third option that we talked about in the report is that you could split this into components, and ultimately that's where the staff recommendations fell at. Where we came to with the direction is please ask staff—direct Council to ask staff to explore outside funding to implement that Wildhorse Valley plan. You can see that on the screen right here. This is a blow-up of that new creek channel as well as the grade-control structures. This would be all the grade-control structures through the span of the creek all getting retrofitted. The second part of the recommendation is to add $150,000 to the capital plan in FY '22 for design and permitting just to do the grade-control structures. The rationale behind that second piece is, if for some reason we weren't able to get that outside funding, you've got this fallback plan so at a minimum we're not left high and dry without a plan, without a design to address the most critical infrastructure, which are those existing grade-control structures. There were several key factors that led the ad hoc and staff to make this recommendation. One of the most salient is this $50 million capital budget gap that we currently have in the City, which makes implementing almost any of these recommendations aspirational at a very best. The City Manager was very forthright with me saying, "This is going to be exceedingly difficult. You better be very clear with the Commission. Let them know this is something the City just can't afford." We have to impress upon this recommendation that it really is outside funding that we're going to have to get to implement this piece of it, to do the Wildhorse Valley and those grade-control structures. Another part of the rationale is this upper stretch you see highlighted is the most significant portion in terms of that erosion and sedimentation solution. At some points we wrestled with the contractor saying it could be as high as 60, but we think conservatively 50 is the right number. About 50% of your problems get addressed with this improvement. Another significant factor that we looked at was how the construction of these improvements, Wildhorse Valley and the grade-control structures, relative to doing the whole remediation, that is, if we were to do 7.7, Las Trampas Valley, and the Wildhorse Valley, all of them, the disruption is so much less if we do this one. The impacts are still there. We'd still be impacting trails that are in this valley. We'd still be impacting the Towle Camp. Trucks will be leaving the park. Those are all impacts that are real. They would affect wildlife to some degree to that are using that area. It'd affect those trailheads, and they'd affect
the visitor experience. We don't want to minimize that, but it'd be much less than all the additional work that would happen if we were also doing the 7.7 acres and Las Trampas Valley. We also thought if more erosion and sediment control is needed in the future, we could use this opportunity, having implemented just this one in Wildhorse Valley, to learn from that experience, evaluate how successful it is and see if we truly need a lot more control or if this might suffice. Lastly, the other reason behind that recommendation especially the part about adding on the $150,000 to address those grade control structures is they will fail in the next 5-10 years. We've got to do something. I just want to be a good steward of the land and have a plan to be prepared for that kind of thing rather than be reacting. The approximate cost for what we're recommending—that's the Wildhorse Valley and the grade-control structures and that pedestrian bridge—is $3.7 million. I should point out if we were to implement that, there would still be some erosion and there would still be some sedimentation we'd have to deal with. We know that. We think it might be manageable. That concludes staff recommendation with the exception of I'll turn it over to my colleagues to see if you have anything else you wanted to add and then also to the ad hoc if there's anything you'd like to share.

Chair McDougall: Anything else you want to add? Does anybody on the ad hoc? David? I was on the ad hoc. The first thing I want to do is compliment the whole team for the amount of work that went into this. I think it's incredibly complicated. The number of times we sat in Daren's office and said, "Should we go for nine? Should we go for three? Should we go for five plus one? How about we go for two?" It was really quite interesting. I do think in the end we've come to the right conclusion. A couple of comments that came out of what I heard tonight and I didn't think of as we heard it before. You describe the 7-foot going to 22 feet. That's not really in all sections; it's only in the valley section. I think you should make that clear so that we don't deliver the wrong message. The other thing I point out in my notes as I wrote this is we talk about the fact that those utilities are running through our park. We're not using much of the utilities. I think we need to make it clear who's at risk. It's sort of amorphous about is it some other community or is it Palo Alto. The same thing with who's at risk downstream. Is that in Palo Alto or is that in fact not Palo Alto and is a residence? I think we just need to make sure we know who we're protecting. Everything else, you've been so responsive to all our comments along that I really couldn't say anything else. I'm willing to turn it over to David. Do you have comments?

Commissioner Moss: Yeah, a couple of things. Going back to what you just said about who are we protecting, it is important to know if we're subject to legal action if we don't do these things, especially downstream. Could we—by controlling the Wildhorse Canyon alone, we're going to still get some sediment into the 7.7 acres. If we have to close that because of the sediment or flatten it before people can go out there, we're saving things downstream. The worst case is that Wildhorse Canyon improvements improve it enough, but there's still going to be some sedimentation in the 7.7 acres. If we
let it go, let that happen, will that be enough to protect downstream from undue sedimentation?

Mr. Anderson: That's a good question. The answer is no, we couldn't just let the deposition of the 7.7 go. What happens is it'll clog that creek channel in that area, and the water will overflow and pool all over or you'll have a big blowout and will send a massive amount of debris down. What we have done historically over many, many years is take that debris out. You'll see in some photos that I think I've shared there have been piles on the side. We take it out; it's either spread onsite. In the past sometimes, the private owner, Mr. John Arrillaga, would take that away and use it somewhere else or off-haul it for us. Other times it's used and kept in the park elsewhere. We'll have to come up with a plan for getting rid of that material long term. I don't think it would shut down the 7.7-acre area. We come in only two times a year where we've got to take out that material, and we can move it offsite. It would impact that open site for part of the day.

Commissioner Moss: The cost of doing that should be incorporated into our final budget because you're going to have to pay that if you don't do the Wildhorse. Even if you do do the Wildhorse, you'll still have to do some of that. We're saving money. We don't have to do that as much by doing the Wildhorse. When you do the budgeting, you have to take that into consideration. What about also lawsuits? If we don't do the Wildhorse, will we be opening ourselves up to lawsuits further downstream?

Mr. Anderson: Good question. I don't have the answer. I'll have to do some more research on that.

Commissioner Moss: I think the Council wants to know what is the impact if we don't do it and as much financial risk. I think that speaks volumes. The other thing I was going to mention I've forgot. That's all.

Chair McDougall: Does anybody else have any comments? Keith?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, I have some.

Commissioner Cribbs: I do too.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I agree with David. When you have these costs, it's not really fair because it looks like it's zero cost for doing nothing. There is going to be huge costs if we do nothing. We really have to estimate how much maintenance we'd have to do due to the various impacts. For example, when you go from the doing nothing to doing Number 2, there should be less maintenance on Number 2 than there would be for Number 1. That will flatten the curve and make it look like this is not as expensive as it is.
Mr. Anderson: Could I chime in on that? The reason why you don't see that reflected here is it's currently all captured with existing staff. This is Curt and his team that are addressing those piles. Historically, it was done by that caretaker. Right now, we have not incurred those costs. It's all addressed with existing budget, existing staff allocations for the most part.

Chair McDougall: Mr. Reckdahl is your suggestion that there is risk that they might have to do incur those costs in the future?

Commissioner Reckdahl: (inaudible)

Chair McDougall: I think that's what both Mr. Moss and Mr. Reckdahl are saying. You might want to identify what the risk is. Even if you want to say it's nothing today because the ranger does it for us, there's a risk that …

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah. Like I said last time, it's not like we're saving money. We're just delaying the spending of the money. By spending the money upfront, we do it on our timetable. If we just wait, we do it on Mother Nature's timetable. Mother Nature always does things in a more expensive timetable. I'd be very careful about making it look like doing nothing is the cheapest option. I don't think doing nothing is the cheapest option. Doing some work in Wildhorse Valley is probably the cheapest option. That brings me to Wildhorse Valley. If we do Wildhorse Valley and it meanders, we'll be doing two things. We'll be doing one thing for sure; we'll be reducing the amount of sediment that gets pulled out of Wildhorse Valley.

Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Will we also be slowing down the flow?

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: When it hits Las Trampas, it'll be going at a slower rate, which hopefully should slow down the erosion in the rest of the park.

Mr. Anderson: That's correct. You would also have new grade-control structures, which I believe will be the kind that slow flow too.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Those would be in the right-hand side or that would be after the merger?

Mr. Anderson: In the existing creek channel, this would still get maybe 40% flow off this hill. Of the total flow in this area, a much smaller percentage hits the existing channel, kind of sloping down this way. All those would be new in those grade-control structures here. There would be more downstream as well.
Commissioner Reckdahl: To me, that's a big win. By doing work at this one spot—because we have limited money, if can only do money in one spot, by doing it here we achieve two things. We not only decrease the amount of sediment that we pull out of that portion, but we also slow down the water, which means that we have less erosion downstream. We have to really sell that. It otherwise looks like we're just addressing part of the problem, but we really are addressing a big chunk of the problem. Even in our wildest dreams, we don't have the money to do the whole thing. I think this is the sale that we have to make, that this will not solve the problem but this will do a lot to help the problem. This is meandering. How do we enforce that? I'm always very nervous that we have the meandering creek, and then 5 years later it's just channelized just like we have right now.

Mr. Anderson: Traditionally, if you let a creek do its own thing, it will not channelize itself. It does just the opposite. It wants to meander all along its path of least resistance. Why we had channelized is only because we forced it that way. Opening this up narrowed it and constricted it intentionally off to the right in the 1940s. By having these more gradual slopes that we're going to install in this valley here, it should do just the opposite where it's got room and flexibility to meander.

Commissioner Reckdahl: We're confident if we set it up to meander, it will meander?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, I believe that's the best understanding we got from our consultant, who's done this kind of work.

Commissioner Reckdahl: At these corners, will we have rocks there that to prevent that from just being eroded away? I see the curves. As that water hits the corner, there has to be something there to force it around the corner, and that's going to get eaten away as the water comes through.

Mr. Anderson: Yes. It would be engineered to slow it down. They intentionally put snags in there. There's all sorts of natural engineering that goes in behind these to ensure a healthy creek corridor.

Commissioner Reckdahl: That's all my comments. Thank you, Daren.

Mr. Anderson: Thanks.

Commissioner Cribbs: My comments were just a couple about money. First, I wanted to compliment you all three on the work you've done because it's really great. It was good to hear it all. I agree with you about the cost of doing nothing because there is a cost now for the staff to be doing what you're doing. If we could know that cost per year, I think that would be helpful to have that. Second of all, Daren, with the staff recommendation, what you're asking us to recommend to the Council, what's the price tag again?
Mr. Anderson: It's asking for outside funding for that.

Commissioner Cribbs: Right. Outside funding, what's the price tag?

Mr. Anderson: We would have to go seek it, and it would be $3.7 million.

Commissioner Cribbs: I heard that, but then I had heard nine and ten. I missed a meeting last time.

Mr. Anderson: Let me clarify. The $9.7 million is the full remediation; all three areas would be included. This one is just the grade-control structures in Wildhorse Valley. That comes to $3.7 million. Separately, there's that $150,000. If, for example, we were to get the money to do the outside funding, we wouldn't use that. We wouldn't need it. If for some reason we don't, then we'll go ahead and use that $150,000 to hire a consultant to do the actual construction design to put in those new grade-control structures.

Commissioner Cribbs: Do you have somebody that you know about, either internally in the City, who seeks grants from national groups and federal groups or do we have to hire somebody to do that? If we do, should we think about doing that?

Mr. Anderson: That's a good question. We do not have a dedicated grant writer for Community Services. We do have some staff that have some skills and experience, and we've used them before. Hiring one is another option to consider. Sometimes we do that …

Commissioner Cribbs: Under contract?

Mr. Anderson: Under contract, yeah. A one-time grant writer for a project is conceivable and possible. Sometimes, we can do that through existing budget too to explore those.

Commissioner Cribbs: We'll certainly talk about it in the funding ad hoc. We have such great environmental groups in the area including Post and other people, that it would be great to take advantage of some of the things that they've learned over the years, that they've raised so much money to support open space.

Commissioner Moss: One other comment on that.

Chair McDougall: Let Jeff, and then I'll circle back.

Commissioner LaMere: One, I think this is a great idea that needs to get done. I would echo the Chair's sentiments about the utility corridor. It doesn't seem like this is optional. If the utility corridor is going to fail, then something needs to be done. I would imagine, if this were a utility corridor within the City, people would be finding ways to get this
done. I think it's extremely important from that fact. To underscore that in a presentation to the City Council would be important. The last question I have is about funding. One is what do we think the likelihood of us getting some of these grants is. Secondly, what is the likelihood of getting an offset that you had mentioned with the wetlands and what is that process?

Mr. Anderson: Good question. Absent this improvement, this new creek channel, if we were just seeking funding for the grade-control structures, I'd say it's unlikely that you would be able to grants for that. When you're creating new creek and new habitat, that's the exact kind of thing people are looking for, for two purposes, one to fund via grant, two to sell mitigation credits. There's an option. When we had originally looked at doing the entire project earlier on, the consultant had said, "It's feasible, it's possible, that you could be looking at $1 million in rights that you could sell to other projects that are impacting wetlands or riparian areas." They would buy your credit basically. This is a third of the new created habitat, so I'm imagining maybe somewhere around a third of that price perhaps—I'm not sure—could be obtained through that. Maybe that's the matching money for the grant that we could apply for. Again, these are kind of speculative. I'm not an expert in that. I'd have to do some more research, which we will do. Most of the grants I'm familiar with require some type of matching money. Perhaps ours could come from some mitigation credits, but I have to do more.

Chair McDougall: David.

Commissioner Moss: I got in the mail this week a notice that Midpeninsula Open Space Preserve was going to put on the market $50 million worth of green bonds for protecting and restoring the Bay. I was wondering if this fits what you're talking about; the improving of the habitat and the creek habitat would fit that kind of money.

Chair McDougall: Excuse me, Daren, before you answer that. I would suggest that the funding committee that we have embrace some of these thoughts that are really good. I don't think any of thoughts change what our conclusion should be tonight relative to what we're being asked, if that's okay. Go ahead, Keith.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Whose utilities are these? Are these City of Palo Alto utilities?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, they are. We are and will be asking the Utilities Department to see if they could fund some elements, especially the grade-control structures in Wildhorse Valley. They might be able to argue that the other portions don't really pertain to them. They might be able to contribute something to that. We've got an email in, and we haven't had that sit-down yet.

Commissioner Reckdahl: When you present this to Council, that would be important that this is our utilities.
Chair McDougall: Go ahead, David.

Commissioner Moss: The bridge in Las Trampas—do you think just doing the Wildhorse Canyon will still require us to move or replace the bridge in Las Trampas?

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Moss: Is that included in the $3.7 million?

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Chair McDougall: If there are no other questions, I would suggest that we proceed with the action item here. I believe I need a motion to these three recommendations that we have here; that staff recommends that the Parks and Rec Commission recommend that Council receive the Buckeye Creek hydrology report; direct staff to explore outside funding opportunities; and direct staff to add $150,000 to the capital plan. Does anybody have any modifications or suggestions relative to those three before we entertain a motion?

Commissioner Reckdahl: What is year '22?

Mr. Anderson: Fiscal year '22. It starts July 1, 2021.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Why would we put it out that far?

Mr. Anderson: It was the first time that our person that manages the capital fund thought we could get it in.

Commissioner Reckdahl: (inaudible)

Commissioner Cribbs: Can we try to accelerate that?

Mr. Anderson: I could certainly try; I could certainly ask. Even if it goes in, in '22, since every new year is re-budgeted, if there's something that's really a hot topic and something that's critical, you can always petition to move it forward. That's happened many times.

Chair McDougall: From what I've heard, one thing I would question is whether for Number 2 there, direct staff to explore outside funding—I'm not so sure that I wouldn't recommend to staff that they contract with somebody to do that. Without insulting staff and in fact complimenting staff, it seems to me that you're in over your heads with all the things that you're trying to do anyway. To spend your time selling this, I would encourage that explicitly say that we encourage you to use an outside contractor for that.
Mr. Anderson: I completely agree. The only hesitation is the funding to hire one. It's possible we could scrape that amongst existing funding.

Chair McDougall: If the Commission is encouraging you to, you might have an advantage to talk to the City Manager or something, saying "Those darn Commissioners told me to do this." The comment about how soon can it be and does it have to be '22, I would like this to say "as early as possible and no later than '22." Adding some urgency to what we're trying to do would make sense. Without detailing that out, could I have a motion including those two modifications to what we have here?

**MOTION** [See McDougall's comments above]

Commissioner Reckdahl: I so move.

Chair McDougall: Do I have a second?

Commissioner Cribbs: I second.

Chair McDougall: Everybody in favor say aye. Everybody that dissents. Thank you. This passed with those modifications. I would like to thank all three of you for your time and the effort on all of this. I expect the whole Commission to show up with their paddleball rackets or whatever might be appropriate, their hiking sticks or whatever it will be, at Council when you present this.

**Motion passed 5-0** McCauley and Greenfield absent

Mr. Anderson: Thank you so much, and thanks to the ad hoc who contributed so much.

Commissioner Moss: When will this go to Council?

Mr. Anderson: I'm not sure yet. I'll get a date and let you know at the next Commission meeting for sure.

Commissioner Cribbs: It won't be before the next Commission meeting?

Mr. Anderson: No, it will not. I don't have the date yet.

5. **Recommendation to Council to Open the 7.7 Acres**

Chair McDougall: Next is the famous 7.7 acres. In fact, I think we should just simply refer to it as "the 7.7." I'm not sure that the "acres" is needed. It doesn't seem necessary any more. Curt, I would invite you to come and sit at the table with us.

Mr. Anderson: I was wondering when we'd make that transition and drop that qualifier. Soon it'll just be called Foothills Park.
Mr. Anderson: Again, Daren Anderson, Open Space, Parks, and Golf, and my colleague Curt Dunn, Supervising Ranger at Foothills Park. This is another action item relating to allowing public access to the 7.7 acres of parkland in Foothills. What we're asking the Commission to do is to recommend that Council direct staff to open the 7.7-acre parcel at Foothills to public access, assumes the necessary security fencing for the plant nursery and for the 7-foot culvert is in place, and to direct staff to engage the community and the Commission to finalize a recommendation for Council on how to use the 7.7-acre parcel.

I want to real quickly go through the background. This parcel was given to the City in 1981 by the Lee family. They had retained the property until 1996, when it reverted to the City. From '96 to 2006, the adjacent property owner, Mr. Arrillaga, had leased the land and utilized it for that period up until 2005. It sat basically idle from that time until now. In August 2014, Council passed an ordinance dedicating it as parkland and had given direction to the Commission to facilitate the development of ideas on how to use that land. In 2014, staff led tours for the facility, did a public outreach meeting to collect feedback. In 2015, Council directed and approved the Commission and staff recommendation basically saying do the Buckeye Creek study first. The rationale behind that was perhaps this creek fix might affect how we use the 7.7 acres, so resolve that first and then open it up and figure out how to use it. When Council dedicated it as parkland, several Council Members expressed an interest in opening it to the public as soon as possible. They kept saying, "If we're looking at how to use it, how are they supposed to do it behind a fence and give you input on what to use it for?" We tried the tours, which were very poorly attended. We just couldn't get the number of people out there. They didn't show or the times were too limited. Part of the reason behind this recommendation is we've completed Council's directive to do the Buckeye Creek study first. The recommendation that we're putting forward does not interfere with the use of it. They had originally said open it as soon as you can, and that's our recommendation here today, that the study is complete. While the study included that option for doing an improvement on that land, again, that's not part of our recommendation moving forward to Council regarding Buckeye Creek. The adjacent landowner, we've been briefing them for quite some time. I should once again show you the photos. The yellow line marks the boundary of those 7.7 acres. The blue line is Buckeye Creek, which flows through it. There's an orange line that goes from the maintenance shop right through the property. That's an emergency egress and access route that travels right through onto Los Trancos Road. That has to be maintained. Then, the shop just outside is where our staff works. The Oak Grove picnic area just outside as well. Part of our recommendation is that we recognize the fact that any further development of the 7.7 acres is expected to require additional funding that we don't currently have. What we will do is the park staff would open it up now. The ad hoc committee and staff would just continue to collect feedback and work with the community to develop plans for how we might use that when the funding is available. While there aren't any amenities on that land, you could see how
close the Oak Grove picnic area is where you've got seating, you've got parking, you've got restrooms, and you've got a drinking fountain all within a very short walk. The point of that was if they were coming in and exploring the 7.7 acres, to get to those amenities is not very far if you come in and walk it. The neighboring property owner has already put in his fencing. The fencing that's left to be done is by the Acterra nursery and by the—I'm sorry, Grassroots nursery—and by this culvert that's towards the end of the property. It's that 7-foot—I think I've got a photo. This is the fence that we would take down and allow people in. This is the open flat area of the 7.7 acres. This is Buckeye Creek flowing through. That's that sediment pile I spoke about earlier, Commissioner Moss, that we would move out and remove. That would be the cost that you talked about that we'll qualify. If we're talking about removing that from the park and not just kind of making do and spreading it out, there is a cost, a rather significant one. Off-hauling material is expensive. We'll qualify that and include it in the report that goes to Council.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Do we have a backhoe (inaudible)?

Mr. Anderson: We borrow them. We do not have an open space one. Some of the cost—I think my colleague was saying, so-so we do it. We don't do it all because we lack some of that equipment. We would be asking Public Works to drive up. Again, that was a service that was once provided by that landowner who has a caretaker with a backhoe, who would come in and do this for us. Now that it's open parkland or will be soon, something he no longer does. We would be reliant on renting one or leaning on a contractor or Public Works (crosstalk).

Commissioner Reckdahl: Does Public Works do it for free or do we have to …

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, they typically would help us. It's possible.

Chair McDougall: Actually, we'd probably have to rent one, and they're really expensive.

Mr. Anderson: This is that 7-foot diameter culvert. There's a steep embankment off to the left of this picture where the 7.7 acres stops and comes down this edge. This is the area that we would also have to fence and secure to keep people out.

Commissioner Moss: You're going to have a fence that'll protect—people will not be able to come up from there or go down into there.

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, it would stop them. Eventually, we'll probably add one, but we don't have a design for it yet that would cover the actual hole itself. What we'll start with, however, is some fencing on the sort of levee edge. As the 7.7 stops, you've got that deep decline; we'd stop them right there with some fencing and signage that says stay out. As I looked at other spots—we were debating this internally quite a bit. As I look at other spots in Foothills, we said, "That's steep, and somebody could get in the hole." I've got a
number of similar areas all throughout open space that we don't have any fencing on, we
don't have signage on. It's just understood people aren't going to go down into the flood
basin and crawl into the tide gate where you can get trapped. It's never happened, and I
don't think we need to go overboard on putting up so much fencing or so much protection
for something that's never going to happen.

Commissioner Reckdahl: There are trails on steep (crosstalk) if you fall off that you're
dead.

Mr. Anderson: I think we can do it with the appropriate amount of aesthetically pleasing
fencing that looks right, stops people, and educates them to stay out. That's our game
plan.

Commissioner Moss: It won't inhibit stuff from going down there. If you dam it up,
that's going to be a problem.

Mr. Anderson: We're going to have to figure that out too. If we eventually block it,
doing it in such a way where it helps the problem rather than adds to it.

Commissioner Moss: What about access from the neighborhood into Foothills Park
along that?

Mr. Anderson: That's something we've talked about for a long time. There have been a
lot of requests over the year, can people come up that Los Trancos Road. Unfortunately,
it passes through private property. We've talked to the property owner; they are not
interested in opening that up because it brings you literally right in front of their front
yard and back yard. They weren't willing to entertain that. I guess the next steps and
timeline is that staff would share this recommendation concurrent with the Buckeye
Creek recommendation to Council. It would go as a package much like it is to you
tonight. Anything else to add from you, Curt?

Mr. Dunn: The only thing is that that creek, the 7-foot culvert. The underground section
is on private property. It outflows into another section of private property that's co-
owned by many families. Beyond that one, then it goes near the roadway at Los Trancos
Road. Currently, I don't think there's access on either side of it.

Commissioner Moss: That was my question, whether people could walk up Los Trancos
Road and come into the park that way. It sounds really convoluted.

Chair McDougall: Anne, do you have a question?

Commissioner Cribbs: Yes, I do. The only cost in here as it goes to Council is $25,000
and then …
Mr. Anderson: Approximately.

Commissioner Cribbs: Approximately, yeah. And then the cost of your guys who are now doing whatever little they are able to do. You've just extended your workload. Am I right?

Mr. Anderson: You raise a good point because now we've got a part of the park that was always closed. It's remote. We've talked about this in the ad hoc, what does it mean for the rangers. They've got to get back there and make sure people aren't up to no good because you are isolated, you are at a place where you could do bad things. We don't anticipate this is going to be a real heavily used spot. You do have a nursery that's on occasion staffed by the Grassroots people. There are some eyes back there, but we would need ranger staff to swing by. Luckily, our base of operations is right there, so I don't think it's too unreasonable. I don't think it will be an undue burden.

Commissioner Cribbs: Seven acres is a lot. In the report, I think it would be good to mention the fact that our staff has expanded their responsibility because of the 7 acres.

Mr. Anderson: Will do.

Commissioner Cribbs: Thank you.

Chair McDougall: In the ad hoc, we talked a lot about that, to look at that from both sides. I think there is a risk associated with opening this up in terms of visibility and whatnot, exactly your point. The other thing we talked about is that we keep talking about 7.7 acres, but there's really no more than an acre here. So much of this is on that very steep hill behind. One of the recommendations the ad hoc made was why don't we just connect it to the rest of the park because you can extend a hiking path up through there. Wouldn't that be neat? The consultant came back and said it was way too dangerous. If you think other places are dangerous, that was even more dangerous to put a hiking trail. It's only really an acre, maybe an acre and a half of flatland that we're … That doesn't decrease the amount of risk because of the hidden nature of the area. Are there any other questions or comments at this point?

Commissioner Reckdahl: The only question I would have is—right now I see two options. Basically do minimal, which we're recommending. The other is if we had a lot of money, we would go through and do what the whole consultant said and make the stream meander. Is there any other options other than those?

Mr. Anderson: I think so. I think part of that outreach process will be what other amenities, should we be adding some restoration. This is a fairly unrestored site. You've got 5 feet of overburden, which is really poor material that came out of the adjacent quarries long ago. It's poor soil. You could do a lot of restoration on that site. It kind of
calls out for it. You could add other amenities if someone wanted some benches or some seating areas. There are other options. When we did our original outreach, some of them were on the high end. There was a grouping of recreation-related recommendations, dog park, BMX tracks, camping, group picnic areas, those kind of things were all …

Commissioner Reckdahl: A pavilion.

Mr. Anderson: A meeting pavilion area, a place for outdoor education. That kind of fit into the family of recreation. There was a separate camp that said you could also be looking at restoration. This could be a good place for kids to study science and look at maybe getting neighboring universities to come out and experiment with plots on what kind of restoration works best. It could also just be through our partnership with Grassroots, where they start working in there. There was also these restoration ideas too. I think we reach out to the community again. The only qualifier is we don't have an enormous amount of money sitting there for huge investments in this area. It'd have to be something we could do over time and that's realistic or maybe there's outside funding.

Commissioner Cribbs: Did we get costs for that yet, those ideas?

Mr. Anderson: No. None of them were explored. We stopped at …

Commissioner Cribbs: It would be pretty cool to get the cost for those kinds of things. I'm sure there's some interest from people. That's an ad hoc thing too.

Chair McDougall: The ad hoc went through that, and the answer is yes. What we're trying to do here is be responsive to opening up the 7.7 acres. The question that I had asked Daren and then I backed off on but I'm going to go back to is I would like us to be saying that we are opening it temporarily as-is to evaluate—to give people the opportunity to see it, and then we might come back and then do exactly what Commissioner Cribbs is talking about. You may want to say, to tell them, what the possibilities are that have been talked about. If you don't tell them that, they'll tell you that. I think you might be better to put that in your grasp to start off with, that these are the possibilities. We don't have the money, so we're opening it up so we can have more discussion, so we can—but here are the things that your Commission has participated in discussion. I think that would help. Remind them that it's only an acre and a half. Jeff, do you have any comments? Are you okay? I'd like to see if we could get a motion for the two items that are here, to open the 7.7 acres as soon as possible. I would suggest that what we need to add in there is a cost range. You've said maybe $35,000, but I'd like us to say $25,000-$50,000 or something so that we could add an extra barbed wire on top of some fence or something if you had to. I would think that that cost needs to be in there. I think we're not temporarily opening it, so we need a better word. We're not temporarily opening it to close it again; we're temporarily opening it as-is, and then we'll see whether
it stays as-is or if something else happens to it. I think that should be explicit. I'd like to recommend that that be explicit in the motion. Is that fair?

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Chair McDougall: Can I get a motion on that effect?

**MOTION** [See McDougall's comments above]

Commissioner Reckdahl: I so move.

Commissioner Cribbs: I second.

Chair McDougall: All in favor. Daren, thank you again.

Motion passed 5-0 McCauley and Greenfield absent

Mr. Anderson: Thanks very much.

Chair McDougall: Even though it's only the 7 acres, it was as hairy a discussion because of where it came from and because of the neighbor. Those backhoes are really, really, really expensive.

Commissioner Cribbs: You can borrow one from a neighbor like a cup of sugar.

Chair McDougall: Anne, you can't borrow those anywhere. Ranger Curt, thank you for attending.

**6. Cubberley Turf Field Temporary Lighting Plan**

Chair McDougall: The next item on the agenda, the Cubberley temporary lighting. I'd like to invite Adam Howard to join us at the table, as they say. He can be in the room when it happened.

Adam Howard: Good evening, Commissioners. Thank you for having me this evening. It's getting late. We're here tonight to ask the Commission to accept a temporary lighting proposal given to us by the Palo Alto Soccer Club. We're going to just go over a little, brief background and then touch on some of the points in the proposal. I did print out more just so I'd make sure you guys have the most up-to-date. There are some for the public. This might be the exact same one you've got, but I just wanted to be sure of that. I'm going to invite Neal Aronson up from Palo Alto Soccer Club to join me.

Chair McDougall: Welcome Neal.
Mr. Howard: As Daren pulls this up, just a quick background here. During winter months—we're really talking December through March during daylight savings—we have a real shortage of available lit fields. The City of Palo Alto has three. They are booked Monday through Friday and weekends, but we're really talking Monday through Friday, 4:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. solid. There is no available extra space. When Palo Alto Soccer Club suggested this proposal, we thought it was something we should look into. It does allow for some additional space to be used during those winter times. The proposal we're talking about is specifically—we're asking February 19-March 11, so it's actually less than a month. We thought it was a good way to see if this would work and then move forward. Excuse me, it's February 12-March 11.

Neal Aronson: Good evening, everybody. Thank you for your time again. As we've discussed before, we're looking for some temporary time. This would be a trial period to see if it works, to see if we're able to conduct these additional field sessions without any undue disruption, I guess, to the community. As Adam was saying, we're talking about the 12th to March 11th or as soon as the Council, I guess, can approve it if that's necessary. I'm still unclear if that's necessary, and I guess it is. The timing would be effectively when we start to lose the light, which is still in the 5:00 hour. We would end practices at 8:15 with a hard stop, lights off at 8:30. The system that we're proposing is a trailer light structure provided by a vendor called DC Solar Solutions. They're based in Venetia. It's a hybrid solar battery/diesel system. We don't really expect it to use the diesel generator at all. We have talked to them recently on the basis of a couple of suggestions that came up with regard to specifically a max time if the generator would run at all. We can enforce that. I think I suggested 4 hours a week max. We really don't think it's going to require any diesel at all. To Commissioner Moss's suggestion regarding one particular corner of the field, I think it's the southwest corner that's the most shaded part of the field. If that particular unit wasn't getting enough light, we would rotate them around. That's not difficult to do; the vendor volunteered to do that for us. I think they're pretty confident that it's not going to be a problem. These solar panels don't require direct sunlight. Just ambient sunlight should be plenty. Unfortunately, based on the winter we're having today, probably if this continues, we're not going to have any problems. Hopefully we'll get some rain. Assuming they run on solar battery, there's very little noise, in fact zero noise and zero exhaust. That would be the perfect scenario. What we're initially proposing is that we would put four units out there on each corner. We've adjusted the alignment of the field based on our last conversation with the Commission. If necessary, we could put two additional ones out there. Instead of putting them on the corner and the diagonal right along the track, we've moved them onto the turf completely. Again, they would probably have plywood or some kind of base underneath them, so that we're not creating any indentations in the turf. This shouldn't create any problems for either play or track users. The two additional units, if needed, would be placed on the field between the track and the sideline. There is enough spacing in there; I've measured it out. It shouldn't be a problem. If we were to go with those extra units,
we of course would create some additional safety bumpers or padding if needed so as not
to interrupt field play. You've seen this slide before. They're LED lights. Based on my
research and the research of the vendor, LED is a non-glare light. The neighborhood
association came back with some comments that we wanted to address. One of them was
is it a non-glare light. As I understand it, LED lights by definition are non-glare lights.
That's what I found when I googled it, if we believe what we read on the internet. The
sound of the generator is pretty quiet, 68 decibels at 23 feet. I couldn't find a sample of
that. The rest is self-explanatory. One of the questions that the community association
came up with is drop-off and parking along Nelson. This was one that has created a
number of comments. We had a good conversation with Jeff Kmetec. Jeff is the
neighborhood association president and ironically a Palo Alto Soccer Club parent. We
have a very good relationship with Jeff. Jeff was very helpful. He identified that the
Nelson drop-off is a critical issue. What we believe we can do as a club is enforce a no
drop-off rule for teams that are practicing at this hour. I put a yellow bar or section up
there along the access to Nelson. What we would propose is that for the first week or two
and as long as necessary—hopefully parents will get the message—of these sessions, we
would have coaches out there and just say, "No, sorry. You've got to drive all the way
around." If we run into problems, we can take additional steps like barring kids from
playing in games and so forth and so on. Hopefully, it won't get to that. We have some
steps that we can enforce to make sure parents don't do this. That's a change that we've
made to our proposal today. Again, the units are very secure and safe, so we don't expect
any vandalism. They are monitored 24 hours a day. We can provide, if necessary, the
phone number to probably somebody in the club or to the 24-hour notice if we need to, if
there are any complaints from neighbors. Now that they're off the track completely, there
probably won't be much issue with coning off the track or anything like that. I think we
covered all that stuff. We appreciate your consideration.

Mr. Howard: I'll jump in here. We put public outreach—we had a meeting scheduled for
the 17th; it wasn't very well attended. We later found out that the postcards I'd sent out
took over 2 weeks to arrive, so they came the Friday after the meeting was scheduled. I
really wanted to apologize to the members of the public. It was not something done
intentionally. We are looking to get as much in put as we can. I have emailed both
neighborhood associations. I actually went door to door with the postcard and
information to try to (a) extend my apologies for the mail mishap and (b) make sure
they're aware. I did say that I will give them another opportunity to come speak to me
directly on the 25th, which is Thursday. I think that will be a part of my regular outreach
during this trial period, making sure we're not hearing complaints, making sure we're
addressing any issues that come up, and making sure that afterwards they have another
opportunity to provide us with feedback to really let us know how this went, if there were
any major concerns. Palo Alto Soccer and the City really, really, want to be good
neighbors on this project. We think it's a good thing for youth soccer, but we want to
make sure we're being good to the neighbors. We're very open to that. This next meeting
will be a part of that, but it's the commitment that we will continue to communicate through the entire process to make sure we're being good neighbors in this. That's the information we have. I'll open it up to questions.

Chair McDougall: Any questions? Commissioner Jeff please.

Commissioner LaMere: This project to me is an extremely important project to do our best with what we've proposed in terms of looking at the drop-off and looking at how these lights are going to work. One of the reasons I think it's so important is that we have fast-tracked it essentially, which is fairly unusual for us to be able to do. To be able to accomplish something so quickly and to see how it's going to work is really important for it to be where nobody gets dropped off at Nelson. This is a project that, if it works, maybe we are able to do lighting again next winter or maybe we're able to identify even other fields around Palo Alto that could use lighting that can increase field use. We know how the lack of field space, especially in the evenings in winter, is. I think it's really, really important that we do everything that we're trying to do and that we say we're going to do with this project because, if it can be successful, it can be a great model going forward. I think that's extremely important and also an extremely exciting opportunity. A quick question about the liability insurance and the liability if someone does get hurt on the lights if it's outside soccer practice, if it's someone from the community that is there. Is the City responsible? Is it solely Palo Alto Soccer Club and their insurance? What's the liability if something happens to someone or something happens to the lights?

Mr. Howard: The lighting company provides insurance for the time period that the lights will be out there. It'll cover the lights as long as they're there. Even if it were to happen off practice time, the company takes care of that with their insurance.

Commissioner LaMere: That takes care if someone gets hurt with the lights? Is that what you're …

Mr. Howard: Right, safety and the maintenance of the lights.

Commissioner LaMere: In terms of have we looked at—is there a study or anything where we've looked at other fields that are high-use fields and could use lights in the future? Is that something that we think about as a recreation department?

Mr. Howard: We do, and Daren might want to speak to this. Really the only fields that can handle the additional play is turf, so this is really the only turf field in Palo Alto that's not lit. It'd be the only one we'd consider lighting because a grass field couldn't handle the additional play.

Commissioner LaMere: Thank you.
Chair McDougall: Go ahead, David.

Commissioner Moss: Thank you very much for addressing all the issues that we brought up last time. I'm really happy with the answers. To his point about other turf fields, it may turn out that we convert some of the grass fields to turf over time, if this works out. Also, I wonder whether the School District, Gunn and Paly and Terman, has fields that we can use at night or is it just our parks.

Mr. Howard: Gunn and Paly both have lit turf fields. Again, the City does not have access to those fields even at night, the high schools. The middle schools we do, but again none of those fields are turf.

Chair McDougall: Keith.

Commissioner Reckdahl: As I mentioned last time, I love the concept of a trial period. If it doesn't work out, we haven't invested anything permanent. I see this as a no-lose situation. I'm really glad that you're enforcing the no drop-off at Nelson; that was a big concern for the neighbors. I don't want you to discourage walking or biking through Nelson because people can bike to the soccer. We want to encourage that, in fact. If they want to go through Nelson from a bike transit standpoint, Nelson is much better than Middlefield. I don't want to discourage that. I was very glad that you got the lights off the track. I was worried about people using the off-hours. I even got familiar with your practices. Do your practices use the whole field or will those four corners suffice for your drills that you're doing?

Mr. Aronson: Practices typically don't use the entire field. Most often they're just drills and so forth. We'll set up smaller—they're called bow nets, if you will. They're temporary stick goals. It also depends how many teams we try to get out there. We're envisioning probably three teams practicing at one time. If we have two or three slots, depending on how long they are—either 1 1/2-hour or 1-hour slots. We're not sure yet; we haven't worked out all those details. The goal would be to get three teams two or three times during that period. They would obviously be focused on the areas that have the light. Based on our recent experience in Mayfield, you can still practice where there's less light, but it just makes it a little more complicated.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Have you done a trial by bringing lights out to these (crosstalk)?

Mr. Aronson: We haven't. We were going to try to do that, but we ran out of time.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I'd like to see does it light enough of the field, but also is there any glare that bounces off the field.
Mr. Aronson: These lights are positionable. If you look at the image of the actual structure, you can move the lights and point them exactly where you want to. Again, LEDs don't necessarily have the same kind of pollution, as we understand it, that a halogen or a sodium light might.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I don't see any visors on that.

Mr. Aronson: It's hard to see in there. I haven't seen the actual structure up close and personal. My understanding is they are directional and there is a little bit of a cone, I guess you could say.

Commissioner Moss: To make sure that it's on the field, not into somebody's back yard.

Mr. Aronson: That's right. Again, these lights—that could be something that, if somebody wanted to mess with it, they could maybe get a stick or a broomstick and try to move the light around. We'd want to make sure we could adjust this and so forth. They are, I think, 20 feet up. My sense is it would be a hard thing to adjust if you were trying to mess with it.

Commissioner Reckdahl: You're saying if you're trying to adjust it?

Mr. Aronson: If somebody were trying to vandalize it.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm not worried about that. I would encourage you—you're talking February. What was the date?

Mr. Aronson: February 12th, which is a Monday.

Commissioner Reckdahl: If that's when you start using it, when will you have your trial?

Mr. Aronson: The trial period would start February 12th and run to basically the day of daylight savings time.

Commissioner Reckdahl: You're not going to move the lights up there a couple of nights ahead of time?

Chair McDougall: Keith, we agreed that a trial period—this was a short enough trial period that having a trial period for the trial period—in the ad hoc meeting we addressed this. We came to the conclusion that the risk is—by the way, if after 2 days—they start on the 12th, and on Valentine's Day we've already concluded that it's a nuisance, then the trial stops. I don't think we need the trial before the trial.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I was just worried about them, not so much for the neighbors but for you to set up the lights and point them where you want them.
Mr. Aronson: I think the first night will be a figure-it-out …

Commissioner Reckdahl: A trial by fire.

Mr. Aronson: Trial by fire, right. We'll get out there, and we'll probably have the technician from the lighting company out there as well. We'll set it up and adjust them as needed that first day.

Commissioner Reckdahl: You've set it up with the neighbors? If there's problems, they'll call Adam or …

Mr. Howard: Yep, they have my contact information.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm very happy with this. I think it has a lot of potential and very limited downside. I would encourage it.

Chair McDougall: There was a debate within the ad hoc. We wanted to give them David's phone number, but …

Commissioner Reckdahl: They'll be calling David regardless.

Chair McDougall: Anne, last but not least.

Commissioner Cribbs: Thank you. I appreciate that. That's okay. I just wanted to say that I'm really happy to see where this has evolved. Adam, you've done a great job working not only with the ad hoc but with your staff and Palo Alto Soccer Club. Kudos to you guys for bringing it to the City and actually being so, I think, very understanding about the needs of the neighbors and certainly respect for what they're thinking about. I don't see how we're going to have anything but good stuff coming out of this. We're certainly going to learn a lot. Could you just tell me two things. It says here Monday through Thursday. There's no Friday use, is that what I'm reading?

Mr. Aronson: Typically, we don't have practices on Friday. The teams are often given a break because of games on Saturdays and Sundays.

Commissioner Cribbs: What is your percentage of girls versus boys in Palo Alto Soccer?

Mr. Aronson: I'm going to wing this, so this is from memory. We have about 1,000 kids in the club. It's pretty darn close to 50/50. I think we have of the 70, 75 teams, 30 are girls and the other 40, 45 are boys. It's pretty close. On the younger end, girls are coming on strong. It's wonderful to see that the girls' teams are as many and more enthusiastic than the boys' teams at the younger ages.
Commissioner Cribbs: Good. Thank you very much for that. That will not make me ask the last question, which is I'm assuming the girls are going to get us the lighting?

Mr. Aronson: Absolutely.

Commissioner Cribbs: Good. Thank you very much.

Chair McDougall: Let me go back to the opening. Daren, this is a recommendation. The question is can the Commission approve this and you go off and do it or does this have to go to Council? That would determine what kind of motion or whether we need a motion.

Mr. Anderson: That's right. Adam, you've had discussion with the City Manager on this.

Mr. Howard: Kristen O'Kane, the Assistant Director, says that if you guys accept it, they'll go to Council on an informational item.

Commissioner Reckdahl: There's no PIO.

Chair McDougall: Before we entertain a motion, the topic here has been the temporary lighting on the Cubberley turf field. I would like to recommend that what we have been considering is a trial of short-term lighting for Cubberley turf field and track. That should be the topic that we're addressing if everybody understands that structure. Can I have a motion that we instruct staff to take this as an information item to City Council and that we the Commission is approving this cooperation with the Palo Alto Soccer Club?

**MOTION** [See McDougall's comments above]

Commissioner LaMere: I move.

Chair McDougall: Can I have a second?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I second.

Chair McDougall: Everybody in favor say aye. Anybody opposed. Thank you for the effort we've put into this. I would like to echo what Jeff said. It's exciting to have this addressed quickly and cooperatively like this. Thank you for the efforts you've put into the trial of short-term lighting for the Cubberley turf field and track.

**Motion passed 5-0** McCauley and Greenfield absent

7. **Baylands Boardwalk Improvements**

Chair McDougall: The next topic—I'll let Meghan get set up—is the Baylands Boardwalk improvement. I'll turn it over to Meghan. I have that right, don't I, Meghan?
Megha Bansal: Megha.

Chair McDougall: I'll ask Megha to introduce the other two please.

Ms. Bansal: Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Megha Bansal with Public Works Department. I would like to introduce our team here tonight. Elizabeth Ames is the project manager, and John Aiken from Community Services Department and our environmental consultant, John Hesler, from DJ Powers. We are here tonight to provide you an informational update on the Baylands Boardwalk project. This was a follow-up item from our previous meeting with you for Park Improvement Ordinance recommendation in September. Our overview tonight. We'll give a brief overview of the project elements. Then, we will provide further clarification to your comments and concerns that were discussed in September meeting as well as we'll provide an update on CEQA comments, ARB comments, some design updates, status update on regulatory permits. Then, John will provide an overview of the interpretive signage program in the Baylands, particularly to the Boardwalk project. Then, we will wrap up with schedule and next steps. This is the big picture of the project. I will not go into details of the design elements as we have discussed them several times in previous meetings. The big picture is this project replaces the existing Boardwalk with a new accessible Boardwalk on the same alignment. Everything will be new, new decking, piles and supports, amenities. We will have four new overlooks and one observation platform. I would like to start with one of your main concerns from September meeting. The Commission was concerned that the proposed higher Boardwalk will not give the users the same experience as the existing Boardwalk. I would like to reiterate the regulatory requirements by BCDC, Bay Area Conservation and Development Commission. The project is in the BCDC jurisdiction; therefore, we need a permit from BCDC to build this Boardwalk. BCDC's policy is that the proposed project should meet FEMA 100-year flood elevation, which is 11.1 feet elevation, and it should be resilient to mid-century sea level rise prediction, which is 2 feet for the area. If you add these two components, it takes us to 13.11 feet. With consultation with BCDC, we decided that we should be using 13 1/2 feet elevation for the Boardwalk deck, which would match the newly renovated Interpretive Center deck as well as the observation platform. I also have a graphic view of the proposed Boardwalk height with respect to the existing Boardwalk. As you can see on this graphic, the existing Boardwalk is about 2.1 feet higher than the original ground elevation. The proposed Boardwalk will be 5.7 feet higher than the existing ground. It incorporates the BCDC criteria, which is FEMA 100-year flood elevation as well as 2-foot sea level rise. That takes us to—basically the proposed Boardwalk is roughly 3 1/2 feet higher than the existing Boardwalk. I would also like to point out that when we first initiated our discussion with BCDC, we proposed a deck height of 11.5 feet, but BCDC rejected it. They asked us to use 13 1/2 feet to meet their requirements. We believe that if we go back to BCDC to reduce the Boardwalk deck height, first of all the project will not be permitible [sic]. There will be significant delays.
in the project. All the permit applications have been submitted. It would reset the permit process as well as the CEQA document has been adopted. It would require major updates to the CEQA document. The other comment from the Commission was if we can provide closer access to marsh by providing stair down to the marshland. Again, this does not meet BCDC policies and their requirements as well as it would not provide equal access per ADA standards. BCDC required us to prepare a shade study when we first initiated the discussion with them. It would require further evaluation to assess impact on vegetation growth under the wider section of the structure. Again, it would mean potential updates to the approved CEQA document and delays on the project. Another main comment from the Commission was we added raptor-deterrent rollers. There is a sample here. We added raptor-deterrent rollers that would be attached on top of the railing. The Commission was concerned that if someone hold onto these rollers, they will be slipping hazards. This was added to the design based on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services' input. We really cannot remove it from the design. Based on your input in the previous meeting, we are adding handrail on both sides of the Boardwalk.

Chair McDougall: That makes sense. That's great.

Ms. Bansal: Again, CEQA update. CEQA Mitigated Negative Declaration was adopted, and a Notice of Determination was filed in November of last year. We only received one comment from the Santa Clara Valley Water District during CEQA circulation. That was for routine inspection for spill prevention during construction. This would be added to the contractor's contract; this requirement will be added. There were no other CEQA comments. ARB recommended approval of the project in October unanimously; however, they provided some suggestions. Most of the suggestions were related to design details, refining the details. Some of them were deck staining was not preferred because it is a huge long-term maintenance issue. If you remember, one of the samples here shows all board elements will be stained in this gray color per Palo Alto Baylands Guidelines. The Guidelines require that if you stain, then you have to stain in this color, but it is not a requirement. We have decided not to stain only the deck. The railings will still be stained to provide some protection, but the deck will not be stained. However, we will do clear staining to prevent any damage due to foot traffic. They also wanted us to specify types and grades of redwood that we will do. They wanted us to explore alternatives to Alaskan yellow cedars. ARB also suggested installing handrail, which we are doing. Their recommendation was to use stainless steel fasteners if possible because of the marsh environment. The design update based on your comments and ARB comments. We are adding wooden handrail on both sides of the Boardwalk. The deck will be clear stained to provide some protection, and stainless steel fasteners will be included as add alternate in the bid. Regulatory permits. We have the top three, U.S. Army Corps, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and BCDC, permits. These are the three permits required for the project. We have submitted applications for all three in September and October of last year. John Hesler, do you have anything to add? John's
John Hesler: Yeah. Good evening, Commissioners. I'll just add on that once the applications are submitted in this permit process, one of the key things is to keep dogging the staff of these agencies. Otherwise, things have a habit of getting delayed. Our goal on the team—we've heard loud and clear from the community and everybody—is to get this rebuilt ASAP. The other restriction we have is—because of the Ridgway rail restrictions out there, we can only construct from September 1 'til the end of January. That's our window when we're allowed out there. That means backing up. We're pulling out all the stops to get all those permits in hand this spring so you guys can go out to bid and then construct starting in September. Right now, it's looking very hopeful. You can never be 100% with these agencies. Everything we've heard so far is that they're supportive of the project.

Chair McDougall: And good luck.

Ms. Bansal: Quickly on schedule and next steps before John Aiken will provide update on the interpretive signage. After our meeting with the Commission in September, we went to ARB, and ARB approved the project. CEQA was adopted in November. Our next step is to go to Council for review and approval of the Park Improvement Ordinance. All applications were submitted in September and October of last year. We are very hopeful, like John said, to get our permits soon so we can start construction in September. With that, I turn it over to John for Boardwalk signage plan.

John Aiken: Good evening, Commissioners. John Aiken from Community Services. The Boardwalk signage plan is part of a larger plan that looks at adding signage to trails that connect the Cooley Landing Education Center in East Palo Alto to Lucy Evans Nature Center, which is about 2 1/2 miles of trails. That came out of really two things. One is we started to look at the need for interpretation on the Boardwalk as part of this project. At the time, we were also teaching at Cooley Landing, and we realized that that underserved community didn't have enough signage on that part of the trail and that there were a lot of people utilizing that area and a fair amount of crossover back and forth. We came up with this broader context for the signage. It also includes the Interpretive Center deck. The examples you'll see tonight are actually designs from that Interpretive Center deck. They're in the style that will be out on the Boardwalk. This is a washed out slide that's actually showing the plan of the Boardwalk. The Lucy Evans Nature Center is to the left, and mid-Boardwalk is to the right. There are a number of types of interpretive signage that we're doing because we have interpretive programs where educators are going out. They stand next to a guidepost essentially to do education programs. For the public, there are both signs and interpretive elements. There are the rest of them out there. They're really organized along those four out-pouchings of the Boardwalk and
then the overlook at the end; that's where they're clustered. Here are some examples.

We're trying to build them into the railings so that the actual signage fits into the top bar of the actual railings and doesn't stick above it and block people's view. This is an example of a sign that has an illustration. We're using a number of different types of media because people have all kinds of learning styles. We're trying to cover those learning styles. The next one shows an example of the test with a photograph. The next one shows a text with a bronze casting, a tactile element to be able to feel, in this case, the differences between the three types of saltmarsh plants that live out there. That same interactive casting or tactile thing may be used in other ways, not just with the signage. We may install those as standalone signs. We're also looking at interactive elements, things that move and engage people in different ways. This is a railing-mounted sediment wheel. You essentially spin it, and the sediments that are in there go into solution. You see how long it takes the sediment to drop out of solution. If you have a couple of these side by side with different sediments, it helps people understand how the marsh is built over time by some sediments are moved more quickly than other sediments. Other interactive elements include sliders, things that change the nature of the sign when you move it back and forth. You can see what's going on at high tide versus low tide in this example. I think this is our last example, a below-railing-mounted cross-section of the marsh, where you could see the types of life that live below you in the mud.

These are all conceptual designs. We still need to go through a design process, and we'll come back with further refined designs as we move forward. This project is also not funded; we're seeking funding. We've got a grant into the State of California; they just came out and did an inspection last week. We're feeling positive about that, but it's a very competitive grant process. With that, we're ready for questions.

Chair McDougall: Elizabeth, did you have anything to add?

Elizabeth Ames: Thank you, Commissioners. We really appreciate all the input that you've provided to us. We had a community meeting in May of last year. I'm sure everybody's anxious to see this happen. What we're trying to do is get the permits in spring instead of summer, like it says on the slide, and then go out to bid after we get the permits and then try to order the materials ahead of time because the yellow Alaskan cedar has a lead time. We're really going to be breaking ground on September 1st. This is our ultimate goal. We really appreciate you helping us expedite this process. If you have any questions, we're ready for you.

Chair McDougall: This time around, I'd like to give Anne the opportunity to go first.

Commissioner Cribbs: I only have one small question. John, what state agency did you apply for this particular grant?

Mr. Aiken: It's the Resources Agency. It's an outdoor education grant.
Commissioner Cribbs: Thank you very much.

Chair McDougall: Mr. Reckdahl. You were sitting beside a red light there. Use either on, use them both.

Commissioner Reckdahl: This one's broken. If I use both, it'll be the same if I just use this one. I still don't understand the height. It says the Boardwalk is designed to be resilient to accommodate projected sea level rise. There's no electricity here. There's nothing that's going to be damaged by exposure to water. Even if you do have a high tide and this gets wet, I don't understand why that would not be considered resilient. It's not going to break.

Mr. Hesler: If the BCDC policies are aimed at everything along the Bay that is subject to inundation, they would theoretically be usable even during a sea level/high tide event. Now, I know why you're looking at me that way. It kind of ignores the fact that in many of these cases—this is true in a lot of projects we've worked on—they're asking for the new facility to be up very high, but you could never get to it in one of those events unless you had a boat, and everything else is going to be under water. Their rationale, their logic is that, yes, that may be true, but we have to start somewhere. We're going to be working over many years and decades toward having as many facilities as possible not subject to inundation.

Commissioner Reckdahl: They're talking about like a one in a million thing. All these things have to stack up. We'll be under water for 15 minutes, and then the tide will come down. It just seems like we're over-engineering.

Mr. Hesler: As Megha said, when we first went to BCDC, we had a whole tidal study done by our hydrologist. We presented them with all of the data, and they rejected it. They came back to us on the team and told us they wanted it at the same height as the new deck on the renovated Interpretive Center.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Do they understand that this is not a transit boardwalk, but purely an observational boardwalk?

Mr. Hesler: Yes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: It just makes no sense to me.

Mr. Anderson: If I could add just a note. I had the privilege of taking care of that Boardwalk while it was limping along for the last 18 years or so. That meant all the nails, the screws that had rotted out because they were inundated. All the low areas that did receive—not the whole Boardwalk would get inundated with the high tides; even at king tides, there were only portions. Those that did, the wood had rotted quicker, and all
the metal fixtures, both under and top, that affix the Boardwalk planks had all rotted out. What I had was bowing boards and hazards left and right. There's a maintenance advantage of having it elevated above that tidal influence, where you're not going to have those materials, both the wood and the metal, rotting out at an advanced rate.

Commissioner Reckdahl: If we go back to Slide 5. Aren't we going to have metal down here? It'd be different if all the metal was just up here, but there's going to be metal through the whole building.

Mr. Anderson: There will still be some (crosstalk).

Ms. Bansal: There will still be (inaudible). If you look at this graphic, the existing Boardwalk height—the 100-year flood elevation is higher than that. What we presented to BCDC initially was 11.5 feet of deck height, which was based on 100-year flood, and they wanted us to add 2 feet of sea level rise.

Commissioner Reckdahl: It just has to be resilient to it.

Chair McDougall: Can I interrupt briefly? I happen to agree. The 100-year flood—half of Palo Alto is going to be under water, so nobody's going to be out there walking on this thing. The only context in which it's interesting to have this conversation as opposed to just shake our heads is if we're going to say this thing is so high and so ugly at 13 feet in the air, we'd rather not have it. If that's the conversation we want to get into, then we should declare that conversation and have it. Otherwise, I'm not sure we're helping ourselves or—I'm just trying to create a context.

Commissioner Reckdahl: If we can lower it by 2 feet, we'd get a better product. We'd still have something that's resilient. We're painting ourselves in the corner of having a sub-optimal design.

Chair McDougall: Let me add that what staff is telling us—I would add to my conversation of we'd rather not have it or, in fact, we'd rather wait another year, at least another year. I'm willing to trust that they've done the work that we're not going to change the height. John.

Mr. Hesler: If I may. I totally understand where you're coming from. The issue with BCDC is there's no magic number. They want us to do everything that's practical. Had we from Day 1 come to them and said, "We want to set it at X feet because the geologic studies or the structural issues are precluding something heavier or taller," they would have been fine with that. The issue, though, is in this case from their perspective—we didn't have any data either—there was no reason for us not to agree to the 13.5, especially since the deck on the Interpretive Center was that.
Commissioner Reckdahl: That's apples and oranges. The purpose of the deck on the Interpretive Center is one thing, and the Boardwalk is to get down into the pickleweed.

Mr. Hesler: I understand. From their perspective, given the predictions and the data that we had given them, they wanted the 13.5. We were faced with a dilemma. If we had said, "No, we're not going to do it," we weren't able to give them any rationale like geologic constraints or engineering constraints.

Commissioner Reckdahl: User experience is a reasonable reason.

Mr. Hesler: True.

Commissioner Reckdahl: We design a lot of stuff to optimize the user experience.

Mr. Hesler: I'm not saying this is logical.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm beating a dead horse, and we should move on.

Chair McDougall: Let me let Anne ask another question.

Commissioner Cribbs: I'm just agreeing that I think this is a crazy discussion. We are beating a dead horse. I'd love to ask has anybody ever won or changed BCDC's mind. In my experience, it hasn't.

Mr. Hesler: It would be very difficult. If we went back and said we want to change the design to have it lower, this year will be off the table immediately. Likely, we would have a difficult time in getting it permitted. Secondarily, the fact that the new facility is going to be wider than the existing, we had an issue with potentially having to have mitigation because of the shading from the structure decreasing the vegetation under the structure. By having it higher, we offset the shading. That was another thing that we were trying to do from Day 1, which is to not get the project and the City into this mitigation mess that could be very costly and very difficult to find in a place like this. That was also in play. It was another reason why it was a little bit higher than we ideally would have wanted it, but we had the huge benefit of not having to have mitigation.

Ms. Ames: Thank you. That was what I wanted to point out. There are two federally endangered species, the saltmarsh harvest mouse and the Ridgway rail. You need the habitat to support the species. The Boardwalk ironically was wider, which could have caused more shading, but then it was higher so it allowed light to come in and create more habitat for these endangered species. In that respect, it seems like the agencies are going to be supportive of the height just because of this condition. Also, I recall, John, you were saying that there was this report that came out of the State of California, *The Rising Seas in California*. It was issued, I guess, April 2017. Although mid-century to 2050, there would be hardly any change, there are scientific data that shows after 2050...
it's going to be worse than what we've actually predicted right now. It is kind of a moving target. They're predicting ice sheets and more greenhouse gases. We already are experiencing climate change effects right now. The science is still in flux. It is a little frustrating, but it would be essentially beating a dead horse, I believe.

Chair McDougall: Keith, I'm inclined to—I'm sorry, Anne. Go ahead.

Commissioner Cribbs: I was troubled by what you said about if we would have gone in from the beginning with a lower level—the path would have been lower—then we wouldn't have run into these issues. Right or we might have?

Mr. Hesler: Actually we did go in with a lower, and they asked us to raise it because there was no engineering or geologic reason that we could have come back to them and said, "Sorry, we can't go any higher for X, Y, Z reasons." If we had had those reason, they would probably say, "You've done what is practical."

Chair McDougall: Not only did we not have the reasons but there aren't reasons. At the risk of doing what I suggested Mr. Reckdahl not do, my question would be why did we make it so wide.

Commissioner Reckdahl: ADA, isn't it?

Ms. Bansal: Yeah. It is accessible.

Chair McDougall: That was exactly where I was going. When you think about it, one of the real advantages of the other one—it was sort of spooky to walk out on this really narrow thing. It was part of the thrill. The absolutely wrong conclusion here, Keith, is what we can hope is we have enough sea level rise that it comes up to where we have the Boardwalk, which is probably the wrong thing to wish for.

Commissioner Reckdahl: What'll happen to the pickleweed if we have sea level rise? Will mud rise with it or will we just have water under the …

Mr. Aiken: I've asked this question. My understanding is that the marsh sediments will readjust themselves, and the marsh will rise with the sea level.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Maybe in 50 years we'll have their optimal height. Serendipity. Don't bike to work.

Chair McDougall: Do we have any other questions.

Commissioner LaMere: A quick question. What's the lifespan of the structure? Is it going to last 50 years, 75 years so there is …
Ms. Bansal: It is 50-75 years.

Commissioner LaMere: If sea levels rise in 50 years and it falls apart in 50 years, then you're building something that would be above sea level when you rebuild it. I was just curious about it. If sea level's happening that many years down the road and the structure then falls apart, then you're building something correctly 75 years from now or 50 years from now or whatever. I don't know if that makes sense. It doesn't really (crosstalk).

Ms. Bansal: We are anticipating or based on the research that our consultant has done, the life of the structure would be 50-75 years. I'm sorry we didn't …

Commissioner LaMere: What we're projecting is what's the sea level going to be 50 years from. What I'm saying is that we're right, but it's going to fall apart then. Why don't we then build something bigger at that time? That was my only observation.

Ms. Bansal: The other thing is it really doesn't make sense to go higher than the Interpretive Center because that's the axis …

Commissioner LaMere: I don't want to go higher.

Ms. Bansal: To address future sea level rise.

Commissioner LaMere: The one thing I would say on the graphic or to explain to people is that it's not—you have elevation height. You should probably also—you have it indicated as 5.7 feet, but it isn't necessarily clear that the Boardwalk is 5.7 feet above the existing ground. Is that correct?

Ms. Bansal: It is 5.7 feet above the existing.

Commissioner LaMere: All the talk is about elevation. It's at 13.5 feet. I think sometimes you might look at that and just think it's actually even 13.5 feet above the water.

Ms. Bansal: Yeah, because the existing ground …

Commissioner LaMere: When you explain it to people—there's two different numbers where it's 6 feet above the water.

Ms. Bansal: Yes, thank you.

Commissioner LaMere: You mentioned something about funding. Is that just funding for the signage that we don't have?

Chair McDougall: It's the signage.
Commissioner LaMere: The funding for the Boardwalk, we're good with that. That's correct?

Ms. Bansal: We do have funding for Boardwalk.

Chair McDougall: Jeff, I thought you were going to suggest that we should lower the Interpretive Center.

Commissioner LaMere: No, I don't suggest that. One thing I would say is, in light of this discussion and also seeing that we're not going to be able to do the ADA requirements and other requirements, be able to put lower observation decks off of this, I don't know if we can think of a project later on or maybe it's not even feasibly possible because of all the restrictions. How do we get people closer into the pickleweed and closer into the marshland? Would there ever be any opportunity? Obviously it's not with this project. Perhaps brainstorming down the road, is there something that we can think of? It does seem to be a priority; it's something we've all talked about. It's probably something that's been in public comments. Is there a way to get people closer to the Baylands? I think that'd be something to consider.

Chair McDougall: David, go ahead.

Commissioner Moss: That was my point exactly. Daren promised me we won't lift the road height because the road floods at the king tide. Believe me, when we have the higher sea level, it'll flood more often. Just promise me we won't lift that road grade.

Mr. Anderson: I can't guarantee that.

Commissioner Moss: That's where I'm going to take my grandchildren to get the marsh experience.

Chair McDougall: I think we're at a point where hopefully we can create—do we need a motion? We don't here. This is just information. On that basis, David.

Commissioner Moss: I have one more comment. I forgot the roller. I went to the marina at Alviso and played with it a little bit. You should know that the maintenance of those will require that you grease them. They haven't been greased at the marina in quite a while, so it doesn't turn very easily. Make sure you budget for that maintenance. It seems to work fine if it's maintained.

Chair McDougall: I like this one better than the one that's at the park down south here because it has these ridges on it. That makes sense. I'd like to comment just briefly on this signage. I don't know if any of this is in response to Chair McDougall ranting about signage every time you show up. Every time anybody shows up, I rant about the signage. If it is, thank you. If it's not, then congratulations. You anticipated me. I would
comment relative to my other Commissioners that there are lots of places even just on the
pathway that takes you to the Boardwalk and around the duck pond where you can get to
pickleweed without—in fact you can get to pickleweed where you can pick it and taste it
and feed it to the kids so they can. Therefore, as you're talking about putting signage all
the way from Cooley Landing to Palo Alto, maybe there are—if we looked at it in a
larger context, maybe there should be a few other signs that go in somewhere near where
there is pickleweed that's accessible or whatever, so that you do that. Before you respond
to that, on the other hand, the other two comments I would like to make about it is this is
the schedule and next steps. I doubt that the contractor you sign up is going to put the
signs in.

Ms. Bansal: No. That would be …

Chair McDougall: You're missing a step, and that step needs to be, as far as I'm
concerned, on this schedule. The signs need to be installed within 3 months of
completion or whatever it is. To go with my rant, if I go home tonight and tell my wife
that I didn't mention that for another year there are no signs on Byxbee hill and you have
all those stupid blank boxes to put signs on, I won't be allowed in the house. It's no good
to have a sign plan if there isn't a sign installation commitment, which needs to be on the
schedule. In the meantime, we need, Mr. Daren, signs at Byxbee Park, even if those
signs are just simply to point out where the stinkweed is. Sorry about the rant.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The signage would have to be TBD from—because we don't
have any funding.

Chair McDougall: I understand that.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Subject to funding, maybe.

Chair McDougall: That would be fine. Just the plan to—I want it on this schedule so
that we know that it's not just a good idea. It's actually going to be completed.

Mr. Aiken: You'll be happy to hear that we've identified a place to talk about pickleweed
and saltmarsh grass out on the levee as well.

Chair McDougall: Thank you. Thank you very much for a great presentation and
discussion and being patient with all of our good ideas about how to do a better job than
you've done. You've done a wonderful job. David.

Commissioner Moss: The signage—the amount of money that you need for the signage
separate and distinct from the money for the construction. As soon as we can get some
kind of an amount for that, we can find some funding sources perhaps for something like
that as soon as you can get an estimate for the signage.
Mr. Aiken: I've got the estimates for the signage. I don't have the numbers in front of me. The total program is $216,000 to do the signage for Cooley Landing down and the Boardwalk. I could break out what just the Boardwalk costs.

Chair McDougall: I think, Commissioner Moss, we would—they seem to have this funding, at least a target. I would maybe word your request differently that come back to us if you're having trouble and tell us what you're having trouble with. In the meantime, good luck getting the whole $250,000.

Commissioner Moss: I'd like to know how much we need that you can't get.

Mr. Aiken: Since you asked, when the state came out and did their inspection last week, they made a comment saying that, "Your grant would be far more competitive if you had a matching piece to it." There's a $54,000 matching piece that we're looking at seeking private funding for right now. If we're able to guarantee that within the next 2 weeks—that's the challenge—to change our paperwork and our request. I think it makes the grant much more competitive.

Commissioner Moss: The reason I brought it up is that the Friends of the Palo Alto Parks looks for low-hanging fruit like this. They can't build you a $10 million Boardwalk, but they could come up with smaller amounts. I don't know what that amount is, but I'd like to jump on that if I can.

Chair McDougall: I would encourage you to talk directly to these people and the people at Friends of Palo Alto Parks.

Commissioner Reckdahl: One last question for Daren. We mentioned going to Cooley Landing. That last dirt trail, are we going to pave that?

Mr. Anderson: That is not owned by the City. That is private property, and we need an agreement from them. You'll notice there's paving on either side of it, asphalt on one side, decomposed granite on the other. That owner of that property did not give us approval for it.

Commissioner Reckdahl: We own all the way up to Cooley.

Mr. Anderson: We do, but not up until that levee. That portion is private, so we had to get an easement approval from PG&E on one side, a different property owner on the other. This one, where it's unimproved, we did not get the easement approved. We do not have the privilege or right to come in and pave that.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Where the dirt trail is, we don't own that land?

Mr. Anderson: We own up to the levee as it rises, right up to that point.
Commissioner Reckdahl: We can't put the trail on the side of the levee. We don't have an easement?

Mr. Anderson: Nope. They wouldn't give us one. I've been working with East Palo Alto for the last year or so. The City of East Palo Alto is eager to do it too, so they're on our side and negotiating conversations with the—it's still the same property owner unfortunately who didn't want to do it before. They're willing to kind of open that again and put in a new request, a fresh one, to see if there's anything they could do to talk this individual into opening it up.

Commissioner Reckdahl: This is what eminent domain is for honestly. We have a trail that goes along, and then someone is blocking off that trail.

Commissioner Moss: This is far bigger than you think because it's also the Bay Trail, whatever it's called, the Ring the Bay Trail.

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, the Bay Trail.

Commissioner Moss: This one person for 100 yards is stopping the entire Bay Trail. I would think that you could get BCDC and other—ABAG to put pressure on this person. Otherwise, you could cantilever a path over the marsh about 5 feet and never …

Mr. Anderson: It'd be 13 feet high. The point is we are working on that one. That's been the status quo for—it's been that way for a decade. We didn't do much for it for a while. Now, we're picking it back up because East Palo Alto and I had a good conversation. They're willing to help, which is the great part. I think we'll get traction on that sooner rather than later and at least get the request to this gentleman. Perhaps East Palo Alto has some leverage that we don't. Last thing, that's still used. We do come in and mow it, and people do bike across it regularly. We've even done improvements, although it's not our right to come in and fill holes and things like that. It's just not the way we'd like it, paved or decomposed granite.

Chair McDougall: Again, Megha, Elizabeth, John, and John, thank you very much. Great progress. I'm going to put September 1st on my calendar for the—what was it—groundbreaking; although, I'm not sure how we're going to go about breaking ground out there. We can't pour wine on the birds or anything, on the mice. We'll have to find some celebration of the September 1st kickoff. Thank you.

8. Other Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates

Chair McDougall: The next topic is Other Ad Hoc Committee Updates. I did not bring my list of ad hoc committees. Thankfully, Anne rescued me. 7.7 acres we've talked about. The 10 1/2 acres, I don't think there's anything. I'm not going to read through this
whole list. I'm just going to ask if there's anything anybody wanted to add from ad hocs that wasn't on the handout.

Commissioner Moss: Several agenda items today did point out funding needs. The funding committee has some work to do on at least three of these items. We have asked staff if we can meet with them sooner rather than later. I just wanted to put that into the notes. In fact, it's critical.

Chair McDougall: I would agree with that. I would welcome an invitation to meet with the committee when they meet with staff. I would be happy to participate.

VI. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair McDougall: Comments and Announcements, the one that I have is there's no update on the golf course.

Mr. Anderson: It's the same status as it was last time.

VII. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 27, 2018 MEETING

Chair McDougall: The agenda. It says confirm the date for the retreat and set agenda. David.

Commissioner Moss: Before you do that, one other thing about the ad hoc committee. The AT&T park, has there been any movement on that?

Mr. Anderson: No news on that, that I've heard from our real estate staff.

Chair McDougall: Did we get some jump up over here to make an announcement or maybe an introduction? Do you have information on the retreat?

Ms. Bourquin: Kristen was going to go over it with you. I sent her an email with Doodle results. Anne Cribbs was the only person that wasn't going to be able to make it. I'm not sure what she wanted to do with that.

Commissioner Reckdahl: What was that tentative date?

Ms. Bourquin: I think it was the last one. That's what I was looking at. It looks like February 23rd was the date that everybody except Anne could make it.

Chair McDougall: Can we pencil in February 23? I'm sorry, Anne.

Commissioner Cribbs: That's okay. It happens.
Chair McDougall: Could we pencil in February 23rd? I'll take the action item to meet with Kristen to talk about the agenda and get everybody's participation and what that agenda might be. Knowing what we're doing ahead of the meeting is probably better off than showing up and guessing at it. Is that okay with everybody? Keith, you'll help me with that?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah. I can give you what we did last time, and then you can work from there. Historically, the Vice Chair will go over what has been done in the past year. You just basically go through every meeting and say, "We had these presentations. We had these actions." The Chair will have outstanding issues and ad hocs and things that we want to talk about. I can give you what I presented last year.

Chair McDougall: Maybe I can buy you coffee, and you can reconstruct that and maybe tell me any learnings you might have had from that. Would that be okay?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, most definitely. Location for the retreat. Sometimes we have it up in the Foothills Park, which is, I think, a nicer area but not as convenient. Down in Mitchell Park is more convenient, but you feel like you have less of a retreat. Do people have feelings of the tradeoff of convenience versus ambience?

Chair McDougall: We could use some of the library rooms, which are not—they're City ambience, but they're not native ambience. I know that Environmental Volunteers is renting out their space now. I'll bet I can get a deal as in …

Commissioner Reckdahl: That would be good. Where's that space?

Commissioner Moss: That's at the Baylands.

Chair McDougall: In the Baylands, the Eco Center. The Eco Center's got a very nice space there, the Sea Scout building.

Commissioner Reckdahl: That's true too. We have the Interpretive Center right there too.

Chair McDougall: We don't even have to ask anybody to do that.

Commissioner Reckdahl: That might be a nice compromise. It's a little closer than Foothills.

Chair McDougall: Let's plan that. We have a location; we have a date; we have a plan to get an agenda. Thank you for that reminder that we need to get that.

Commissioner Reckdahl: When is our next meeting then? February …
Commissioner LaMere: 27th.

Chair McDougall: 27th, right. Are there topics for that meeting that we should make sure are on the agenda?

Commissioner Moss: Normally, we get ahead of time the list of all the future meetings and the topics so far. Did we get that for this time?

Chair McDougall: Yes.

Chair McDougall: It's the activities prohibited in dedicated parkland. That was one of the—we were looking for a definition of dedicated.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The related thing was we talked about that art. Sorry. What's the park over on Alma?

Commissioner Cribbs: By the train station.

Commissioner Reckdahl: By the train station. Bowden Park. That area is just unused.

Mr. Anderson: The grassy area right on the (crosstalk). That's the area we were talking about perhaps doing a dog park with the art.

Commissioner Reckdahl: If we're going to talk about activities prohibited in parks, a related thing was what constraints do we have on parks. We have public art in that …

Mr. Anderson: I almost wonder if …

Commissioner Moss: Could we get the Art Commission to come and talk to us?

Mr. Anderson: That's right. I was thinking the liaison could come and talk with us.

Chair McDougall: That would be a really good idea.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Another area for public art—I think Byxbee is so barren up there. If we could have some public art, it would not only add some interest, but it also would allow us to orient yourself. You get up top on Byxbee, and you feel like where's where. There's no landmarks at all. It's just stinkwort.

Mr. Anderson: You're right. Actually coming up if not the community meeting that I mentioned—there'll be a subsequent one that's dedicated to public art for the Baylands Comprehensive Plan. That's a whole element of the plan. Not necessarily for our earlier discussion about Bowden and what we'd do with that, but for the Baylands that would be a comprehensive investigation into public art.
Commissioner Reckdahl: (inaudible) remember this one when he's back. When we first—it was about 4 years. We had Friends of Palo Alto Parks come in and give an overview. I think that would be good. Do you think you could talk to them and see if they have—are you still going to their meetings?

Commissioner Moss: I haven't been invited for a while.

Commissioner Cribbs: I'd be happy to do that, call them. On the next meeting, would we like him?

Commissioner Reckdahl: That's something that Don and Kristen will have to figure out, whether they want to come back and give a presentation. That was very useful. I was the only one on the Commission at that time that is still here. It'd be brand new to everyone else. We're talking about bringing the Friends of Palo Alto Parks in to say, "This is what we do, and this is" … They want to know how they can help us, and we want to know they can help them.

Chair McDougall: I heard you extolling the virtues of putting more signage up on Byxbee Park along with the art.

Mr. Anderson: That signage is funded, just waiting on design. That'll be part of the Baylands Conservation Plan. It's coming.

Chair McDougall: When can I come over and help design them?

Mr. Anderson: This next meeting.

Commissioner Moss: Along with the Friends of the Palo Alto Parks, if we could talk about the AT&T property at the same time, that would be ideal because they're very interested in helping us with that.

Commissioner LaMere: Do we at some point—speaking of the Friends of the Parks, would we want to invite at some point the Palo Alto Recreation Foundation?

Commissioner Cribbs: We probably should.

Commissioner LaMere: Especially if we're interested in having them be a pass-through for some of the fundraising that we want to do. My other question would be what do we do now as far as the pickleball and tennis. Is that an ad hoc committee and recreation question? Does that come back? Is that something we address again in another meeting? What do we think the path forward is with that?

Chair McDougall: I think our position is continue to do some more outreach. We'd already had a discussion. Commissioner Moss earlier mentioned can you just get them in
a room. We've already had that conversation. In the short term, I trust the work that
Adam's doing in terms of outreach and looking for a compromise. Both sides talk about
wanting to work together. None of them act like working together. We need to facilitate
that conversation.

Commissioner Reckdahl: One thing that I think we have to really get to is good usage
data. How much of the tennis court's used? Also, the lit courts, how much are they used?
For example, if pickleball just had a non-lit court, would that be enough for them for
now? Cubberley has six tennis courts over there. If two of those—there are three sets of
two. If two of those became pickleball with no lights, would that be a good compromise?

Chair McDougall: In fact, we were trying to figure out how to get data on when they
were used and not used. The conversation in the ad hoc—maybe it was even in the last
meeting—was setting up cameras. There was all sorts of issues relative to privacy.
Somebody pointed out to me that there are already cameras in the Magical Playground.
There are probably enough pointing in that direction that they …

Peter Jensen: There are no cameras in the playground. The City has a very strict policy
against having any type of camera. Only on the train tracks.

Chair McDougall: I would hope so. Thank you.

Commissioner Reckdahl: If they were de-focused so all you see is blobs, there'd be no
privacy issue.

Chair McDougall: Let's not add it to our agenda.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think what the bottom line is I don't care how they get usage
data, but we need usage data.

Chair McDougall: Good data is really important.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Right now, we're saying with anecdotal evidence that these
courts aren't used. There are all these leaves on it, and they were sweeping off the leaves.
That suggests that it's not used. Now, the tennis people are saying that's used heavily.
Who's right? We've got to have the data; we need data one way or another.

Commissioner Cribbs: The other data I would like to make sure we have is the number
of tennis courts that exist in the City, the lighted ones and the regular ones, and if there
are any tennis courts at the School District that can be used or not. Just the total numbers.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The total numbers. The email that I sent you—those numbers
are correct. The lit courts that the City has is we have seven in Mitchell Park that are lit.
Chair McDougall: Now, we're getting into ... I think we shouldn't do this. It wasn't agendized. We're now outside—we're discussing things. We had the people here. I want to be careful about ...

Commissioner Reckdahl: We're going on a tangent we don't need to go on.

Chair McDougall: On the other hand, I would reinforce that any suggestions or recommendations you have—let's get them to the ad hoc. The other thing I would invite is as long as we don't violate the Brown rule, depending on who's around or whatever, everybody's invited to participate in the ad hoc as far as I'm concerned as long we don't go outside the Brown rules. The number of people is the only issue I have.

Commissioner Reckdahl: It's already full, isn't it?

Chair McDougall: Not everybody shows up all the time. If we knew that somebody wasn't going to show up, we could have a substitute.

Commissioner Reckdahl: For that month, provided it's new information or anything that you talked about then is briefed.

Commissioner Moss: I have two more quick comments. One is (inaudible) discovered this week that there is a brand new Highway 101 bridge for Menlo Park that is being built. It sure would have been nice over this past 6 or 8 months to know that when we're going through all our discussion about our 101 bridge. It seems like it took us a lot longer to get through all that stuff. They're plowing ahead with a similar-sized bridge, similar cost. I don't know what happened.

Commissioner Reckdahl: It was first proposed a couple of years ago. It's hitting the news now, but there's been a lot of stuff percolating under the hood.

Commissioner Moss: Just a comment. The second comment is Adrian Fine. We talked last year about getting a City Council person to come to our meetings. Don, I think tag you're it. It might be good for you to have a private conversation to see if we can get a City Council person.

Chair McDougall: As we turnover and as they bring in a new Mayor, then we need to go back to the City Council to ask who their delegate is this year and suggest that it should be somebody new. I have no problem with that. I'll take it.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Cribbs and second by Commissioner Moss at 10:00 p.m.