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**MINUTES  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
June 26, 2018  
CITY HALL  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, California**

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

15 **Commissioners Absent:** None

16 **Others Present:**

17 **Staff Present:** Peter Jensen, Kristen O'Kane, Natalie Khwaja

18 **I. ROLL CALL**

19 **II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS**

20 Chair McDougall: Do we have any agenda changes, deletions, requests, reordering  
21 relative to the agenda? Everybody's okay with that?

22 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

23 Chair McDougall: The next thing on the agenda is Oral Communications. These are oral  
24 communications that are not specific to business items that we have on the agenda. I  
25 believe that Herb Borock is not speaking to an agenda item, so I would invite him to  
26 come and speak.

27 Herb Borock: Good evening, Chair McDougall and Commissioners. I came to the  
28 meeting because I saw the agenda and some items of interest. When I entered, the copies  
29 of the staff reports are not here. Recently I was at another meeting of the Commission  
30 when there also weren't staff reports. You get a packet with printed staff reports and  
31 other items that are on the agenda. The State's open meeting law, the Brown Act,  
32 requires that there be copies of everything you got that's not confidential available for the  
33 public to review at the meeting. Instead, all there is is a piece of paper with links to  
34 internet sites. As far as I know, this is the only legislative body in the City, Council



1 committee, board, commission, that does this. It's only been doing it recently. I request  
2 that it stop and that you go back to what you did previously. Thank you.

3 Chair McDougall: Thank you.

4 Natalie Khwaja: If I may really quick? We were directed by the Clerk's Office to start  
5 presenting the attachments and reports in this manner to save paper because often we  
6 would print a lot and no one would take them. If you would like me to go back to how it  
7 was done before, I have no problem doing that.

8 Chair McDougall: I'm not sure we should make that decision on the spot as opposed to  
9 understand what it takes and why that recommendation. I think I can understand that  
10 recommendation, but maybe there's a compromise, maybe there's some other way to look  
11 at it. I don't think we should make that decision right now. We'll publish that decision.  
12 Herb, I'll make sure that they send whatever answer we get directly to you personally.

13 Mr. Borock: (inaudible)

14 Chair McDougall: Pardon me?

15 Mr. Borock: And the name of the person in the Clerk's Office who said that because to  
16 my knowledge there is no connection between that Council-appointed officer and the  
17 staff that is here, who reports to a different Council-appointed officer who is the City  
18 Manager. I'd be interested in the name of the person and, if it was in writing, to see that  
19 from that person.

20 Chair McDougall: We'll be happy to provide you with the conclusion of our  
21 investigation.

22 **IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

23 Chair McDougall: The next is approval of the minutes of the April 24 meeting. Am I  
24 missing something?

25 Kristen O'Kane: The department report.

26 Chair McDougall: Yes.

27 Ms. O'Kane: Kristen O'Kane with Community Services. Daren is out sick today, so I'm  
28 going to provide some updates from Parks and Open Space on behalf of Daren. The first  
29 one is the Peers dog park opening was held on June 14. It was a very nice event. The  
30 dog park was packed with people and their dogs enjoying the site. Daren wanted to  
31 extend a big thanks to the Commissioners, especially Commissioners Cribbs, LaMere,  
32 McCauley, and Chair McDougall, for attending and Chair McDougall for speaking at the



1 event. The next item, the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority flood  
2 protection project is starting its final construction season on July 2. Expected project  
3 completion is spring of 2019. The Friendship Bridge and the creek-side trails are  
4 expected to be closed for the duration of the final construction season. For the Foothills  
5 Park trails, we have submitted our application to the Planning Department for rerouting  
6 the trails, and we expect to get approval in late August. Our trail contractor is available  
7 to do the work in August. Hopefully, we can kick that off towards the end of the  
8 summer. The Lucie Stern brick pathway project—I don't know if any of you have been  
9 to Lucie Stern recently. As you know, the brick pathways, because they're really, really  
10 old bricks, are very worn. The grouting between the bricks was very worn. We're  
11 actually in the process of redoing the brick pathways around Lucie Stern. A certain  
12 percentage of the original bricks, because they are considered historic, is being preserved  
13 and being put back into the brick pathways. We're doing this in a three-phase approach  
14 so there are always two entrances and exits out of the Lucie Stern Community Center.  
15 The final note from Daren is the Baylands Boardwalk. This is going to Council on  
16 June 25, which was yesterday. This was awarded last night for construction at Council.  
17 Construction is anticipated to begin in September and be completed by January 2019,  
18 which is good news. I think that was all from Daren. I just have one thing I would like  
19 to give everyone information about. On June 18, Council approved our contract with a  
20 company called Concordia to assist with the Cubberley master planning. Council also  
21 approved a cost-share agreement with the Palo Alto Unified School District. The City  
22 and the School District will be sharing equally in the cost to do the master planning  
23 effort. This is very exciting. We are going to use the summer time to get them up to  
24 speed, to put together our community engagement plan, which will include recruiting for  
25 what they call community fellows or citizen planners, who will be members of the  
26 community and who will help us facilitate meetings, help us move the project along, help  
27 us just be advocates for the project, and get people involved. I may be asking all of you  
28 to help identify some people within the community that might be really good at helping  
29 out with the project. The first community meeting will be in September. Commissioner  
30 Cribbs.

31 Commissioner Cribbs: I was just wondering how the consultants are going to initially  
32 interact with the Parks and Recreation Commission and if there will be some engagement  
33 on the part of the Parks and Recreation Commission in the early planning stages. In  
34 addition, it'll be interesting to see how a firm who comes from so far away understands  
35 very much about the process of Cubberley and the history of Cubberley. Maybe that's  
36 not important, but just curious.

37 Ms. O'Kane: They're in New Orleans. They have a lot of experience locally and are also  
38 working on some other projects in California. There are two local partners that they have  
39 on their team. One is at Stanford, and one is local. She's a consultant, but she used to be  
40 in charge of the State's education department, for lack of a better term. They do have



1 local representation here in Palo Alto. This just happened on June 18, so I need to talk  
2 with them on how we should get the Commission involved. I know there's either an ad  
3 hoc or liaison group. I think it's specifically an ad hoc group for the Cubberley master  
4 planning process. Natalie sent that to me the other day because I was asking who those  
5 people are. There are three of you. I apologize that I can't exactly remember who the  
6 three of you are. We'll definitely have you involved from the beginning. Was there  
7 another question?

8 Commissioner Cribbs: That's probably enough. Thank you.

9 Chair McDougall: Jeff, did you have a question? Kristen, just quickly, is this idea of  
10 citizen planners the same thing we've always done or is that an effort to be more locally  
11 engaged?

12 Ms. O'Kane: It's different from what we have done. A lot of times there's a stakeholder  
13 advisory group, and then there are community meetings that happen once in a while. We  
14 decided not to have a stakeholder advisory group. Every community meeting is open to  
15 everyone, and they're actually working meetings. They will not be in this style of  
16 meeting where people are talking and we're getting questions. It's people sitting around  
17 tables, working together, actually putting pen to paper. The community fellows will  
18 facilitate the table discussion. They can have their own ideas, but they're not pushing a  
19 particular agenda as that community fellow. But they're, of course, welcome to  
20 participate in the discussions as well. It's just to have people who are really embedded in  
21 the community be advocates ...

22 Chair McDougall: Invested in the project.

23 Ms. O'Kane: ... and invested and can help. We're hopeful we'll have a few hundred  
24 people at these community meetings that are sitting around the tables working. We're  
25 going to need help with those meetings. We're hoping the fellows can do that.

26 Chair McDougall: Hopefully, that will help address Commissioner Cribbs' question. I  
27 think she might have another one.

28 Commissioner Cribbs: Thank you. I have just one more. The survey that Amy did to the  
29 Cubberley tenants, when is that done and is it going to be public information, the results  
30 soon?

31 Ms. O'Kane: When the consultant was here—they were here for the Council meeting—I  
32 didn't mention the Board of Education approved the cost-share agreement the next night.  
33 They came here for those two items. While they were here, they met with the existing  
34 Cubberley tenants just to introduce the project. I think there was some concern that this  
35 meant things were going to change for them. We wanted them to meet the consultants

1 right away. They sent out a survey for the tenants specifically to complete just about  
2 their experience at Cubberley. That is due, I think, the end of this week or next week.  
3 We are going to have, just like we did for the Parks Master Plan, a website that's going to  
4 have everything on it, all of the data that's collected, all the information, meetings, results  
5 of meetings, things like that.

6 Chair McDougall: I know it's not directly related, but do you have a status of the Zoo  
7 moving to Cubberley?

8 Ms. O'Kane: They needed to make some improvements. They needed to do some  
9 construction at Cubberley to make it suitable for the Zoo. They're doing that right now. I  
10 don't have an exact date of when that move will happen, but it's in the works.

11 Chair McDougall: That's fine. Thank you. (inaudible) and we'll invite Yuko Tanaka to  
12 come and speak for a couple of minutes.

13 Yuko Tanaka: My name is Yuko Tanaka, and I play tennis, and also I volunteer as a  
14 Board Member of Palo Alto Tennis Club. I would like to raise three points for your  
15 consideration regarding tennis court usage. Recently, the level of frustration among the  
16 tennis players who cannot access the public courts has been increasing. One of the most  
17 common reasons that they express is that the City tennis court usage policy says that  
18 more than 50 percent of the courts cannot be reserved at the same facility at the given  
19 day, given time. However, the City has been giving the reservation for more than 50  
20 percent of the courts for many reasons. One recent experience was pickleball reserve  
21 three courts at Mitchell Park for drop-in. In addition to that, there was a special senior  
22 event, and they reserve the additional, so that was more than 50 percent. That was an all  
23 weekend event. People were saying that this is violating the City policy. Also, the tennis  
24 side is not innocent either. We do hold the USTA Junior Tournament probably seven,  
25 eight times a year. During that time, we reserve six courts, one day the weekend. Of  
26 course, that's more than 50 percent. People expressed concerns about more than 50  
27 percent is against the City policy, but the City is giving away those reservations more  
28 than the policy. What's going on? Those people send an email to the City. City's answer  
29 is "we support senior event." That is not a good response for them to hear. Right now,  
30 especially since the pickleball—there is no designated pickleball courts. We probably  
31 have to have those circumstances for a long time until we create a plan and survey and  
32 build. It takes time. I think, even if it's temporary, we should address those policy to the  
33 level that we actually can comply or the City can actually comply. Right now the City is  
34 really accommodating the senior events, junior events. I really appreciate that for all of  
35 the racket players. At the same time, the people's frustration is also valid. I would like to  
36 raise points that I would like to see the policy to be updated so that we can do that.

37 Chair McDougall: Thank you very much.

1 Ms. Tanaka: The second point ...

2 Chair McDougall: I'm sorry. I said you could have a couple of minutes, and you've gone  
3 on for 3 minutes.

4 Ms. Tanaka: Sorry. Two more points.

5 Chair McDougall: You've got 30 seconds.

6 Ms. Tanaka: One way to reduce the tennis courts reservation is look into the USTA team  
7 reservations. I checked current USTA team reservations. Out of ten teams currently  
8 reserved, only one team has more than 20 percent of Palo Alto residents as a player.  
9 Some teams do not have even no Palo Alto residents as a roster player. Those people are  
10 reserving Palo Alto tennis courts, and then the tennis players in Palo Alto community are  
11 ...

12 Chair McDougall: I'm going to have to ask you to stop. Thank you. I will tell you that  
13 we do have both an ad hoc committee looking into the courts themselves. We do have an  
14 ad hoc committee that's working with staff on the usage of fields and courts and into  
15 those policies. We're not unaware. If you'd like to—I have your name. Potentially they  
16 can reach out to you or others. You should know that we're not unaware of some of the  
17 questions that's you're raising.

18 Ms. Tanaka: Ten seconds. The Palo Alto Tennis Club is not involved in that ad hoc  
19 group, and we would like to ask that the Palo Alto Tennis Club be included in that ad hoc  
20 group.

21 Chair McDougall: Any time we have public meetings, everybody is invited, the tennis  
22 club and everybody else. We'll just make sure that everybody is aware.

23 Ms. Tanaka: Thank you.

24 Chair McDougall: Thank you.

25 **V. BUSINESS**

26 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the April 24, 2018 Parks and Recreation**  
27 **Commission meeting.**

28 Approval of the draft April 24, 2018 Minutes as presented was moved by Vice Chair  
29 Greenfield and seconded by Commissioner Reckdahl. Passed 7-0

1           **2.     Renzel Pond Project Update**

2           Chair McDougall: Next on the item is the Renzel Pond project update. Welcome,  
3           Ms. North. It's nice to see you.

4           Karin North: Nice to see you.

5           Ms. O'Kane: Good evening. Kristen O'Kane. I just wanted to introduce Karin. I know  
6           she's been here before. There was a request, I believe, from Commissioner Moss, to have  
7           her come back and give an update on what's happening at the Renzel Wetlands and  
8           answer any questions any of you might have on the progress. I'll turn it over to Karin.

9           Ms. North: My name is Karin North. I'm the Watershed Protection Manager. I work out  
10          at the wastewater treatment plant. I'm with Environmental Services in Public Works.  
11          Some of the benefit of our Renzel Pond was a water reclamation project back in the early  
12          1990s to recycle and reuse a lot of our plant effluent. I'm just going to give you the aerial  
13          view. Probably many of you know this area. It's that pond area down here at the bottom.  
14          Some of this might be a repeat. Some of the Commissioners weren't here the last  
15          meeting, so it's sometimes nice to know. This entire area is the ITT property; now, it's  
16          called the Renzel Wetlands. It was cut off due to our landfill, which is now Byxbee Park.  
17          Back in the early '90s, we tried to restore some of this. This was all previously upland, so  
18          we put in a pipeline from the wastewater treatment plant, which is right here. About 5  
19          percent of our flow flows through the Renzel Wetlands. Currently, no flow is flowing  
20          through it. There is another secondary pipe that during high tides saltwater, Bay water  
21          flows through here and down along this channel and then it gets pumped into Matadero  
22          Creek. The recycled water and the salt marsh were designed to complement each other,  
23          to balance out the salinity going into Matadero Creek in the flooding basin. This is what  
24          the area was back in the day, in 1991. Good thing we have all these Google images that  
25          we can pull from, which is nice. This is what it was in 2002. You can see we had a few  
26          habitat islands. It was designed to—we're trying to make it into a nice habitat for the  
27          environment. As you can see, in this little corner that island is gone. The cattails are  
28          starting to take off in 2009. We're not exactly sure. We think it's the berm deterioration.  
29          We had muskrats. We've had it breaking down, subsidence over the years. You can see  
30          in 2014 it's basically turned into almost two ponds. Last year, we know now that because  
31          of the cattails, when we started to drain it, it did turn into essentially two ponds. We had  
32          over 16 breaches last summer over here. We were spot fixing them, which was very  
33          challenging because you have to mobilize equipment. You're going into the  
34          environment; you have to basically piecemeal this berm back together. We decided that  
35          this was the year to fix it versus having another year of going in there and just doing spot  
36          fixes. The last time I came to talk to you, I talked about we were going to start draining  
37          the pond. We drained the pond. As I mentioned before, it turned into two ponds, so we  
38          had to get this long-reach excavator in to dig a channel to allow both the north end and

1 the south end of the pond to drain. This is what it was looking like during the draining.  
2 This is the pipe that actually drains out the pond. If you guys haven't been out there, it's  
3 completely dry now, which is good because we needed to let it dry out before we bring in  
4 the large, heavy equipment to move the silt. The silt over the years, over 25 years, has  
5 basically silted up because of the cattail growth. When it breaks down, that silt  
6 accumulates in the pond. We have to do—unfortunately this massive equipment needs to  
7 come in. We are limited with our season of when we can get in there because it's in a  
8 previous wetland. We don't want it to go in while there's a rain event. We're very  
9 limited, and it's a short season. It's not ideal. We understand people are very concerned  
10 about the habitat out there. We're trying to be very mindful of that while we're doing this  
11 project. This is part of our NPDES permit to discharge to the Bay. Maintenance is a  
12 requirement. Shani Kleinhaus from Audubon Society was concerned about birds. We  
13 had the Rangers out there regularly checking on bird habitat. They did not see any.  
14 Because of her concern, we did hire a certified biologist. They went out, and they did  
15 find six nests. Based on the recommendation of the biologist, we put a 30-foot buffer  
16 around them. We are continuing to do the berm work because that's taking the longest  
17 amount of time. We're building up the berm, making it wider, so then we can go in and  
18 maintain that marsh in the future. Not ideal, but something we need to do. Last night,  
19 the City Council approved O'Grady. They're going to come in starting at the end of  
20 August. We were originally going to have them come in sooner, but we're pushing it past  
21 the nesting season to come in. They're basically going to be moving dirt. They're going  
22 to be pushing all the dirt from this side up to this area of the pond, and we're going to see  
23 how much we can—maybe this will turn into an upland area. This will turn into a  
24 shallow marsh, and then this will be an open marsh. We're doing a little bit of adaptive  
25 management. We're trying to be mindful of our funds and see what we can get done.  
26 Ideally, I don't want them coming in again because we also have plans potentially to  
27 expand this wetland as well. If we're going to expand the wetland, I would say in 5-10  
28 years' time because of permitting, then hopefully we'd get in there and do it all once  
29 again. This is what it looks like now. We have a silt fence up there. I know  
30 Commissioner Moss has been out there. Have any of you guys driven past it? It's  
31 definitely not what it was before. It's changing, and we're hoping that we can at least get  
32 it back to its natural habitat in the fastest time possible. We do have a silt fence around it.  
33 We are bringing in a lot of trucks with material. We had a soil brokerage contract with  
34 our landfill, so we're utilizing that and capitalizing on it. That's only 'til 2019. This was  
35 our year to also get in the soil that's free. We're building up the berm. We have signage  
36 out there for residents so they know what's happening if they read it and wonder what  
37 we're doing and why we're doing it. We have an active website as well. We've gone to  
38 all the Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan meetings to let them know what's  
39 happening. We're coming to you to talk to you as well. This is from June 2018. You can  
40 see it looks very different now. It is dried out, but we don't know how thick that crust  
41 layer is, which is why we want to let it dry as long as possible before we bring in the  
42 equipment to start moving dirt around. This is what the contractor was awarded last night





1 from Council. We're not sure how far this will come down. We're hoping we can try and  
2 keep it as compacted as possible, but we won't know until we're really in there moving  
3 the sediment and the silt around. This area is going to be the drying beds for the cattails.  
4 We've also talked to Shani and Emily about leaving some of the cattails, so we're not  
5 going to remove them all. That will be something we'll do. We haven't made any  
6 decisions at this point in time. We have another meeting coming closer to then. We can  
7 walk out to the site and try and identify cattails that we could keep. Obviously we don't  
8 want the cattails in this area, this pinch point, because we'll just have that problem yet  
9 again. We're trying to do our best. Hopefully, it'll go back to what it was in 1991 and  
10 then evolve, and the cattails will grow back and the habitat. We're hoping we can do this.  
11 It's been once in 25 years. I'm hoping that I won't have to do this again while I'm with the  
12 City of Palo Alto. Hopefully we do it right, and we can maintain it, and we won't have to  
13 do this again. Feel free to ask questions. I think Shani has some comments too.

14 Chair McDougall: Thank you, Karin. Shani.

15 Shani Kleinhaus: Good evening. Shani Kleinhaus with the Audubon Society, resident of  
16 Palo Alto. This project makes me really, really sad. It started without CEQA because it  
17 was a maintenance project. We were told, "We have to fix the leaks. We have to do it  
18 now. It's a maintenance project. We don't need CEQA." I said, "What about the birds?  
19 This is nesting season. This is the most sensitive area in the Baylands at the height of the  
20 nesting season." I was told, "We're not impacting anything. We're only draining the  
21 water. We need to do that because, when we come in after the nesting season and start  
22 doing some work with dirt, then we won't have birds nesting there." I accepted that. I  
23 started getting reports from birders going there saying, "Why are they covering all the  
24 reeds with dirt?" I went to look, and that was what was happening. It turns out we were  
25 importing soil, building berms, doing all this groundwork, and dumping the dirt on top of  
26 the reeds, and there were birds in those reeds nesting. There were birds nesting on the  
27 areas where the soil was dumped. When I was there, there was a killdeer—it's a little,  
28 ground-nesting bird—that was running around and doing this game where they pretend to  
29 be injured so you'll follow them away from their nest. The next day, there was a lot of  
30 soil on that site, and the bird was not there anymore. Talk about sensitivity. What I ask  
31 you, one, is learn about CEQA. A project like that should have gone through CEQA.  
32 There would be mitigations necessary and biologists onsite. They did send a biologist  
33 after we started screaming. I'm sorry. I know that you didn't intend to cause damage.  
34 When the process is broken and there's no CEQA, because this is only a maintenance  
35 project for something that started 30 years ago or 20 years ago, then you don't have the  
36 mitigations that are necessary to protect our resources now. The public doesn't know,  
37 and they're surprised when they see a huge project taking place when we were told that  
38 it's only the draining of the ponds that is going to happen now. Another thing. When I  
39 asked then, I understand it is emergency fixes, but you say you don't want to come back  
40 there again. The whole project that you're going to hear next is about how do we design

1 this area. This was an opportunity to look at something in a much bigger framework. I'm  
2 not only doing maintenance on a project and talk to me now about leaving some refuge  
3 for the animals so not all the reeds will be gone and so on. This was an opportunity to  
4 actually look at how do we do a project and enhance the environment at the same time. It  
5 wasn't. It's not going to be, but it's still not planning to have a real ecological design team  
6 work on this project. It's a maintenance project. I sent a letter about the next item, which  
7 is the Baylands Comprehensive Plan. You have at least 13 projects that are capital  
8 improvement, and three projects are enhancements. We talk about balance. We need to  
9 start at looking at every project as how do we balance this project. This was the ultimate  
10 opportunity that happened in a very sad way as far as the birds are concerned. Again, I  
11 don't think there's anyone who means to do something that is not necessary. Yeah, they  
12 needed to fix the leaks. There are things that need to be done, but there are too many  
13 breaks in the system. All of you, please, if anybody proposes a project whether it's Public  
14 Works or anybody and it touches on a park, insist on CEQA so you know what's going to  
15 happen, so you make sure everything is right and accidents to killdeer don't just happen.  
16 Thank you.

17 Chair McDougall: Thank you. Do people on the Commission have questions for Karin?  
18 David.

19 Commissioner Moss: I went by the pond and was really surprised at how significant,  
20 how huge this project turned out to be. I guess I didn't quite realize it. I want to  
21 emphasize what Shani said about maintenance projects versus something that requires  
22 environmental review. What's going to come out of this also is there's a path all the way  
23 around that could become a path for people who want to walk or bike or walk their dogs  
24 or whatever around there that didn't exist before. It really should be covered by the  
25 Baylands Comprehensive Plan so that we deal with that new feature and others. I  
26 strongly believe that that pond should be open to the public in some way to allow an  
27 observation or whatever to be able to look out at that. I'd like to see birds there too. I've  
28 always wondered why it wasn't open to the public for bird viewing. I would like to echo  
29 what Shani said about taking the broader view with this project. I don't know what we  
30 can do at this point. As soon as it's done, I want to put all the birds back. That's my  
31 comment.

32 Chair McDougall: Anybody else have questions, comments? Thanks, Ryan.

33 Commissioner McCauley: Karin, could you perhaps tell us what your plan is for  
34 mitigation with respect to the birds? You've now put up these 30-foot—is it a barrier of  
35 some sort?

36 Ms. North: If you go out there, there are orange, 30-foot—they're 30 feet away from the  
37 nests. That's what the biologist recommended that we hired and then to maintain those.  
38 Before O'Grady comes into the area, we'll have a biologist come back again to ensure

1 there's no new nests and that the nests have been—basically the nesting season's over.  
2 Then, we can go in and remove the reeds. I know we haven't done the CEQA, but we're  
3 trying to do all the—since it's a maintenance project, I'm wearing my environmental hat.  
4 We're trying to do our due diligence on making sure that we're looking for birds, looking  
5 for nests, mitigating any potential impacts. The area around the pond for the maintenance  
6 will be a road. It will be your decision to determine if that becomes part of the trail  
7 system, but we do need a road for maintenance. Part of the reason why it was not opened  
8 up is it was an ankle-turner with the berm. It was completely divots and falling apart. I  
9 just want to respond a little bit to Shani's concerns. I originally had the plan of a larger  
10 vision. With the Baylands Conservation Comprehensive Plan, we wanted to incorporate  
11 it. That started, and then we had all those leaks. We are still looking at the larger vision,  
12 but we also have to maintain our current infrastructure. I know it's odd that a pond is  
13 infrastructure, but it is. It's part of our treatment process. We do get some nutrient  
14 removal. It's in our actual permit that requires us to have a certain percentage of our flow  
15 go there to reduce the flow going into the San Francisco Bay. I would not say this is my  
16 favorite project. I'm just trying to get it done and do it the most environmentally sensitive  
17 way I can. Keep on asking me questions because it challenges staff to come up with  
18 strategies on how to do it. We feel like we've talked to the biologist. We didn't have a  
19 biologist on staff. We were relying on Rangers prior to that. We'll bring the biologist  
20 back out again. If you have any other recommendations, we are open to them. We have  
21 talked to the consultants for the Baylands Conservation Comprehensive Plan, that's who  
22 was our biologist for assessing the birds. This is an adaptive management strategy. None  
23 of us has ever had to deal with a large freshwater pond that was wastewater for  
24 maintenance.

25 Commissioner McCauley: I think we all appreciate that you're trying to be thoughtful  
26 about all this. Are there other wildlife mitigation issues that need to be considered?

27 Ms. North: For full disclosure, we did find fish. Some of them got moved into the flood  
28 basin before they died. CDFW, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, told us to  
29 euthanize the rest of the fish. Any fish that were left were euthanized.

30 Commissioner McCauley: Is there any plan to restock fish or something like that?

31 Ms. North: The fish probably were not naturally there. They probably got stocked over  
32 the past 25 years. We're not sure how they got there because it's not hydraulically  
33 connected to the creek. The water flows into the creek, and creek water should not be  
34 flowing back. It's been a fun project, let me tell you.

35 Chair McDougall: You don't have fish that come from the wastewater treatment plant?

36 Ms. North: No. We're failing miserably if we have fish coming from the wastewater  
37 treatment plant.

1 Chair McDougall: David mentioned the inevitability or suggested the inevitability of  
2 there being a path around there. You said there would be a road whether it became an  
3 open path. I would see at some level that area is just not that big. Wishing for the birds  
4 to be there but allowing your dog to be there at the same is a little bit of a contradiction.

5 Ms. North: That's what I'm saying. The Parks and Rec Commission can determine if it's  
6 going to be a maintenance road or a path. That has not been determined at this point in  
7 time. We're just trying to create a maintenance road. Obviously, we know that people  
8 may take that path, but there are ways to deter folks from going there if we do not want  
9 people going down around that pond. It's really up to you guys to make that decision.

10 Chair McDougall: Would that decision be made in the context of the Comprehensive  
11 Plan or would that be made separately?

12 Ms. North: No. This is part of what's looking into the Comprehensive Plan.

13 Chair McDougall: Thank you. Any other questions? Jeff.

14 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I appreciate that there was no ill intent. In all this,  
15 the intentions were well founded. Proceeding without a CEQA study because this was a  
16 maintenance project was legally permitted. My question is what we have learned from  
17 this and how can we improve in the future and is there a policy change that we should be  
18 considering to protect against something like this happening in the future. I'm interested  
19 in the staff perspective.

20 Ms. North: Definitely. If someone was to tell me that we're under a maintenance  
21 exemption, I would now based on my knowledge absolutely say no. Now that I'm  
22 a wiser staff individual, I would require us to get this. This was something that we've  
23 learned from. We're doing the mitigation as we go. I don't think it would have really  
24 changed the outcome of what we would have planned on doing, except maybe we would  
25 have had a biologist out there sooner.

26 Vice Chair Greenfield: Help me out here. For a maintenance project, is a CEQA study  
27 not officially required?

28 Ms. North: That was our interpretation. My interpretation has changed since we started  
29 the project.

30 Vice Chair Greenfield: We now believe that a CEQA study should be required?

31 Ms. North: If I did a future project just for—that way if Shani asked me questions or  
32 other people asked me questions, just for my own basis, I would require it. I don't think  
33 it's necessarily required by law; I just would do it regardless. Does that make sense?

1 Vice Chair Greenfield: Sure, that makes sense. My concern is ...

2 Ms. North: Am I being clear in terms of—we were going under the premise that it was  
3 not required for maintenance. Now what I know and with my knowledge base, I believe  
4 still legally it's not required for maintenance, but I would probably still require us to do it.

5 Vice Chair Greenfield: It seems very clear that you're once bitten, twice shy. You would  
6 certainly not proceed in the same manner. What's to stop someone else? If someone else  
7 is in a similar situation and a CEQA study isn't officially required, is there something that  
8 we should be doing as a body to consider a policy change (crosstalk)?

9 Ms. North: I think the policy change has already happened. I don't think this will happen  
10 again.

11 Vice Chair Greenfield: Where has the policy change occurred?

12 Ms. North: We've been told that if we were to do any other future projects, because of  
13 concerns from public, we would do CEQA documentation. It will happen. I work for  
14 Phil so, yes, it would be happening again.

15 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you.

16 Commissioner Reckdahl: What was the reason for not doing CEQA? Was it a cost issue  
17 or a schedule?

18 Ms. North: Cost issue, time issue, maintenance. We were under the gun of trying to get  
19 this completed during the dry season when we were trying to do the larger aspect of it.  
20 We realized we didn't have the cost to actually go out and do the larger study of the  
21 whole region. We are trying to limit costs and get it done. As you know, our Council is  
22 trying to limit every cost angle. We're trying to do our best as City staff of not spending  
23 money when we don't need to spend money.

24 Commissioner Reckdahl: Every dollar that you spend is something that maybe could be  
25 used elsewhere, but you also don't want to overlook important things. It's a tough  
26 situation.

27 Ms. North: Which is why in my mind we're doing all the mitigation that would be  
28 required anyway for CEQA, which is why when I was wearing my hat we were getting  
29 the Rangers out there. We had the biologist go out there. Those are all the mitigations  
30 that would have been laid out in a CEQA document anyway.

31 Commissioner Reckdahl: Do you have a rough estimate of how much money it would  
32 have cost and what kind of schedule it would have impacted?

1 Ms. North: It probably would have added about a year and probably around \$100,000.

2 Commissioner Reckdahl: Could the berm have lasted another year or would we have to  
3 ...

4 Ms. North: No. We had 16 breaches in the berm the previous summer. No, it couldn't  
5 have lasted another year.

6 Commissioner Reckdahl: In hindsight, if we wanted to do CEQA, would we then have  
7 gone in and fixed that berm for that final season, or what would we have done? What  
8 would have been the best option in hindsight?

9 Ms. North: We could have just drained the pond and left it and not done any kind of  
10 work. That would have been two seasons with the water being out. This is where we're  
11 stuck, as staff, trying to make the right decision. We couldn't have left it in there and  
12 kept on going and patching it while we were trying to do our CEQA. We have the cards  
13 that we're handed. We try and do our best decision-making process. I have a master's  
14 degree in environmental science. I wear my environmental hat. I've been with the City  
15 since 2001. We are trying to do the best we can. We consult with our consultants as well  
16 because they're part of the Baylands Conservation Comp Plan. Our experience getting  
17 through procurement and getting CEQA done is a much lengthier process. It's at least a  
18 year if not longer. Just to get the consultant on board for the moving of the dirt took  
19 around 4 months. It's timing unfortunately. I wish things could go quicker, but that's the  
20 City process that we're in.

21 Commissioner Reckdahl: You mentioned these cattails and reeds. Are they all native  
22 vegetation?

23 Ms. North: No.

24 Commissioner Reckdahl: They're not native?

25 Ms. North: No. It's a freshwater pond. Cattails are going to grow wherever they come.

26 Commissioner Reckdahl: This is naturally occurring. If you had a freshwater pond 100  
27 years ago ...

28 Ms. North: If you had a freshwater pond, then cattails naturally occur. Boronda Lake  
29 has cattails in there. They have a maintenance—they go in every year, I think, or every 5  
30 years and clean out the cattails. We know we're going to have to do some more  
31 maintenance on it similar (crosstalk).

32 Commissioner Reckdahl: That was my next question. What prevents these from doing  
33 the same thing that just happened?



1 Ms. North: One, by having a road around the perimeter, we can keep better access to it.  
2 Before our guys were using goats and machetes to actually get to the interior of the pond.

3 Commissioner Reckdahl: If we start having a choke point now with cattails, what would  
4 we do?

5 Ms. North: We would hire the—do it from the water similar to what they do at Boronda.  
6 They go in and harvest a certain percentage of it but not remove all of it. That would be  
7 our next strategy. Prior to doing that, I would probably get a full—another CEQA  
8 documentation with maintenance agreements built into that.

9 Commissioner Reckdahl: You mentioned the saltwater pipe. What's the condition of  
10 that? Is that ...

11 Ms. North: That's why it's part of the Baylands Conservation Comp Plan. That is  
12 another part of the wetland that needs some maintenance because it's silted up. We've  
13 historically had our operators go out there and hand dig the channel. We need to actually  
14 dig it out properly. That will be part of the next stage, which is why I say it's 5-10 years  
15 to see when we can get money to look at the entire area. You see the remnant slough,  
16 which is right here. We also want to see if we can connect that. That's part of the  
17 Baylands Comprehensive Plan. We're trying to look at the area holistically. Ideally, we  
18 would have done the whole thing and then done CEQA and done the entire pond at the  
19 same time. As I said before, our timing just didn't match up with the breaches and the  
20 leaks.

21 Commissioner Reckdahl: When you talk about what's going down in 10 years, do we  
22 have a good idea of what we want to do or our options are open and we have do to a lot  
23 of planning?

24 Ms. North: We have some options available. AECOM, the consultant, is laying out  
25 some and looking at what makes the most sense for that area, utilizing their experience.  
26 We're not there yet. It's coming up in the timeline. They have it on their agenda to talk  
27 to you about it.

28 Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you.

29 Chair McDougall: David.

30 Commissioner Moss: One more comment based on what we've just heard. The pond  
31 was always considered just a part of the wastewater treatment plant. As we now know  
32 after the fact, it is not just part of that like your cement-lined tanks over on the left. It is  
33 now part of the Baylands Open Space Preserve and must be treated with the respect that  
34 that deserves. What you're doing now is building this pond for the next 25, 30 years

1 before the Baylands Comprehensive Plan is complete. I would like to address do we put  
2 an island or two in the middle there. That maintenance road, do we make sure that you  
3 have those metal barriers with a lock and key so that only maintenance workers go back  
4 there and that we allow that other part of the road to be a path sooner rather than later?  
5 All of these things for the 25-year plan is covered in the Baylands Comprehensive Plan  
6 that won't be completed for another year, but you're working on it now. I worry that you  
7 might have to go back and do this all over again. I don't want that to happen.

8 Ms. North: If we do, we do.

9 Commissioner Moss: We're between a rock and a hard place. Can we get the Baylands  
10 Comprehensive Plan—can we do some work on that ahead of time regarding that part of  
11 the Baylands before you're done?

12 Ms. North: The consultants have been out prior to the work, during the work. They're  
13 planning on incorporating it in. They're also looking at the larger vision. If we wanted to  
14 increase the pond size, what makes the most sense for that area? It will definitely be  
15 incorporated.

16 Commissioner Moss: I would like the Baylands Comprehensive Plan ad hoc committee  
17 to have a discussion in the next month or two just to hear what is going to be—what the  
18 pond is going to look like after they're done even though the Comprehensive Plan is  
19 going to be done for a year.

20 Ms. North: It's going to be done by the end of the year. It's incorporated.

21 Chair McDougall: I think we're going to have a discussion on the Baylands  
22 Comprehensive Plan in a few minutes. Hopefully we can address that problem there. If  
23 nobody else has any questions, I would like first to thank you not just for your  
24 presentation, but I thank you for your very conscientious efforts to look after the  
25 environment. I think everybody's aware that you have not been doing anything malicious  
26 here. In fact, you've been working hard to protect it. In fact, you're dealing in a difficult  
27 situation that we have in the whole Baylands, all parts of it, where it's been re-engineered  
28 and re-engineered. In several cases, we're trying to protect nature that isn't even nature.  
29 That provides a double challenge. I do agree that anything we can do to holistically look  
30 at what's happening so that we're not making individual decisions is important. I hope  
31 we'll hear more about that in a minute. On the question of the cattails, the only thing that  
32 came to mind there was if in fact there is culling going on, how do we—if in the  
33 meantime birds have come back hopefully—make sure we're not culling where the birds  
34 have come back. I don't know that you need to answer that question.

35 Ms. North: I think I'm learning a lot about this habitat. The plan would be to do a water  
36 culling of the cattails during non-nesting season. We unfortunately couldn't do



1 everything during non-nesting season just because nesting season is during the dry season  
2 which is when we need to be out there. That would be my strategy.

3 Chair McDougall: The last comment I'd like to make is I share Ms. Kleinhaus'  
4 enthusiasm for CEQA. When you say that policy has been made, I think when you  
5 mention Phil's name you're saying that Phil's now decided we're going to do that all the  
6 time. I'm not sure how we would have that as a policy. Is it a policy if we're dealing in  
7 more than an acre or more than 3 acres or if we're dealing in wetlands or saltwater. I  
8 don't know how we would have that kind of policy. I think it deserves more discussion to  
9 make sure it's everybody's deliberate awareness of when to ask or when to say can we  
10 trust you to do this analysis or the consultants you bring in versus CEQA. I think Shani's  
11 right; getting it on the tip of everybody's tongue is probably more important than it being  
12 a specific policy.

13 Ms. North: It's definitely on the tip of everyone's tongue now. Thanks to our project, it's  
14 on the tip of everyone's tongue. The Planning Department and the City Attorney's  
15 Department—it's definitely been a policy change. I can assure you that the Public Works  
16 Department will not be doing anything again if they think CEQA should be potentially  
17 there. We are going to be cautious and not (crosstalk).

18 Chair McDougall: It is a policy that the City has put in place. Maybe at some point we  
19 should just ask if somebody would come and inform us of how that works. That would  
20 probably be useful.

21 Ms. North: We have two very strong CEQA folks in the Planning Department, actually  
22 many in the Planning Department and our City Attorney's Office as well.

23 Chair McDougall: Thank you for that. Thanks for that clarification. With that, I'd like  
24 to thank you for your, as I said, appearance tonight and the work that you've done.

25 Ms. North: We can come and give you guys, if you want, an update. As I said, this is an  
26 adaptive management since we aren't sure exactly once we bring in the heavy equipment  
27 at the end of August. I'd be happy to come back again and tell you guys where we're at.  
28 I'm hoping that we can fill the pond by October. That's my goal. During the dry season,  
29 get it done and then fill the pond up again.

30 Chair McDougall: We'll just fill you in for a permanent spot on the agenda for the next  
31 ...

32 Ms. North: That's totally fine. I would much rather have you know that we're full  
33 disclosure. We have nothing to hide. We put everything on our website. We're not  
34 trying to do anything under the radar. It's a very visible area that we all drive past or  
35 walk past. I'm not hiding anything.



1 Chair McDougall: Look forward to seeing you soon.

2 **3. Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan**

3 Ms. O'Kane: A natural next agenda item is an update on our Baylands Comprehensive  
4 Conservation Plan. I'd like to introduce Petra Unger and Diana Edwards from AECOM,  
5 who have been working closely with Daren and a lot of stakeholders who are interested  
6 in the Baylands on moving this forward. I'll go ahead and turn it over to you.

7 Chair McDougall: Good evening and welcome. Nice to have you with us, Daren.

8 Petra Unger: Good evening, and thanks for having us. We're happy to provide an update  
9 on where we've been with the Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan and where  
10 we're going and what the schedule is and how that interacts with Karin's project and  
11 others.

12 Chair McDougall: Thank you.

13 Ms. Unger: My name is Petra Unger. I'm the project manager at AECOM; we're the  
14 consultant preparing the Comprehensive Conservation Plan. With me is Diana Edwards,  
15 who is the deputy project manager. Both of us have been very involved in this from the  
16 very beginning and on a day-to-day basis coordinating with Daren. As you heard, we  
17 were planning on having Daren here presenting with us, but he's out today. I believe he's  
18 been giving updates to the Commission on a regular basis on where we've been. On  
19 today's agenda, I'll give you a brief overview on what the Baylands Comprehensive  
20 Conservation Plan is, our planning process, steps completed to date, ongoing activities,  
21 and also the timeline. What is the BCCP? It's a comprehensive conservation plan to  
22 manage the Palo Alto natural Baylands for the next 15 years and beyond. It's supposed to  
23 be ecosystem-based and comprehensive, incorporating both the habitat and the natural  
24 resources out there with environmental education, art, and uses that are out there now.  
25 It's also supposed to take your current and future projects into account. There are a lot of  
26 projects going on around it and in the area as we've already heard today. We've heard  
27 updates on San Francisquito Creek and on what's going on at the Renzel Wetlands.  
28 There are other projects as well. There are current things and new trends that we're  
29 taking into account such as climate change and other opportunities. It also includes some  
30 site-specific aspects for two of the properties in the Baylands, one of them being the  
31 Renzel Wetlands/ITT property and the other one being Byxbee Park where we're doing  
32 some site-specific planning. Overall this is supposed to be an 18-month process, and we  
33 got started about a year ago, last June. Other aspects of this, we're incorporating the 2008  
34 Baylands Comprehensive Master Plan Update. Over the years, there has been a lot of  
35 work out at the Baylands and a lot of work going into that Master Plan. There's a lot of  
36 excellent information in there. There's also a lot of new data and new trends and new  
37 projections that we're incorporating. Stakeholder and public outreach is an important



1 aspect of this planning process, as I understand is with pretty much any project in Palo  
2 Alto, which is great. Our scope of work included 12 distinctive tasks that we're  
3 completing. The first task we did was to complete a work plan that laid out what those  
4 steps are, what timeframe they would be completed in, and what is part of each of those  
5 ones. Our first deliverable to the City was the existing conditions report, where we  
6 basically documented what is out there now, what are the habitats, what kind of species  
7 use the Baylands. We did some original habitat mapping. We interviewed the Rangers.  
8 We spent a lot of time with Daren, who knows the Baylands inside out like no one else.  
9 We talked a lot to the folks doing the restoration out there, the Rangers, people eating, the  
10 nature walks. We read all the literature, and then we produced the existing conditions  
11 report. We also developed a stakeholder engagement plan that laid out at what stages in  
12 the planning process we would engage the stakeholders and what that would look like,  
13 their meetings. There is an opportunity to review interim deliverables and provide  
14 feedback. We started with our first stakeholder meeting last October, which was  
15 basically—you can see pictures of that here—a kind of early brainstorming, determine  
16 different people's vision for the BCCP, what it should look like, and what should go in  
17 there. We then completed a summary of the first stakeholder workshop that was shared  
18 with the stakeholders and also posted on the website. We became aware that these  
19 projects were being planned at the Renzel Wetlands, so we pulled that particular part of  
20 the Baylands Plan forward so we could incorporate that and coordinate with Karin. Just  
21 as you've been directing, you were hoping that would happen now. Prior to our second  
22 stakeholder workshop, we had a tour at the Renzel Wetlands where we invited the  
23 stakeholders to join us out there and did a comprehensive tour, walked around, looked at  
24 the issues at there with the marsh and also the ITT buildings and the property that has  
25 become parklands recently and that we're addressing in more detail here. We have a  
26 stakeholder workshop specifically on Byxbee Park and the ITT property and also develop  
27 the themes from that as kind of a meeting summary. We also launched the project  
28 website where we're posting this themes paper and interim deliverables that have been  
29 completed. If somebody cannot attend the meetings or chooses to review the  
30 deliverables, they can go on there and get an idea of what's been completed. We had our  
31 third stakeholder meeting in February of this year. That one was an evening—by the  
32 second workshop, we opened it up to the public because we wanted to get a broader  
33 input. There was some desire by several of the stakeholders to have this open to anybody  
34 who wanted to come. We also got a request to maybe hold an evening workshop instead  
35 of daytime to enable a broader group of people to come. That was well received. A lot  
36 of people thanked us for doing the evening workshop as well. Also, we were trying to  
37 get some broader input from some of the users out there, so we launched a survey, which  
38 has some very simple questions about what do you like at the Baylands, what do you like  
39 to do out here, how often do you come out, what are your favorite things, what are your  
40 issues of concern. That was administered onsite by the Baylands Rangers. We've gotten  
41 some pretty good feedback from that as well. With all of that and the input received from  
42 those stakeholder workshops, we developed a draft vision, goals, and objectives



1 document, which basically lays out the main themes that people want to see for the  
2 Baylands and how we would go about developing that. As you may be aware, the City  
3 has a stipend for some artists-in-residence that was allocated to this planning process.  
4 They have been recently brought onboard. In fact, they're here tonight, Mary O'Brien and  
5 Daniel McCormick. That is the City's art program led by Elise DeMarzo. They came  
6 onboard to provide an art overlay or art aspect that interacts with the Baylands  
7 Comprehensive Conservation Plan. When they came onboard last month, we had a  
8 meeting with them at the Baylands and a tour where we shared information about what  
9 we are each doing, what stage of the Plan we're at and how we can interact. We met with  
10 them again this afternoon onsite to discuss some ideas and such. We also have conducted  
11 site visits to explore some of those issues at the ITT and Byxbee Park. We're doing this  
12 presentation today as an update. Ongoing activities. On a very regular basis we  
13 coordinate with the Rangers or with the stakeholders. They've been providing feedback  
14 on some of the deliverables we've had. We incorporate those comments and feedback.  
15 We've also been coordinating with the Historic Resources Board because, as you may be  
16 aware, the former ITT property has the buildings that are of historic significance. There's  
17 some discussion as part of the BCCP what should happen with those buildings. We're  
18 coordinating with the artists-in-residence. Kathleen Jones, Head Ranger, has been a  
19 guest instructor at a local community college where they did parks planning. They chose  
20 a plan for the ITT property as their class project. She shared some of the project results  
21 that we've gotten from that class. We're looking at those for ideas too, just to see what  
22 the local students came up with. Here are some examples from the artists-in-residence  
23 materials and some ideas. The general feel is that whatever art is out there as an overlay  
24 should be natural and in nature and fit well into the whole theme of the Baylands. This is  
25 all the things from Elise DeMarzo with the City who has been leading that artist-in-  
26 residence overlay. Next steps. Right now, we're preparing another chapter of the Plan  
27 that's called the draft and final opportunities, limitations, and best management practices.  
28 This is where we present, based on everything that's out there and what people would like  
29 to see, what are some of the best management practices that should be implemented out  
30 there. That can be anything related to habitat and wildlife and invasive species  
31 management, user impacts, user opportunities, also with the art, and so on. We're also  
32 working on a chapter on sea level rise and climate change. That's currently underway.  
33 Then, we'll develop from all this material a draft action plan saying now that we know all  
34 this, how do we move forward and implement some of those parts. We will put all those  
35 chapters together and have a draft BCCP and a final BCCP. Both of those will be  
36 presented to the Commission as well. The timeline for those. You see the sea level rise  
37 paper will be done by July. The draft Plan should be done by September, and then the  
38 final Plan will be done by the end of the year. In terms of the ITT and Renzel Wetlands,  
39 the use scenarios, you were asking what we're doing there. We're currently in the process  
40 of developing three alternative scenarios that explore what could happen at the ITT  
41 property. We're looking at different options for access, trails through there, reuse or even  
42 removal of the buildings, what are the options there, what kind of habitats can be



1 expanded or created there and also what kind of connections to Byxbee Park could be  
2 done there. We visited last month when we toured with the artists. We had our  
3 landscape designers and restoration ecologists visit the site and look at it firsthand and  
4 come up with some ideas. They're now translating those ideas into some conceptual  
5 drawings. I believe Daren will be sharing those with you in the not-so-distant future. I  
6 already touched on the draft and final Plan outline. As far as Byxbee Park, there's an  
7 interim management plan for the park. There are some aspects that we're supposed to  
8 complete as part of this Plan, and that relates to habitat management and invasive weed  
9 control to parking and circulation to the interpretive signage and also to the use of the  
10 composting facility parcel that's part of Byxbee Park. With that, I'd be happy to answer  
11 any questions. Diana as well.

12 Chair McDougall: Should I assume everybody might be interested? I'll start at one end.  
13 Jeff.

14 Commissioner LaMere: I'll begin. Appreciate all the work that's been done with this,  
15 and excited to get this going. It's such a beautiful area.

16 Chair McDougall: I'm sorry, Jeff. Do we want to do the Commission comments or do  
17 we want to do the public comments? Shani, would you like to comment please? Sorry,  
18 Jeff.

19 Ms. Kleinhaus: Shani Kleinhaus, again, with Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and a  
20 resident of Palo Alto. In the last 2 years, I had the opportunity to participate in three  
21 stakeholder groups for parks master plans, the one that Palo Alto did as well as San Jose  
22 and Cupertino. Those are not done yet; I'm still participating in that process. In all of the  
23 surveys and everything that the cities have asked, all the residents always prioritize nature  
24 as the highest priority that they want to see in their parks, not only in parks that are  
25 natural like we're very lucky to have, but in every city park. They want to see butterflies  
26 everywhere. The reason I'm saying this to begin with is because it's really hard to  
27 implement. It's very difficult to know because people are not trained how to create and  
28 do nature. They know how to do landscape ecology, landscape architecture, how to put  
29 trails in a place, how to do all these things that bring people. How to bring nature back  
30 and regenerate it is not that simple. This Plan is called a comprehensive conservation  
31 plan. It's not called the comprehensive access and trails plan. It's not called art plan. It's  
32 a conservation plan. I'm not saying that it's not important to look at those things, but art  
33 suddenly is an overlay that was (inaudible) upon us. I'm not opposed to art necessarily,  
34 but I don't know that that's the best place for it. It's so beautiful; why don't we have art  
35 where it's less beautiful? We can do both, but I think it needs a lot more consideration of  
36 detail. Connectivity is not always good for nature. You connect something in nature for  
37 people, you disconnect it from nature often. You connect it for people, the creatures now  
38 have to find a way across. As we talked about the project before, we need those gates

1 that Commissioner Moss said. We need them now before we expose the whole perimeter  
2 of the pond to traffic. Yes, we want people to get there. We want them to enjoy the  
3 ponds, but maybe only half. They go and see half of it, and the other half is for the  
4 wildlife and the birds. Which half, I don't know. These are things we need to think about  
5 already. When you look at all these things and you have all these inputs, sometimes you  
6 get—everybody wants to do something. In the stakeholder meetings that I participated  
7 in, the ultimate wish of the people that have the background and history with the  
8 Baylands was to really think about how to minimize the intrusion, the segmentation, the  
9 fragmentation of the habitat, how to really create a very viable ecosystem and allow  
10 people to glimpse in and enjoy it, but not build it for the people. Build it for the wildlife  
11 because they have almost nowhere to go anymore. We've been developing the edge of  
12 the Bay so fast and the sea is rising, there's very little area for them to still go into. The  
13 focus on the ecology really needs to be—it speaks to people. People understand it. Even  
14 when they want access, if you tell them there's no access here because there's something  
15 going on here—the gray foxes need a place to breed, the birds need a place to breed—  
16 they understand that. They accept it, and they love it. Comprehensive Conservation Plan  
17 and restoration plan, not BCDC, not a development and conservation. Thank you.

18 Chair McDougall: Thank you. Jeff, I'll let you start over again.

19 Commissioner LaMere: Just appreciate all the work that's gone into this, and excited for  
20 this project and gaining a better understanding. One of my main comments is also about  
21 the art. Understanding the permanence when there's installation of art, be very judicious  
22 or very careful or having an understanding of both future use of a place but also impact to  
23 the environment, I think is extremely important because, as we've learned, with these art  
24 installations, especially the permanent ones, when they are there, it's very difficult to  
25 adjust or change or do something else or modify. As we move forward with the thought  
26 of art, especially the permanent art, how we study that and how we think about that is  
27 really important.

28 Ms. Unger: Point well taken. In meeting with Mary and Daniel, it's very clear that they  
29 have a very soft and natural touch, that they're very aware of the sensitive nature of the  
30 habitat and how that all relates. I am a scientist by training; I'm a biologist by training.  
31 As I was telling them today, I think sometimes when we in our conservation science or  
32 biology write policies and best management practices, that echoes with a certain kind of  
33 audience. An artistic interpretation or relation to something echoes with a whole other  
34 type of audience. There can be a very subtle overlay and a way to meld those two  
35 together.

36 Commissioner LaMere: Just to underscore. If it's a permanent installation, what  
37 permanence means. We've gained a greater understanding of permanence with artistic  
38 installations.

1 Commissioner Cribbs: I just wanted to ask—first of all, it's great that you're doing this.  
2 The project is big, and it's very important. It's certainly important to everybody in Palo  
3 Alto and outside Palo Alto as well. Thank you. I think we talked a couple of months ago  
4 about engaging along with the stakeholders that exist now the youth of the community,  
5 going out to high schools, perhaps the environmental classes at high schools, both private  
6 and public schools, and also the Youth Council. I just wondered if there had been an  
7 opportunity to do that.

8 Ms. Unger: We have not gone out to the public high schools or anything like that. The  
9 closest we've come to that is the input from the community college class.

10 Commissioner Cribbs: I saw that in the report, and that's good because it's a great source.  
11 I'd really like to see the youth in our community have a voice to talk about this at least  
12 because they're the ones that are going to be using it in the future. They always have  
13 good ideas about things, and it's a different perspective. If there's an opportunity to do  
14 that, I would really support that. The second question is just about when do you know  
15 about the cost of the Comprehensive Plan. Will you ever put a price tag on it to say if we  
16 do these things or we don't do these things, this is what it's going to take to keep the  
17 Baylands the way the stakeholders want it to be?

18 Ms. Unger: As far as our scope goes, the only part that has a price tag is the  
19 implementation of those different opportunities or scenarios at the ITT property. If we  
20 went with Option A, this would be a ballpark. If we went with Option B, this would be a  
21 ballpark. A good way to do that is by unit. If you build X feet of trail this way or that  
22 way, that's going to have a cost. If you want to rebuild a building and do that sort of  
23 thing. Those concept scenarios are supposed to have some ballpark costs associated with  
24 them.

25 Commissioner Cribbs: That'll be good. Thank you very much.

26 Commissioner McCauley: Thank you very much for the presentation.

27 Commissioner Reckdahl: Were you at the stakeholders meetings?

28 Ms. Unger: Yes.

29 Commissioner Reckdahl: Can you give us some flavor? Was there a uniformity of  
30 opinion or were people pulling in all directions?

31 Ms. Unger: I would say what you heard from Shani. The majority of the stakeholders  
32 that attended those meetings is very interested in maintaining the natural side, leaning  
33 towards the restoration and protecting the wildlife. Keeping them natural or making them  
34 more natural again is definitely reverberating with the majority of the stakeholder

1 outreach. There was some interest in access for the users as well. We also had a couple  
2 of people from the City airport join us on a couple of the meetings. They certainly had  
3 some ideas of other things that could happen in the larger part. My feeling for what I've  
4 heard so far is that people are basically very happy with having this resource out there  
5 and wanting it preserved. We haven't heard anybody even from the user survey saying  
6 you have to do this totally different. Everybody really likes to have this at their doorstep  
7 and wishes to see it preserved and wishes to see it in a natural state, much like you've  
8 heard.

9 Commissioner Reckdahl: I really have a love/hate relationship with Byxbee Park. The  
10 views are wonderful up there, but it's so artificial. What are your thoughts of Byxbee?  
11 What options do we have for Byxbee?

12 Ms. Unger: Byxbee, as you know, is a closed landfill and, as such, comes with a lot of  
13 stipulations that are beyond wishes of what can and cannot happen out there. Most of  
14 that is related to the depth of the soil out there and the cap and what is allowed to grow  
15 and not to grow. It's somewhat limited in that. There have been the habitat islands  
16 installed out there, and they're providing a little bit of variation. In some areas of the  
17 park, where they have the engineered soils there's a little bit more opportunity for having  
18 a broader range of plants grow with a little bit deeper roots. We're exploring those  
19 concepts for those areas. Overall, it's a very regulated environment. It's a tough choice.  
20 Before it was built as a landscape, it was a bayfront marsh. I don't think it'll ever go back  
21 to that, but there's definitely some opportunities for some enhancements on habitat.  
22 We've been discussing potential habitat for owls and other things that have been out  
23 there, what can be done in terms of maybe more shrubs, a little less manicured. We're  
24 going to look at the whole regime of mowing and all of that.

25 Commissioner Reckdahl: Have you come up with any options that we haven't thought  
26 of? I know Daren has the plan of possible things in the evolution of Byxbee. Are there  
27 any new options that you've come up with?

28 Ms. Unger: I wouldn't say entirely new like this will be very different than it used to be.  
29 There's definitely opportunities for enhancing some of the habitats out there. Like Karin  
30 mentioned, to maybe reconnect that dry wetland next to the creek, because of all the  
31 infrastructure that has been built over the years, it's a very engineered system even though  
32 a lot of it looks very natural right now in terms of the flow and the flood basin and  
33 saltwater and freshwater and using it for treatment. It's not a natural system.

34 Commissioner Reckdahl: What about the ITT property? We have this big area of marsh  
35 that's been neglected. To do it would probably be very expensive. Are there some ways  
36 that we could use that and improve that without breaking the bank?



1 Ms. Unger: There are some areas of the ITT property that flood at times. There's  
2 saltmarsh in areas beyond the channel. With some of the infrastructure that has been  
3 taken out associated with the buildings, there are some opportunities there. We're also  
4 looking at connecting the little lake as well. We've been discussing those options that  
5 Karin is interested in, expanding the Renzel Wetlands over time. There is an opportunity  
6 for invasives control as well; some of it is very weedy. That one has more potential for  
7 natural sites than maybe Byxbee. We're exploring what we can for Byxbee.

8 Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you.

9 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you for all your efforts on this comprehensive project. It's  
10 very detailed. This is a cherished resource for the community, so it is well appreciated. I  
11 do look forward to seeing your recommendations to balance recreation and art  
12 enhancement within the natural environment while maintaining the priorities of the  
13 natural environment. I echo Anne's concerns about costs. We have a lot of projects now  
14 that are underfunded. I hate to see this one fall onto the stack of unfunded projects.  
15 There are lots of great things we want to do, and we need to figure out how to take action  
16 and make things happen. I echo Jeff's concerns as well in terms of the sensitivity of the  
17 art enhancements within the natural environment. One question I have is are there any  
18 trail additions that you're looking to recommend? One thing I appreciate is when walking  
19 a loop around the Baylands area, like starting where the bike bridge underpass comes  
20 from 101 and walking along, the walk back is along the Bayshore Boulevard. It's the  
21 least natural part of the walk. If there were some way to have more of that loop walk be  
22 off the highway, perhaps walking along one side of the road in the Renzel Pond area  
23 that's being redeveloped right now, that would be an improvement. I do appreciate that  
24 we want to limit access sensitively to maintain the natural environment. If there were  
25 some way to improve that part of the loop, that would be an appreciated enhancement.

26 Ms. Unger: We are looking at the back side, at those businesses along Embarcadero.  
27 There's a narrow strip of restored or enhanced outdoor space, and we are looking at the  
28 potential to put a trail connection through there. You would have a more natural  
29 connection to the backside of Byxbee. We're also exploring as one of the options for the  
30 ITT property to have a connector. If you put a trail through the ITT somewhere to have  
31 one that would cross the saltwater channel and go into Byxbee Park, that is controversial.  
32 Not all the stakeholders are supportive of that, but we're exploring that as one of the  
33 scenarios. There are some constraints associated with that because of the saltmarsh  
34 providing habitat for the saltmarsh harvest mouse.

35 Vice Chair Greenfield: That's great. That analysis of the options and the pros and cons  
36 will be much appreciated.

37 Ms. Unger: I heard somebody, maybe Shani, say concerns about landscape architecture.  
38 Our landscape architects are working on this. They're both restoration ecologists as well,

1 so they're more on the restoration side. They've done a lot of work on levees and open  
2 space and that balance. You need not worry that we're creating a hard-surface, urban  
3 landscape design for your park.

4 Commissioner Moss: This is a question for Kristen. We have had three people on the  
5 Commission who are on the Baylands Comprehensive Plan subcommittee. It would be  
6 good to get more regular updates than in this forum. A number of the questions that have  
7 been asked here could have been answered or discussed outside of the meeting ahead of  
8 time. I'm a little bit worried that the subcommittee is not being utilized to the fullest that  
9 it could. We've only got 6 months left on this 18-month project, and already we're  
10 talking about final drafts. I would like to see some drafts before then privately or in that  
11 subcommittee. If that's possible, can we get that to happen?

12 Ms. O'Kane: I can certainly pass that message onto Daren when he comes back. I  
13 appreciate that. We do have an ad hoc, so we should be utilizing them. We would still  
14 want to hear from all the Commissioners. It may be the same questions that the ad hoc  
15 has. I'll pass that onto Daren.

16 Commissioner Moss: I've been on this Commission for 3 years, and I've been on a  
17 number of subcommittees for other subjects, and we've had a lot more behind-the-scenes  
18 discussion than has been afforded to this particular project. That's why I brought it up.

19 Ms. O'Kane: I just wanted to add that a lot of the information that we're collecting and  
20 that they're using is coming from the stakeholder group and from the users of the  
21 Baylands. There are some projects, like the dog parks, where the ad hocs will be more  
22 involved. For projects that there's a lot of data being collected and a lot of community  
23 involvement, the ad hocs may be less involved. I'll certainly pass that along to Daren.

24 Commissioner Moss: The two examples that I want to bring up specifically, that have  
25 already been brought up here, are the artist walk. We were not aware of that artist walk.  
26 It would have been nice for some of us to be on that walk. The second thing is, going  
27 back to what Commissioner Reckdahl said, what is the natural potential for Byxbee Park.  
28 I would look towards Coyote Hills, San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge on the  
29 other side of the Dumbarton Bridge. They have pretty pristine environments unlike our  
30 dump, which is covered with dirt. The weeds just land there. If we could replicate  
31 Coyote Hills or the Bay Wildlife Refuge, those places have not only hills that are natural  
32 but also freshwater marsh and brackish water marsh and the connection to the creek. I  
33 can't remember which creek it is, but it's a huge creek like our San Francisquito Creek.  
34 They've got all the features that we have. If we could just replicate that, that would be  
35 fantastic. I would love a tour with your group to those places so we could point them out.  
36 Either one or both places would be a wonderful model. That's all.

1 Ms. Unger: Thank you. Great suggestion. We can look into that. On the point of  
2 having concerns about how far along we are and not having seen any part of it, maybe I  
3 didn't make it very clear. All those chapters that we've been delivering, the existing  
4 conditions and the draft visions, goals, and objectives and the future projects, are all  
5 chapters of the BCCP. As we've completed them, they have been shared for interim  
6 review with the stakeholder committee. People have had the opportunity to comment on  
7 those. What you'll see when it's all put together won't be entirely new. Those chapters  
8 have all been shared. As we complete additional draft chapters, they will also be shared.

9 Chair McDougall: I'd also like to make some comments. My first comment would be to  
10 thank you for your work and effort. In your presentation, you talked about the fact that at  
11 the second meeting you had developed some themes for the third meeting. As you know,  
12 I was at all those meetings. To answer Commissioner Reckdahl's question, the general  
13 theme was we don't want balance. That's really important to remember as we start saying  
14 we want balance between recreation and nature. The theme of those meetings was no  
15 balance. This is a situation where we want total imbalance. We want everything to go  
16 towards nature. I'll go back and say there is no nature there. There's a landfill and a  
17 bunch of Baylands that have been re-engineered. It's really hard to create nature out of  
18 that. That doesn't mean we shouldn't try to do it, but it's a double effort that we have to  
19 make. The only way we can make that effort is to remember we don't want balance. We  
20 want that imbalance. I obviously need to ask what's the status of the CEQA?

21 Ms. Unger: There is no CEQA currently. It's a plan. The BCCP will have  
22 recommendations and in the action plan ideas for future projects. As they move forward,  
23 they would have to go through CEQA. In our best management practices, we will  
24 definitely have some call-outs saying before you implement any of these, here's what you  
25 have to consider, here's what you need to implement before you move forward with any  
26 project. It's really a plan, not an action.

27 Chair McDougall: At some point, CEQA has to be a part of it. Even if that wasn't  
28 specific, it was anticipated on your calendar. It would be a good reminder of the  
29 discussions we've had earlier tonight, particularly if it's now a policy.

30 Ms. O'Kane: Chair? I'd like to add onto that. Just like we did for the Parks Master Plan,  
31 we will be doing a high-level programmatic CEQA document. It's not part of their scope  
32 because we wanted all of the funds to go towards development of the Plan. There will be  
33 a separate CEQA process. Just like the Master Plan, it's high level and programmatic.  
34 Any future things that are more detailed, any projects that we would do that require  
35 CEQA, would have a separate CEQA document under that.

36 Chair McDougall: Thank you. The only other thing I want to mention is the habitat  
37 islands on Byxbee were mentioned. I agree with Commissioner Reckdahl that it's not a  
38 natural environment. They have constructed these habitat islands. When Daren was here



1 at the last meeting and talking about what was happening with Byxbee, his point was it's  
2 nice that we put in those habitat islands, but there's a heck of a lot more space up there  
3 that is full of invasive plants, and it won't take long for the invasive plants to eat up the  
4 habitat islands. I met with Daren and the Rangers to discuss that. I propose that it would  
5 be an interesting idea to not try to get one organization, Environmental Volunteers or  
6 Audubon or Acterra, to take over the whole place to maintain them. It would be  
7 interesting to actually allocate an island to a different group. It could allocate an island to  
8 Audubon, one to Environmental Volunteers, and one to the local Audi dealership. There  
9 was a fair amount of skepticism. I can tell you that at this point the Rangers have already  
10 arranged for all of the gloves, bags, and pickup that would be necessary. They've  
11 embraced this idea. My point would be to invite my fellow Commissioners to contact me  
12 whether they would like to have the Commission as a whole adopt one of the islands.  
13 Nobody needs to talk about that now. You can send me a note later. It would be a good  
14 idea for us to go ahead and adopt an island and do what Daren was talking about, which  
15 is do what we can to protect those islands and help them grow as opposed to watch them  
16 shrink with nothing happening. With that, I'd like to thank you very much for your  
17 presentation and discussion and the effort tonight. Thank you.

18 Ms. Unger: Thanks for your time.

#### 19 **4. Boulware Park Update**

20 Ms. O'Kane: Next we have a familiar face in the room, who hasn't been here in a while.  
21 Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect, with our Public Works Department, will be providing  
22 an update on Boulware Park.

23 Peter Jensen: Good evening, Commission. Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect, City of  
24 Palo Alto, here to present Boulware Park. It's our most recent park renovation project. I  
25 want to walk you through what has been proposed for the renovation elements, discuss a  
26 little bit about the community meeting we had, and give you a rundown of the schedule  
27 of the project to date. This is an aerial view of Boulware Park, very close to the Fry's  
28 location. It has some potential to be incorporated into that overall design in the future.  
29 For our purposes, we have a capital improvement project with a construction budget of  
30 \$475,000. The renovations mostly look at the playgrounds and replacing the play  
31 equipment. The last time the playgrounds were renovated was 1993. We usually change  
32 out that equipment in 15-20 year timespans. It's getting time to do that.

33 Commissioner Reckdahl: What year was that put in?

34 Mr. Jensen: '93. Along with renovation of the playground, it does take up a majority of  
35 the budget. Not only do we have to do the equipment, but we also have to bring it up to  
36 ADA standards, which the playgrounds do not meet now. If you have seen the  
37 playgrounds, they are very large sand areas with equipment that floats in the middle, not

1 much access to the equipment from the sides. One of the playgrounds has an elevated  
2 step-lip around it that doesn't allow any kind of access. We'll have to work on those  
3 ADA limitations as well as a few others that are in the park. We want to look at the  
4 irrigation and planting that's out there and make sure it's brought up-to-date and working  
5 efficiently as well as the site furnishings, the benches, tables, barbecues, trash  
6 receptacles. All of them are a little antiquated and need to be replaced. I would like to  
7 look at a little turf reduction. I think that will be a bid alternate item, but there are  
8 locations in the park that have small areas of turf, are not used, could be converted, and  
9 made to be native areas. I address some of the ADA improvements that have to be made  
10 for the playground. Within the park, there are no direct crosswalks or ramps that meet  
11 ADA standards and that get you to the park if you're across the street. There is one ADA  
12 parking stall on the street that has some slope difficulties that need to be addressed.  
13 Some of the walkways around the park don't meet ADA standards due to their cross-  
14 slopes being greater than 2 percent. The graphic shows the proposed renovations to the  
15 park. Because the tot lot and the children's playground are fairly significant in size and  
16 because of the fairly limited budget, we looked at combining the playgrounds into one  
17 location. To demolish one of the playgrounds and replace it with something new would  
18 take the entire budget. We're going to maintain the playgrounds. We're going to employ  
19 a tactic that we used at Bowden Park and the Ventura Community Center where we  
20 utilize the existing poles for the play equipment, repaint them, and then put new  
21 equipment onto the poles, which saves a significant amount of money. I was looking at  
22 the construction drawings the other day, and the footings for some of the playground  
23 equipment are quite significant and would be a chore to remove. Economically, it would  
24 behoove us to use what we have. The community does like the play equipment and how  
25 it's set up now. They were supportive of that. Irrigation improvements in the central turf  
26 area, just reconfiguring and changing some of the heads to make that work more  
27 efficiently. There's a very large ivy hedge that needs to be addressed. I don't think it  
28 started out as a hedge, but it's grown to be a hedge. That's another area to change the  
29 planting to more native vegetation. There's an unused turf space that could be renovated  
30 to more native landscape. We're going to propose two curb cuts and get a direct  
31 crosswalk. One crosswalk currently gets you into the park from this side of the road.  
32 Unfortunately, it uses someone's driveway apron as the ramp, which it shouldn't do.  
33 We're eventually going to abandon that crosswalk and build a new one. Site furnishings,  
34 picnic tables, barbecues, trash receptacles, drinking fountain, need to be changed out.  
35 The asphalt walkway along the rear portion of the park dead-ends into the basketball  
36 court. Unfortunately, a good amount of that doesn't meet ADA standards. Instead of  
37 removing that entire walkway and redoing it, we're proposing to connect the walkway to  
38 the existing walk and to maintain an ADA-accessible loop within the park. You will be  
39 able to walk along here and access the basketball courts. Currently, the walkway ends at  
40 the basketball court, so you have to use the court as the path. If someone's playing out  
41 there, the connection is awkward. Making that one connection will address some of our  
42 ADA needs and make the flow and connection of the amenities better than they are now.



1 A picnic table exists back here in the corner; it is not totally visible from the street and  
2 has had incidents in the past. People have used it to sleep and to jump over the fence.  
3 We would like to move that picnic table to the other picnic tables. This was brought up  
4 in the community meeting and by staff. The accessible parking stall needs to be re-  
5 graded. All the paving in the park is asphalt, so we will be refinishing the asphalt  
6 surfacing to clean it up and remove the cracks. These are some images of the playground  
7 equipment. In Palo Alto, we use a lot of Ross Recreation equipment. In situations like  
8 this, they have the original plans from 1993. I can use that information, and it was very  
9 easy for them to re-clad the poles and new items. It is very similar to the existing  
10 equipment. We've toned down some of the color, but I would like to get rid of some of  
11 the oranges and blues to make it more natural. We will work on that some more. When  
12 we went to the community the first time, we didn't specifically talk about each piece of  
13 equipment, but that is a conversation they want to have at the next meeting. Any  
14 questions or comments from the Commission?

15 Chair McDougall: Does anybody have any questions? Jeff.

16 Commissioner LaMere: I was out there the other day, a weekday morning. I saw maybe  
17 three or four separate seniors walking the loop and cutting through the basketball court,  
18 as you mentioned. I know we're really tight on money. As we move forward on some of  
19 these projects and we look at different playgrounds for the youth and tot lots, what is out  
20 there for seniors? Are there other elements to parks that we can incorporate, especially  
21 when the Master Plan talks about the aging population? I'm not an expert but just  
22 wondering are there other elements within a park or things you can add besides a nice  
23 walking path and a bench that could potentially be appealing.

24 Mr. Jensen: There is the option, which they've had for a while, of adult fitness  
25 equipment. I can't say it's built for someone that wants to be a weightlifter. Especially  
26 for older adults, it does gear itself toward that kind of user group. We can look at adding  
27 some of that equipment in the areas. Like I said, the play areas are quite large. There is  
28 maybe some possibility of incorporating that stuff in there. We also discussed having  
29 open, rubberized surface areas that you could do low-impact physical activity on, whether  
30 that be yoga or some type of stretching activity. That's another possibility to do. Again,  
31 proving the walking path is always good. Providing seating that's inviting and under  
32 shade are key features as well. There are some things we can address.

33 Commissioner LaMere: Was the community meeting well attended? It seems like a  
34 fairly dense area. Is that correct?

35 Mr. Jensen: The Ventura community is not a large overall space but one of the most  
36 densely populated as far as housing, mostly apartments. We did have ten people come to  
37 the meeting. Most of them were young families. They provided good feedback on the

1 plan and what they wanted to see there. Of course, it's ten people in an area of a lot of  
2 people. We did the best at capturing what the community wanted.

3 Commissioner LaMere: Thank you so much for all your work. It's great to see  
4 something like this move forward.

5 Commissioner Cribbs: Totally agree it's great. Thanks for doing that. I'm glad to see the  
6 community meeting still on the schedule. How did you publicize them?

7 Mr. Jensen: We do it in a couple of ways. I think the most successful is the mailer.  
8 Technically, we're only supposed to do within 600 feet or 1,000 feet; I don't know what  
9 that is. We always do a lot bigger. We actually captured the entire Ventura community  
10 area. We mailed out 1,500-1,800 postcards to residents. It was signed within the park for  
11 a few weeks about the meeting. It is pushed out on all the City's social media platforms,  
12 Twitter, Facebook. There was an ad in the newspaper that ran the two Fridays before the  
13 meeting. We try our best. We try to use all the avenues that we can. For most of these  
14 meetings now, I usually ask at the beginning of the meeting how people heard about it  
15 because that is interesting to me. It was mostly the postcard. I think someone saw it on  
16 Facebook. A few people saw the signs in the park.

17 Commissioner Cribbs: Does it make sense to do anything through our summer camps  
18 and also through the School District or is that not possible?

19 Mr. Jensen: I think through the School District definitely. For those entities that have  
20 mailing lists, they can help out. Any avenue of pushing out information is always good.

21 Commissioner Cribbs: Maybe the PTA Council as well.

22 Commissioner LaMere: I would quickly make one comment on that. There's a website,  
23 Nextdoor, and I see sometimes Planning and Transportation meetings on that. That's  
24 becoming more and more popular to use, whether it's for our own Parks and Recreation  
25 Commission to shoot something out on that or other avenues.

26 Mr. Jensen: I'd have to confirm, but I believe we do push information on that platform.

27 Commissioner McCauley: Peter, first off, kudos again on the dog park.

28 Commissioner Cribbs: Oh, yeah, me too. I wanted to say that.

29 Mr. Jensen: I'm sorry I wasn't there for the opening of it. I would have like to have seen  
30 that.

31 Commissioner McCauley: It was a great crowd. It seems like it has been well received  
32 and well used.

1 Mr. Jensen: Yes, it was well used before the fence was put up.

2 Commissioner McCauley: From the first community meeting—I know that it's a small  
3 sample size—was there any consensus on improvements or was it just "we want you to  
4 update the playground equipment"?

5 Mr. Jensen: The majority of the conversation centered around the playgrounds and  
6 making sure the playgrounds were going to stay there or the size was going to stay the  
7 same and the equipment was going to be fairly the same. We're not proposing a lot of  
8 change to the park. I think everyone was comfortable and understood the aspects of the  
9 renovation and the things that needed to be addressed.

10 Commissioner McCauley: Something I know you take into consideration all the time and  
11 we talk about sometimes up here as well is diversity of amenities within parks. The tot  
12 playground at Boulware Park is a great example of that, where you have a park that has a  
13 specific type of amenity that would be good for young families. Daren had raised the  
14 adult fitness equipment just as a general matter maybe one or two meetings past, thinking  
15 about where we might integrate additional adult fitness equipment. That would be a great  
16 idea. If there's an opportunity and if you have some money available, you might take a  
17 look at places within Boulware where that could be added. Thanks again.

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: I used this park or my kids used this park quite a bit. It was  
19 within stroller radius, so we made the trip over there quite a bit. Even back then, it was in  
20 bad condition. I'm glad to see that we're repairing things. That back corner is just  
21 problematic. It's kind of tucked away. We're taking the picnic table out. What are we  
22 going to do back there, just have grass or ...

23 Mr. Jensen: I think we're going to leave it like it is now, a mulched area, because of the  
24 incidents that have occurred there and the lack of view. It's probably best to leave it open  
25 as much as possible. One thing that was brought up in the meeting was a request for  
26 better fencing in that corner because of the ...

27 Commissioner Reckdahl: Against the creek?

28 Mr. Jensen: Yeah, against the creek. There's one house that backs up there as well.  
29 People have gone into the backyard before. Enhancing the fencing back there, probably  
30 using the Caltrain style of fencing that we just put up along the line. Architecturally, it  
31 looks better than chain link, but it's very difficult to climb, almost impossible. That  
32 might help the area because it would close down that access point. What I heard mostly  
33 is people are using the creek as a hidden pathway to move around. The community was  
34 concerned, and they would like to limit that as much as possible. The part they're  
35 identifying is that back corner. I think we will probably address that with some upgrades



1 in the fencing. Putting anything else back there, I'm not quite sure. Maybe a horseshoe  
2 or bocce court, something that provides a lot of visibility and another amenity.

3 Commissioner Reckdahl: It's hard because you don't want to have something that's going  
4 to attract a nuisance and you don't want it to be unused. It's tough.

5 Mr. Jensen: It is a tough one, and it is extremely close to the house back there. It's hard  
6 to squeeze something else in there that's going to be close to someone's house. At this  
7 time and with the budget we have, it's going to stay open. Some way of linking the Fry's  
8 development over to the park and re-creating that edge along there would be interesting  
9 to look at.

10 Commissioner Reckdahl: That back corner could be used as a bridge access. That would  
11 not be a bad idea.

12 Mr. Jensen: Or restoring the creek.

13 Commissioner Reckdahl: During the Master Plan, we mentioned that. If we had the  
14 money to do that, is that still of interest to us, to restore the creek at that point and  
15 provide access, or would we not want to do that?

16 Mr. Jensen: I think we would want to do that. It's always best to restore the creek where  
17 possible. I know the County had visions of doing that and was trying to locate funding to  
18 set up a grant to do that. The cost of doing something like that is not small. When they  
19 started to do that a few years ago, we did talk about the area in Mitchell Park around the  
20 Adobe Creek bridge and restoring Adobe Creek in Mitchell Park to what it was before.  
21 They seemed open to that. They haven't figured out the funding for their grant yet. We  
22 were waiting on that. It's going to take something like that to make that happen or a  
23 development that's large enough to funding something like that.

24 Commissioner Reckdahl: Do you think the neighbors would be receptive to that or do  
25 you think ...

26 Mr. Jensen: Again, it's mostly about design. No, they wouldn't if it was an overgrown  
27 place for people to hide out and camp. If it was developed more natural, open, and  
28 accessible, that's a possibility.

29 Commissioner Reckdahl: My kids love Shoup Park in Los Altos. We spend a lot of time  
30 in the stream up there. If we had something local, that'd be very nice.

31 Mr. Jensen: When we started to talk about the Mitchell Park Adobe Creek segment,  
32 some people in Public Works who have grown up here talked about that as the favorite  
33 thing. It would be nice to get those areas back in there.

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you.

2 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you for your efforts on this. It's great to see us working to  
3 enhance our parks. You mentioned the cycle that the parks are typically refurbished. Did  
4 you say 15-20 years?

5 Mr. Jensen: For play equipment, yes. That kind of dictates our renovation schedule  
6 because the playgrounds usually are a larger part of the project budget. We usually  
7 renovate a park every 15 or 20 years, mostly looking at the playground.

8 Vice Chair Greenfield: My sense is it seems to run more than 20 years.

9 Mr. Jensen: That depends on the budget and working the projects in there. I would agree  
10 with you. We do start at the 15-year mark to try to get the projects on the books as  
11 quickly as we can. Sometimes that takes longer than other times.

12 Vice Chair Greenfield: Do you know which parks are up next?

13 Mr. Jensen: I know that Bol Park is on the list. are a few. Over the next few years,  
14 there's five or six parks that are going to go through the same renovation style. I don't  
15 recall offhand what they are, but they are in the capital budget.

16 Vice Chair Greenfield: Did you mention the sand is going away and will be replaced  
17 with ...

18 Mr. Jensen: That's something we'll talk about more with the community. I'm sure there  
19 is a desire to keep some of the sand. We probably will keep some of the sand in the tot  
20 lot area. The way that it's set up now, the front half of it has all the equipment, and the  
21 back half is a sand play area. Probably the sand in the big kids' area will go away.

22 Vice Chair Greenfield: As a general policy, we are continuing to keep sand in some  
23 cases?

24 Mr. Jensen: In a limited fashion, yes. We don't have a policy of eliminating it altogether.  
25 It does seem, just from experience and community meetings, the community likes it and  
26 wants to maintain it as much as possible.

27 Vice Chair Greenfield: I certainly support the idea of removing turf and converting to  
28 native plants where appropriate. I'm wondering if the back corner would be appropriate  
29 to add some nature.

30 Mr. Jensen: Perhaps some trees just to keep the ground plane clear. It's a possibility,  
31 planting some small oak trees. It is a good space for it. It's sad that we can't develop it  
32 just because the value of the land is ...

1 Vice Chair Greenfield: Just one more comment, and there's probably nothing to act on.  
2 There's been a lot of discussion about the desire to add the AT&T property to Boulware  
3 Park. I'm wondering, if you knew that property was going to be added in the next 5, 10,  
4 or 20 years, is there anything you would do differently.

5 Mr. Jensen: That's based on the budget. If you had unlimited, I would probably start  
6 from scratch and lay it all out again like we did for Scott Park. It was just so small we  
7 could do it with the budget we had. I think that would be a longer conversation about the  
8 road and if it stays or goes away to make the connection of the space. There is a prime  
9 opportunity in the development of the Fry's location to make that connection all the way  
10 across. There's possible funding that could happen there. I haven't really thought about  
11 the design, so I can't say if there's anything I'd do differently. Most likely it would be a  
12 larger, more active turf space that would start to extend itself with more native planting  
13 around the outside in the edging if we could eliminate the road because it's not overly  
14 used. That is a point of concern for the community because the road has been used for  
15 long-term parking for people living in their cars.

16 Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you.

17 Commissioner Moss: Most of my comments have been covered. I'd like to make a  
18 comment about each of those comments. First of all, it's absolutely essential that  
19 whatever you do on the side that's not AT&T property should be something when you  
20 add AT&T you don't have to redo a lot of what you're doing here. If you want to add  
21 more turf, if you want to add more native areas, that's great as long as you don't mess  
22 with what you're doing now. It looks like the road—it's pretty self-contained, the stuff on  
23 the left side of the road. You're doing a great job. I want to make sure you don't too  
24 much that's going to go away if you add AT&T.

25 Mr. Jensen: Looking at the long run, that was a consideration, the idea that the AT&T  
26 part could be developed. We would not want to build anything, a bathroom or something  
27 like that, along the edge that would have to be torn down to reconfigure it. That area is  
28 maintained just the way it is.

29 Commissioner Moss: I had the exact same suggestion that Commissioner Reckdahl had  
30 about making a bridge from the Fry's property to that back corner. That seems like a  
31 perfect place for a bridge similar to Magical Bridge in Mitchell Park. That gives you  
32 access to the creek; you get to look at it and everything like that. It's very nice. You get  
33 a tie-in to Fry's. When you had that stakeholder meeting, I wanted to make sure that the  
34 ad hoc committee for park amenities is specifically invited. Commissioner Reckdahl is  
35 on the Ventura Coordinated Area Plan, and he should have been invited specifically for  
36 that. Maybe he was. For any future park re-dos, that park amenities ad hoc committee  
37 should be invited specifically by name. I really like the idea of whatever you can do for  
38 Adobe Creek in Mitchell you could do for this creek here. Some kind of interface with

1 the creek, even if it's a hill overlooking the creek and maybe not access to the creek, some  
2 nice transition would be great if we can do it. I'm assuming with the turf reduction and  
3 irrigation changes, you're going to try to use that purple-pipe water that's going to the  
4 Stanford industrial park.

5 Mr. Jensen: If that was a possibility, yes. If we could get the water over there, we would  
6 want to do it. Our City policy for renovation of parks is we do install recycled water  
7 products. One day probably all the parks will operate off recycled water.

8 Commissioner Moss: That's all I had. Thanks.

9 Chair McDougall: The first thing I'd like to do is repeat the dog park thing. That was an  
10 exciting event. It was well attended and well done. You talked about repairing asphalt.  
11 Is there any consideration to any of those places where we would take out asphalt and put  
12 in gravel or something that is more permeable?

13 Mr. Jensen: It's just about cost. The asphalt is not in bad shape. Over time, it cracks  
14 because of the material. It's pretty easily fixed. Nothing has been considered to replace  
15 it with another material. I would consider it semi-permeable because it does sheet flow  
16 off to landscaped area, not just the street. At least it has that going for it.

17 Chair McDougall: You mentioned cost. I think I heard you say there was something like  
18 \$400,000-and-some involved as you went through it. I'm not against doing things that  
19 are ADA, but it sounded to me like an awful lot of the effort is to comply with ADA. I'm  
20 not objecting to that, but is there anything we've ever considered or is there any  
21 opportunities to get ADA funding for any of these projects in our parks?

22 Mr. Jensen: For this park in particular, the budget was set before we had our ADA  
23 review. I actually have now a little book that talks about every park and every little area  
24 in every park that needs to be addressed. When we put the budget together for future  
25 projects, we will be adding a sum of money to address those issues in the parks. That  
26 will be part of the renovation, so we can cover those. There has not been a conversation  
27 that I'm aware of about setting up a separate stream of annual funding to address things.

28 Chair McDougall: I was thinking of Federal funding or something that could be used.

29 Mr. Jensen: No, there's nothing now. It's on us to address shortfalls in the parks.

30 Chair McDougall: In terms of the stakeholder and outreach meetings, I would like to  
31 echo what Commissioner Moss said in terms of inviting—I would go so far as I don't  
32 think there would be any Brown Act violations if the whole committee was invited, as  
33 long as we're not having specific meetings. If more than the ad hoc showed up, that  
34 would be good and not bad. I've done that in some of the Cubberley park stuff, and it's

1 always interesting. I'm interested in at some point—Keith, I think you're our  
2 representative to the Ventura park project or whatever—maybe coming back. I don't  
3 know how much progress has been made. The tie-in to here would be interesting to hear.

4 Mr. Jensen: There's a green space there. Capitalizing on what we have already and  
5 building on it would be a good idea.

6 Commissioner Reckdahl: Ventura's first meeting was supposed to be about a month ago,  
7 and they have delayed it. It's about a month from now, the first meeting.

8 Mr. Jensen: For this project and for some in this price range, to stretch the dollars as  
9 much as we can the design and the construction drawings are all done in-house by myself  
10 and staff. If you look at the capital improvement budget book, there's \$450,000 for  
11 improvements and another \$45,000 for design. We're going to take that \$45,000 and  
12 move it to the improvement part. We do try to stretch as much as possible, especially  
13 with the market we're in now. Everything we have proposed we can do with the budget  
14 we have now.

15 Chair McDougall: Thank you. Any other questions? If not, we can let Peter go.

16 Commissioner Cribbs: I have one.

17 Chair McDougall: Sure, Anne. I'm sorry I missed that.

18 Commissioner Cribbs: Are there AEDs in all of our parks? Do you know?

19 Mr. Jensen: I do not believe so.

20 Commissioner Cribbs: In some of the bigger ones but not the smaller?

21 Mr. Jensen: The regional parks, Mitchell Park, Rinconada Park, and Greer Park, have  
22 them by the restroom facilities. I do not believe any of the other parks have them.

23 Commissioner Cribbs: It might be interesting to think how we could do that because  
24 there are some programs around that ... On this project schedule, I was confused because  
25 maybe you meant to say 2019 for the second meeting and the third meeting and the  
26 adoption.

27 Mr. Jensen: It should be '19, not '18. The Parks and Rec Commission meeting in January  
28 would be January 2019. The PRC meeting for the park improvement adoption would be  
29 in February '19 as well.

30 Commissioner Cribbs: Since we have these park improvements going on and we're  
31 starting to meet with all the potential stakeholders and people are giving their

1 impressions, is now the time to start thinking about Friends of the Parks, not in the  
2 foundation way but people who live close to the park, trying to formalize in a really nice  
3 way about taking good care of the park once it gets reinstalled and celebrated? I think  
4 we've talked about that in the past but maybe never really did it. I don't know that it's a  
5 staff thing. It's something that might organically spring up about "we have a new park,  
6 and let's see what we can do to take care of it." Just a thought.

7 Mr. Jensen: It's a good thought. I know there's an ad hoc group associated with Friends  
8 of the Parks now. We should have further conversations offline with staff and the ad hoc  
9 about better ways that that group can be used to help us preserve the parks, fund the  
10 parks, all those fun things.

11 Commissioner Cribbs: It might be fun to try with this particular one when it gets done.

12 Mr. Jensen: They've expressed that some want to financially help fund some of the  
13 picnic tables or the amenities. That would be low-hanging fruit they could help with in  
14 the short term. That group has the potential to impact the park system in a large way over  
15 a period of time.

16 Commissioner Cribbs: Some things are more fun to fund than other things. When we  
17 had that itemized sheet from the dog park, there were some things that looked like  
18 opportunities for people to fund. If we could look at a park and say, of this \$459,000,  
19 what are some things ...

20 Mr. Jensen: Besides benches and tables, probably a much more exciting item for people  
21 to donate to is some of the play equipment. That's mostly about marketing and what  
22 people are excited about.

23 Ms. O'Kane: I wanted to add that in the Parks Master Plan there is a program that talks  
24 about establishing community neighborhood groups that participate in cleanup and  
25 maintenance of parks. You have a neighborhood park maintenance day, and neighbors  
26 can come out and help do the work that staff would do, which gives them a sense of  
27 ownership of the park and would make them want to take care of it a little bit more, not  
28 that people aren't. Daren and I have talked about it a little bit and how we can get that  
29 going. I'd like to explore that a little bit more.

30 Mr. Jensen: I've also found that using our local nonprofits, especially Canopy, is  
31 beneficial. It doesn't have to be associated with the project. At the end of the project, it  
32 would be nice to do a tree planting out there. It involves the local community to be more  
33 in touch with the park. They can look at the park and say, "I planted that tree," and they  
34 can watch it grow for a long time.

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

Chair McDougall: As a quick update that would go into the next section of ad hoc committee or liaison updates, we have had recent meetings with Friends of the Palo Alto Parks on various conversations. I will be meeting with them again next Thursday, taking them into the field so they can get a better view of what the opportunities are. Peter, I know you mentioned at one point we should work on developing the relationship. With Kristen's support, we're working hard at that.

Commissioner Moss: One comment along those lines. Just like we told the Friends of the Palo Alto Parks about the dog park, in community meeting two and community meeting three they could be there with a table and a little card or envelope that says, "If you want to contribute towards some of the amenities for this park." We should make that a regular feature of a community meeting for a particular park for a particular community because that's the best way to get the community to be part of it.

Chair McDougall: Are there any other ad hoc committee or liaison updates? I don't have the chart in front of me.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I have one question for Peter while he's here. You did a nice job a couple of years ago leading that Bol Park planting alongside the path. Some of those plants have died obviously. Overall, they're doing well. Is there any plan to replant the ones that have died?

Mr. Jensen: We replanted in the fall. I think we planted eight or nine plants. I looked at it the other day, and some other plants have died. We're doing pretty good. We are planning on re-installing the plants this fall. This is the last year that we'll be replacing the plants. The VA in the last few weeks has started their planting along that wall.

Commissioner Reckdahl: When they take the fence down, there will be some extra space between their wall and the park. Are they going to put stuff where that fence is right now, the construction fence?

Mr. Jensen: I'd have to look at this again. I believe they put the fence back up, so there's an alleyway between a fence and the wall, but they planted it.

Commissioner Reckdahl: They planted between there.

Mr. Jensen: They put the fence back. I think their original plan was to plant all redwood trees along there. We had a conversation with them about planting native oak trees, so they did change their plant palette. It's not the easiest (crosstalk).

Commissioner Reckdahl: We didn't want redwood because ...

1 Mr. Jensen: It's just not ...

2 Commissioner Reckdahl: It wouldn't do well in that area?

3 Mr. Jensen: No. When you walk through that area, it is mostly an oak woodland. It does  
4 have a lot of oak trees, especially coast live oak. We wanted to maintain that (crosstalk).

5 Commissioner Reckdahl: In Bol Park, there are some redwoods along the creek.

6 Chair McDougall: Places like Stout Park that have redwood groves, all those redwoods  
7 are dying.

8 Mr. Jensen: The redwood requires irrigation. El Palo Alto lives in a unique micro-  
9 environment. It was next to the stream and had access to water and was able to grow.  
10 The specialty around it was it was the only one. Everything else that grew around it was  
11 oak trees, so it stood out even more. Over time, it is a very easy tree to propagate and to  
12 grow. We have grown a massive redwood forest on the lowlands. If you take the  
13 irrigation away, they only live for 5 or 6 years until they start to decline or die. You can  
14 even see that in the Magical Forest in Rinconada Park where there's not a supplemental  
15 irrigation system.

16 Chair McDougall: The hydraulics in those trees will only move water up 60 feet. The  
17 reason they can live on the coast is they get the water from the mist above 60 feet.  
18 Otherwise, they just die off.

19 Mr. Jensen: The majority of water intake by a redwood, unlike other trees, is absorption  
20 through its leaves, mostly through fog. If you don't have the fog, then it's a problem. The  
21 redwoods around here will max out at the same height. That's the height they can push  
22 up to in the drought and the heat of the area. In prolonged periods of drought, the tops  
23 will die. For Bol Park, we wanted to make it more native. Hopefully by the time the VA  
24 system stops functioning, those trees will be established and can live without any more  
25 maintenance.

26 Vice Chair Greenfield: Just one more note. I believe Palo Alto has three protected tree  
27 species, redwood, coastal live oak, and valley oak. My understanding is there's a  
28 movement that the redwood might not be protected because it's not appropriate for most  
29 of the locations here.

30 Mr. Jensen: That's been discussed, but it's more of a political question. If Palo Alto  
31 wasn't called Palo Alto and Redwood City wasn't called Redwood City, it would  
32 probably be easier to make those changes.

33 Commissioner Reckdahl: Going forward, if you have another planting like you did on  
34 Bol, please invite the Commission. That was a very good way to spend a morning.



1 Mr. Jensen: That was a very successful planting. That was the biggest planting I've done  
2 with Canopy to date. I think it was 60 trees and 40 plants.

3 Commissioner Moss: I have an update on an ad hoc committee. It's not necessarily for  
4 Peter.

5 Mr. Jensen: The replacement of the bridge in Mitchell Park will start July 9, and it is  
6 going to be a logistical challenge because the bridge will be closed from July 9 through  
7 August 30. I'm hoping it will be done by the time school starts, which is August 14.

8 Commissioner Moss: How will they get to Magical Bridge?

9 Mr. Jensen: I have a detailed plan that shows the access route. It's very difficult to get  
10 there. I haven't gotten all the agreements from the adjoining parties yet, so I'd rather not  
11 say how that's going to happen. Hopefully, it's going to go down Middlefield and then  
12 into the playground.

13 Commissioner Moss: There's no way to create the new one just to the left of the old one  
14 and leave the old one up until ...

15 Mr. Jensen: Our idea was we would do the bridge at the same time as Magical Bridge.  
16 Unfortunately, we had a funding gap, and the bridge stayed. We built the pathways on  
17 each side to meet the new bridge. Now, we've just got to put the new bridge. Installing  
18 the bridge will be very quick; it's mostly demolishing the old bridge and building the  
19 abutments.

20 Commissioner Moss: Why did you pick summer instead of the dead of winter?

21 Mr. Jensen: For the school.

22 Commissioner Moss: The major access to JLS.

23 Mr. Jensen: It's used by hundreds of students in the morning going to all the schools  
24 around there and commuters as well. The logistic hurdle is getting the detour plans out to  
25 the public. We decided on July 9 because of the July 4 celebration in the park.

26 Vice Chair Greenfield: Have we notified the pickleball community about this closure?

27 Mr. Jensen: I just got approval today of my alternative parking plan to give them. I will  
28 be emailing them tomorrow probably about the—they know about the project, but they  
29 don't know the access and the route to get into there. The tennis courts and the  
30 playground will remain open. I'm working with Friends of the Magical Bridge to get the  
31 information on their website.

1 Commissioner Moss: What about the back parking lot of the Unitarian Church?

2 Mr. Jensen: I haven't reached out to them yet. They've been doing work in the area, and  
3 it would be best to do the parking and close that area. There is no ADA ramp that goes  
4 from their property, and you still have to go out to Charleston and down the pathway.  
5 There is some street parking on Charleston that we're going to make available and show  
6 parking there.

7 Chair McDougall: Thank you, Peter. I'm going to assume you have no more bad news.

8 Mr. Jensen: That's it.

9 Commissioner Moss: I didn't hear earlier in the department report about the golf course  
10 opening. That was a really big deal since our last meeting. I just wanted to make sure  
11 everybody knew how incredible that opening was. We tried to make a reservation for a  
12 slot this week, and it's full. It's getting a lot of great traction. It's just a great job you  
13 guys did.

14 Ms. O'Kane: Daren is going to be coming either next month or the month after to give an  
15 update on the course. It's great to hear that you couldn't get in. I hope that you do find a  
16 time to get in. I was able to play the course, and it's really fun and beautiful.

17 Commissioner Moss: One of my favorite subjects is connections to other open space. I  
18 went to the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space board meetings the past couple of  
19 months. One of them had a very nice new addition from the City of Saratoga into all of  
20 their open spaces. It reminded me how lucky we are to have all the connections that we  
21 do to their open space preserves. On July 1, I will be walking from Palo Alto to the sea,  
22 39 miles, on public trails from Arastradero Preserve through Foothills Park through Los  
23 Trancos Open Space to Black Mountain to Portola State Park to Gazos Creek. We should  
24 probably publicize that connectivity that we have and that other towns wish they had. In  
25 order for us to have an official trail, it has to be open to pedestrians and bikes. I had a  
26 conversation with Daren about the connectivity between Arastradero Preserve and  
27 Skyline. The only section that doesn't fit that is Foothills Park and the Los Trancos Open  
28 Space. They've already said they would open the Los Trancos Open Space Preserve to  
29 bike traffic if we would open up Foothills. There is no way at this particular time—  
30 there's no connection from Arastradero. The public can walk from Arastradero Preserve  
31 through Foothills Park to Los Trancos, but they cannot bike.

32 Commissioner McCauley: Not as a technical matter because this park is not open to the  
33 public.

34 Chair McDougall: David, I'm going to suggest that this could be an interesting topic at a  
35 future meeting where we could actually spend time discussing it. It's a good topic. I'd

1 like to make a note and explore it that way. Does anybody else have anything that they  
2 would like to bring up or add?

3 Commissioner McCauley: I was just going to ask where David is camping on his trek.

4 Commissioner Moss: At the top of Black Mountain (inaudible).

5 Commissioner Cribbs: Could I ask one more thing before we go?

6 Chair McDougall: Sure.

7 Commissioner Cribbs: I was really intrigued with the whole conversation about the  
8 environment and the CEQA today. It just occurred to me that I didn't know as much as I  
9 should know about it. If I could answer the question of when does a maintenance project  
10 become a construction project—is it the amount of area that is affected or is it the cost or  
11 something else that I don't understand? Is there an easy answer to that or not?

12 Chair McDougall: I'm betting that there's not an easy answer; although, Kristen's about  
13 to prove me wrong.

14 Ms. O'Kane: Are you asking with respect to CEQA?

15 Commissioner Cribbs: In general, when does a maintenance project that doesn't need  
16 CEQA become a construction project? What's the trigger there or is there no trigger? Is  
17 it a cost? Is it an acreage?

18 Mr. Jensen: The maintenance project was set up to be done over periods of time. They  
19 did not do that, and it became a bigger project. That project was established from their  
20 permit, and that's why it became maintenance. It was operating on a permit that they  
21 hold. It wasn't a construction project. A construction project would require a new  
22 permit, and that permit would trigger the CEQA aspect.

23 Commissioner Cribbs: That helps.

24 Ms. O'Kane: If the Commission as a whole is interested in understanding CEQA better  
25 and not necessarily for a specific project, we could add that to the agenda.

26 Commissioner Cribbs: That would be nice at least from my perspective. Thank you.

27 Commissioner McCauley: This isn't an ad hoc item, but it was raised by one of the  
28 speakers. It might have been the Commission that asked not to have unnecessary paper  
29 materials at these meetings and also not to have advance paper-printed packets delivered.  
30 It probably makes sense to have a few copies available for the public in case people need

1 them. Maybe there is a hybrid. If that's possible, that might be the easy route to resolve  
2 that question.

3 Ms. O'Kane: There was some confusion as to the City Clerk's direction. Moving  
4 forward, we'll provide paper copies of the staff reports. That's the appropriate thing to do  
5 for the public.

6 Commissioner McCauley: Try and right size it so you don't have a whole bunch of extra  
7 copies that go unused.

8 **VI. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

9 None

10 **VII. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR JULY 24, 2018 MEETING**

11 Ms. O'Kane: Did you want to go through the agendas?

12 Chair McDougall: I've got a list of the golf course, connectivity, the Foothills, CEQA.

13 Ms. O'Kane: You have in front of you the agenda items schedule. For July, Jack Morton  
14 from Parks and Rec Foundation is coming to give a basic talk on their role. You can  
15 share with them what you think the Commission's priorities might be. Daren will be  
16 giving an update on the Foothills Park Trail reroute project. The other two items are  
17 budget related, and we're adding one which is an update on Municipal Fees for the  
18 Community Services Department and any changes for fiscal year 2019. We'll group that  
19 into a fiscal year '19 budget update now that Council has adopted the budget.

20 Commissioner Reckdahl: Jack Morton, is that Palo Alto Recreation Foundation or did  
21 they change their name to Parks and Recreation Foundation?

22 Ms. O'Kane: It should be Palo Alto Recreation Foundation.

23 Chair McDougall: Remind me who has the liaison with them right now? Jeff. I may  
24 spend a few minutes talking to you about the kind of presentation and what we had with  
25 the Palo Alto Friends of Parks.

26 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

27 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Reckdahl and second by Commissioner  
28 Moss at 9:48 p.m.