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**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
August 27, 2019
CITY HALL
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California**

13 **Commissioners Present:** Anne Cribbs, Jeff LaMere, Ryan McCauley (arrived at 7:12 p.m.),
14 Don McDougall, David Moss, and Keith Reckdahl (arrived at 7:46
15 p.m.)

16 **Commissioners Absent:** Jeff Greenfield

17 **Others Present:** Council Member Cormack

18 **Staff Present:** Daren Anderson, Natalie Khwaja

19 **I. ROLL CALL**

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

21 Chair McDougall: I'd like to ask if there are any Agenda Changes, Requests, Deletions
22 from the published agenda. Do staff or Commissioners have anything that they'd like to
23 suggest?

24 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

25 Chair McDougall: I have no cards for Oral Communications for topics that are not on the
26 agenda.

27 **IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

28 Chair McDougall: I'd like to start with welcoming Daren Anderson and the Department
29 Report.

30 Daren Anderson: Good evening. Daren Anderson. Thanks so much. I'll give you a
31 couple of brief items. The first one's about the Black and White Ball. Just a reminder it's
32 Friday, October 4, 7:00 p.m. to midnight, at Lucie Stern. Tickets are still available.
33 They're \$150 each and available online. There's an ice cream social at Hoover Park.



1 This is the 25th annual Midtown Ice Cream Social on Sunday, September 15, from 1:00
2 to 4:00 at Hoover Park. So far, Chair McDougall and I are signed up to staff a table and
3 provide information on parks and open space and recreation.

4 Commissioner Cribbs: (inaudible)

5 Mr. Anderson: And Anne Cribbs, wonderful. I hadn't heard that yet. That's terrific.
6 Thank you. Commissioner Greenfield had asked about some lighting issues at two of our
7 parks. A couple of bulbs were out at El Camino Park and Stanford/Palo Alto. At El
8 Camino Park, they were replaced on Monday and today. We're back up and running.
9 We're getting a price quote for a little electrical fire we had on an outlet that powered a
10 few of the lights at Stanford/Palo Alto. We're getting a price quote on that, and we'll get
11 it fixed promptly. An update on the Cubberley track and field project. It's progressing
12 well, and we're still on track. About a third of the field has the new pad and the new
13 synthetic turf down. The turf crew that's working on this will be out next week to finish
14 the field installation. Anticipated total turf installation should be done by September 18,
15 and then they'll address the track, which should be completed by September 30, and
16 wrapping up the whole project on October 4. An update on the 3350 Birch Street or
17 AT&T property. On August 19, Council authorized the City Manager to finalize the
18 purchase of the vacant lot at 3350 Birch Street. The City Manager will provide the seller
19 with a written notice to proceed with the sale by August 30, and closing is scheduled to
20 take place 15 days after that. Subsequent steps I envision will be park dedication for the
21 property and community outreach to figure out what the community would like to do
22 with the land. Pickleball, I've got good news. We received our final permit for approval.
23 I think I notified the Commission via email. The work is underway, and the project is
24 anticipated to be completed by November 15. The Cubberley Master Plan, unfortunately
25 I don't have a lot of details. Kristen's planning to get more information and hopefully
26 update you either by email in the interim or perhaps at our next staff meeting. The draft
27 Master Plan is complete. It's under internal review right now. A Commissioner had
28 asked about review on behalf of the Commission, and Kristen says she's coordinating
29 with the City Manager and PAUSD on this issue to make sure we're in alignment about
30 the release of the plan. More information to come. Also good news on the Arastradero
31 Community Garden. This is our newest community garden. Staff's been putting in the
32 irrigation and clearing out a little debris and building the plots. That'll be about 35 plots,
33 which should be ready for gardeners to start using in about one month from now. We
34 already have nine people on our waiting list, which is exciting. People are geared up to
35 start moving in once we're ready. I also had a question about Bol Park and a project
36 Public Works had been looking at for GSI or underground water storage at that site.
37 Several months ago, they had investigated the possibility of putting an underground
38 reservoir there and GSI features. The community had weighed in not in favor by and
39 large. We asked about the current status, and Public Works informed me that that was
40 just the preliminary look, and they're not currently looking at it any longer. Their GSI

1 plan has other, higher-priority sites for GSI improvements. Bol Park's not on their
2 agenda or calendar. I also received a question about some recent surveys at the Baylands.
3 Save the Bay, who is our primary partner for restoration at that site, is out doing some
4 vegetation monitoring around the marsh along Byxbee. This is just part of their regular
5 efforts. They're out there removing invasive weeds and planting a tremendous number of
6 native plants. They monitor those areas regularly. We also had Team Spartina. This is a
7 team dedicated to one specific invasive plant called the invasive spartina plant. We have
8 it at the Baylands and have had it for quite some time. They've tracked it over the years,
9 and they did an annual pretreatment survey of it. The good news is our infestation is
10 down about 90 percent from its peak in 2006, and now we have approximately 0.14 acres.
11 We're just continually whittling it down with ongoing sustained efforts. I also had a
12 question about sea level rise, just kind of what's next, keeping that fresh and relevant.
13 The next step, I think, is going to be Public Works will be bringing the horizontal levee
14 project for the Commission to discuss in October, tentatively. That concludes the
15 Department Report.

16 Chair McDougall: Before I ask the Commission whether they have any questions for
17 staff, I would like to remind everybody to make sure you're using the mic and you're
18 speaking into the mic. Apparently, we've recently lost some of the extremely valuable
19 conversations that we've had, and they haven't been sufficiently recorded. That's just
20 disastrous. Please plan on speaking up. I will ask if anybody has any questions for staff
21 at this point. Anne.

22 Commissioner Cribbs: Just two comments. One, great news on the pickleball. I'm sure
23 that the community will be very excited about that, and I hope we're going to plan a
24 celebration. That's just great. I was so happy to see that come. For the track and for the
25 field at Cubberley, are you doing something to publicize all that?

26 Mr. Anderson: Yes, I think we'll probably get a ribbon cutting.

27 Chair McDougall: Does anybody else have any questions? I would like to echo the
28 pickleball excitement. On Bol Park, that was something that GSI decided was a good
29 project. Do we have any understanding of what citizen objections were to that project?

30 Mr. Anderson: I don't think they got a fair chance to hear a lot about it. I don't think
31 there was a public presentation on it. I'm probably not the right one to give all the details,
32 but I'll ask Public Works to come back at some point. I think they'll be here in
33 November, for sure, and maybe they give a litany of updates, and that could be one of
34 them, where we're at with GSI.

35 Chair McDougall: That would be good because they were pretty passionate about GSI
36 and the things they could do. It would be worth understanding what citizen objections
37 were. On the Baylands, spartina is a kind of cordgrass, right?

1 Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

2 Chair McDougall: Does that mean that all cordgrass is bad or all the rest of the cordgrass
3 that we have there is good cordgrass?

4 Mr. Anderson: Very good question. It's really tricky, especially at our site. There's an
5 East Coast variety, spartina alterniflora, and it was introduced on accident in the East
6 Bay. It migrated all through San Francisco Bay. You could tell differences until it
7 hybridized. We've got a native spartina, native cordgrass, and now we've got this
8 alterniflora, the East Coast variety, and now we have a hybrid. It's really, really difficult
9 to discern the differences. You have to sometimes time it just right in terms of its
10 growth. Sometimes, you have to inspect the roots. It's very, very difficult, and hence this
11 team of specialists that are really, really good. Lots of times we'll take samples and send
12 them to Cornell to have them genetically tested to ensure we're going after the right ones.

13 Chair McDougall: It sounds exciting, but I'm not sure exciting is the right word. It
14 certainly sounds interesting and impressive. Thank you for that. Unless there are any
15 other questions—David.

16 Commissioner Moss: Regarding the horizontal levee, there's a demo for the
17 subcommittee this Friday.

18 Mr. Anderson: A tour to Oro Loma as I understand it.

19 Commissioner Moss: The AT&T property, that's fantastic news. I hope it proceeds well.
20 We've only had a couple of new additions over the past four years, so this is going to be a
21 big update.

22 **V. BUSINESS**

23 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the July 23, 2019 Parks and Recreation**
24 **Commission meeting.**

25 Commissioner Moss: I wanted to acknowledge that my updates to the Minutes in the
26 form of a memo were added to the record for others to see. I hope we can talk about that
27 later.

28 Chair McDougall: The same for the comments and the written response from
29 Commissioner Greenfield. Would it be appropriate for us to somehow acknowledge that
30 in that we're approving the amended Minutes or is it just the Minutes as they've been
31 presented to us? Does that make any difference? Natalie, do you have a comment?

1 Natalie Khwaja: The memos aren't actually added to the Minutes. They're added to the
2 agenda from last meeting. There would be no change to the Minutes. The memos are
3 posted for public record on the agenda.

4 Approval of the draft July 23, 2019 Minutes was moved by Commissioner Moss and
5 seconded by Commissioner Cribbs. Passed 5-0, Greenfield and Reckdahl absent

6 Council Member Cormack: Chair McDougall, may I ask a question about the Minutes
7 now that they've been approved?

8 Chair McDougall: Yes, please.

9 Council Member Cormack: Mr. Anderson, I noted in the Minutes that there was going to
10 be outreach about Ramos Park in August. Has that been completed or started?

11 Mr. Anderson: I'm sorry, it has not yet.

12 Council Member Cormack: Just for my understanding, when you're doing outreach for a
13 park, how broadly do you do? A half-mile perimeter to notify people or how does that
14 work?

15 Mr. Anderson: Approximately, yeah. It depends sometimes on the layout of the park and
16 what the nearest surrounding neighborhood looks like. If it's residences, we'll try to
17 broaden it out a little bit more. If it's commercial, sometimes less in certain (crosstalk).

18 Council Member Cormack: The schools, you'll contact the schools, etc.?

19 Mr. Anderson: Schools and, for sure, the Commission is always sent an email.

20 **2. Informational Presentation on Park Visitation Study**

21 Chair McDougall: If there are no other questions, I'd like to welcome back Jazmin
22 LeBlanc, who has given us interesting presentations and so on before, and invite her to
23 give us an update on the park visitation study that was done in the summer.

24 Jazmin LeBlanc: Thank you very much. I'm Jazmin LeBlanc from the Community
25 Services Department. I'm here to present an urban park utilization study that our
26 department was able to conduct this summer. We hired a fantastic summer intern. We
27 would have really liked to have her here, but she's already gone back to college. It's
28 Megan Schmiesing. She's a local young person who is entering her senior year of Pitzer
29 College, studying environmental analysis. She was able to work with us on a variety of
30 projects. This was the biggest project that she worked on. The reason that we asked her
31 to do an urban park utilization study is we actually don't have a good sense of how many
32 people are using our urban parks. Open space is something that we've been able to track

1 because there are fewer entry points, but urban parks are a different animal. This was
2 something we thought would be valuable. It does come up. Both Daren and I will get
3 calls somewhat regularly asking how many people use our different types of parks and in
4 what ways. This is the reason behind doing the survey. Megan developed a survey
5 methodology that was—before I jump into the methodology, the point of this survey is to
6 have a better understanding of how people are using our parks and in what ways and not
7 to base it on anecdotes or other methods like how much trash is accumulating in one park
8 or another. That's a bit of the background for the survey. We only had one person who
9 was working on this survey, so we did have to narrow in on just a few parks. We chose
10 to look at eight parks. The list of parks was developed closely with Daren and his staff to
11 make sure we were getting a good variety of different types of parks, sizes, and locations
12 across the City. We used the survey methodology that was developed by San Diego State
13 University and the Rand Corporation to be able to get a relatively accurate picture of park
14 usage. This was systematic observations of parks just during the summer, so we're
15 looking at summer data only, throughout the day and throughout the week. In addition to
16 doing the surveys or observational study, we also asked Megan to ask a ten-question
17 survey, and she did get a relatively small sample, but it's still valuable information. I
18 wouldn't try to extrapolate it to the entire population of Palo Alto, but it gives us an
19 interesting picture. This is just a brief overview of how she gathered the data. Basically,
20 each park is broken into segments, and she's counting users in each part of the park.
21 There's a possibility that she's double counting people or miscounting people, but overall
22 we felt like this was going to give us a reasonably good data set. Some of the big
23 findings are here. You can look and see how many people are using the eight parks that
24 we surveyed in an average week in the summer. In terms of putting this into a bigger
25 picture, the national average is somewhere in between Eleanor Pardee Park and Juana
26 Briones Park. Pardee Park is about 10 percent more used, if you're looking at people per
27 acre, than the typical park at the national level. You can see some of our parks are
28 significantly above that. When you look at the average across all eight of these parks, we
29 have about twice as many users in Palo Alto parks as we do in the average park in
30 America. We have relatively even distribution of people in parks at different times of
31 day. Obviously, there are some peaks with the most people around the lunchtime hours,
32 but it's pretty even. There are more users on weekends than weekdays across the parks,
33 about 20 percent more on a weekend. It's pretty even distribution if you're looking at it
34 by gender. When you look at age, there are more noticeable differences with the most
35 people in our parks being children and a lot of adults, but when you pull out just adults
36 who appear to be there to observe kids in the park, you get a lot fewer adults. About half
37 of the adults that are in parks are there primarily to watch their children. As we compare
38 the usage of parks with the demographics in Palo Alto, you can see that children are over-
39 represented in parks and seniors are under-represented in parks across Palo Alto. Again,
40 this is what the surveyor observed. She broke out essentially the three larger parks in the
41 survey as regional parks, so Mitchell Park, Greer—actually I think it was Peers and
42 Pardee as well, compared with the smaller parks to see if there were differences in usage.

1 You can see a little bit of difference. We also looked at how people were using the parks
2 and found that quite a few people are engaged in something that is either vigorous
3 exercise or walking or more. This was pretty different than other surveys found. For
4 instance, in LA when they did a similar park survey, they found that about two-thirds of
5 the people in parks were sedentary, relaxing at benches or picnicking, things like that.
6 We have sort of a flipped image here of people who are pretty active. This is something
7 that other park surveyors have really focused on because physical activity is so important.
8 Looking at particular activities, our surveyor actually separated Magical Bridge from
9 other playground use because it was such a popular activity on its own. Definitely when
10 you add playground use and Magical Bridge, you can see that is a hugely popular thing to
11 do in our urban parks. There's a variety of things that are happening. When you focus on
12 just what was observed among seniors, you get a bit of a different picture where there are
13 definitely more people doing things like walking, sitting, picnicking. Playing pickleball
14 was a very popular activity she observed among seniors, tai chi, etc. We also asked her
15 to focus on dogs at the parks and found that the new Peers Park dog park is very popular.
16 She saw a lot of people with dogs there. The Mitchell Park dog area seemed to also be
17 quite popular. She did observe some dogs in the Greer Park dog run, but a similar
18 number of dogs that were on the fields at Greer Park rather than actually in the dog run
19 and some other dogs off-leash in other parks. I've already said what's on this slide, so I'll
20 move on. We asked her to focus on specific parks in particular. As I've already
21 mentioned, the most common activity at Mitchell Park was using the Magical Bridge
22 playground, using the other playgrounds, picnicking, using the pickleball courts were
23 other popular activities. Because she spent so much of the summer in parks, part of what
24 we asked is, "Can you look for some other observations that you're just picking up by
25 being in our parks for hours and hours all summer and speaking with people?" She
26 identified some potential improvements we could make. I would say there's a consistent
27 pattern that people want to be in the shady spots no matter what. That was some of the
28 things that she heard and observed around dog parks and so on. In looking at Greer Park,
29 this park was more popular in terms of actually playing sports on the fields and then
30 playing at the park and walking or jogging. El Camino Park is a bit different because it is
31 primarily ball fields. What she saw during the summer speaks to that. What she saw
32 appeared to be people in summer camps for particular sports. In the particular time she
33 observed, there were some pretty dramatic differences amongst gender in that park,
34 which is worth noting and worth us keeping an eye on. This really may be a statistical
35 blip because of the nature of whatever the camps were in the given weeks she was there.
36 Peers Park was one that she noted was really utilized to the max, that every inch was well
37 used. That's particularly true now that the dog park is in. Dog park, picnicking,
38 playgrounds, and summer camps were all popular activities she observed. Pardee Park,
39 this is one that I mentioned is about 10 percent above the average in terms of use. What
40 she saw was similar, playgrounds, playing on the fields, walking, people gardening. This
41 was one that she noted had the highest use amongst teenagers, but it's hard to know
42 exactly what was driving that. In the cases where she saw teens there, it was more

1 playing on the fields in formal or informal sports. Juana Briones Park, the playgrounds
2 are popular, and she noted the playground with shade is much more popular than the
3 playground without shade. There's two playgrounds at that park. Scott Park, this is one
4 of the smaller parks. It had a lot more people who were using it as a place to walk
5 through. She did see that the bocce ball courts were used, especially on weekends. Sarah
6 Wallis Park might be the smallest park that we looked at; I think it is. She did see that
7 this park actually does get a decent amount of use, especially during the lunch hour for
8 people who just want to come for a place to relax. I'll go through the park visitor survey,
9 which does have a small sample size right now of about 40. This is something that we've
10 put up on our City website. We'd like to advertise it a little more to collect more data,
11 find out how people are using our parks a little more. For the people that she surveyed,
12 she found that people are in parks very frequently, daily or several times a week. People
13 are going to parks that are near their home, and they're generally walking or driving to the
14 park. The reason they're coming is kind of what she observed. They're coming to go to
15 the playground, to go for a walk, or to bring their dog somewhere. The reason they chose
16 the park is generally because it's the closest park, but sometimes there's some particular
17 amenity that's drawing them to that park. In general, they feel very safe in our parks and
18 feel that the parks are either very clean or fairly clean and attractive. We did find that
19 about three-fourths of the survey respondents were Palo Alto residents. The conclusions
20 that we drew from this were that Palo Alto parks are being well used, more than twice as
21 much use per acre as we saw in other national surveys. Attractions are a big draw, so
22 having a really great playground. You can see that with Mitchell Park. It's going to pull
23 a lot of people in. Other popular activities are having walking paths for walking or
24 jogging, nice dog parks. Open lawn space for people to play sports or just relax are
25 popular. Organized activities are drawing a lot of people. There was a bit of a bias to
26 having more males than females in the parks. We saw a lot of physical activity, as I
27 mentioned, higher than other surveys. Mitchell Park is very popular. Some of the next
28 steps, we thought it would be interesting to look at the same data at different times of the
29 year to see if we can get a better sense of our annual use in parks. It might be useful to
30 look at some of our other parks. As I mentioned, we still have the survey up. It would be
31 great to get more people to respond to the survey. If we are continuing to find, as we get
32 more data, that we do have some mismatches in terms of demographics, if we only have
33 about a third of our seniors coming into the parks, that's something we may want to really
34 look at as we develop new amenities or new programming. That is the conclusion of this
35 presentation. Thank you.

36 Chair McDougall: Jazmin, thank you. That was particularly interesting. I'm going to
37 start with Anne because she has her light on already, and then I will go in that direction.
38 I forgot. We do have one speaker card. It's Shani Kleinhaus. You have Item Number 2.
39 Would you like to speak on this?

1 Shani Kleinhaus: Yes. I wrote some notes on this. Thank you. My name is Shani
2 Kleinhaus. I'm the environmental advocate for Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. I
3 also live in Palo Alto. I like the results of this. It's very informative, the survey, but 5:30
4 is too early in June and July to see the people who come out in the evening. Having the
5 survey done at 5:30, you're not going to see the seniors, the people that stroll around, the
6 people that walk with their dogs, the people that come out with their little kids. Sunset in
7 those months is after 8:00, and people don't show up until 7:30, 7:00. From my
8 experience, that's when I see people there. That's just a comment. A general comment is
9 that I really think this shows that we need to plant shade trees and that big shade trees are
10 important, especially oaks if possible. One thing about Mitchell. I saw that there is
11 comments there. One of the things at Mitchell that could be looked at is removing some
12 of those lights. If you drive there at night, there's no people, and there's a lot of light
13 pollution. Maybe dog drinking fountains if you're going to continue developing that
14 park. What was pretty clear is that the very little parks are not very functional. They
15 only have people walking through, 61 percent at Scott Park and 40 percent walking
16 through at Sarah Wallis. It's important to have people go through parks. It makes their
17 day better. The pocket parks should have some kind of attraction like a gathering place.
18 I don't think they're doing that. One of the things I hope you discuss is what makes a
19 gathering place, what's the minimum size for a functional park that actually provides
20 more than a walk-through opportunity. Again, it's not unimportant, but it would be good
21 to know what makes a gathering place. Shade would be good for seniors, but there are
22 other things. My usual pitch, add butterfly gardens, shade, and beauty. Thank you.

23 Chair McDougall: Thank you. I'll go back to you.

24 Commissioner Cribbs: I would hope that we would do something in the winter time or
25 the fall or the spring or if we could do it the four seasons. It would be interesting to see
26 the differences. I was interested in the way that maybe she counted. There were more
27 males than females using the park. That seemed different to me somehow. Maybe it's
28 just an assumption on my part. When I think about all the soccer teams and the baseball
29 teams and all of that, I don't know how those were factored in. Just something to think
30 about. On the whole idea of Sarah Wallis Park, that is like a little jewel in California
31 Avenue, and there are so many people in California Avenue right now. We probably
32 should put on some sort of fun promotion to get people to come and have lunch there,
33 take a break, or bring their lunch because it's a lovely place to go and spend some time
34 relaxing.

35 Commissioner Moss: Thank you very much for doing this survey. Who calls you to
36 know about these statistics and why?

37 Ms. LeBlanc: The Planning Department will definitely call trying to understand usage or
38 where we might want to put more amenities in some place because it's heavily used or

1 other places they could use more. I've gotten a few calls from planners. Daren could
2 probably add because he's been getting questions longer than I have.

3 Mr. Anderson: The only thing I would chime in is it's a very commonly tracked statistic
4 that parks should be tracking. We just haven't, and I'm very grateful for this intern and
5 her endeavors. I think it's really valuable. It's absolutely certain that we're going to
6 continue it.

7 Commissioner Moss: The Planning Department is internal. Do you also get other cities
8 who—do you feed into a national database, for instance?

9 Mr. Anderson: We get a lot of questions from other park districts. Statewide, I know
10 we've done—I don't recall getting a national survey, but I'm sure it's happened here and
11 there. Oftentimes, we put n/a, not available information. Looking forward to changing
12 that.

13 Commissioner Moss: As far as the total number, you put the total number estimated for
14 eight parks, but of course we have a lot more parks. That number is really big. I'm
15 amazed. I wanted to make sure that we could extrapolate that to the other parks, and not
16 only to the parks but to like Cubberley field and the field at Page Mill and El Camino,
17 which would skew the activity levels and also the teen percentages as well. I hope you're
18 doing that as well.

19 Ms. LeBlanc: Yes. We tried to have her consistently follow this methodology that's been
20 developed by academics and statisticians so that we can extrapolate. Our hope is that we
21 can bring her back in her winter break. She's already said she has some time to do winter
22 next. Since she knows what she's doing, she can jump right in without training so that we
23 can get year-round. Eventually, hopefully, we can add more of our parks. This is
24 definitely a good start for us.

25 Commissioner Moss: I echo the speaker about shaded playgrounds. If you can't grow a
26 tree fast enough, I would put gazebos over sections. I was wondering, if we did add
27 restrooms to the parks, would we track an increase in usage when we add a bathroom.
28 We talked last meeting about adding those super port-a-potties in the interim. I would
29 like to see some follow up along those lines. Also, we have special events at these parks,
30 and they will regularly add a couple hundred people, but they're one-offs. I don't know
31 how you can put that into a survey, but it would be nice to make a footnote for those
32 special events that we have.

33 Chair McDougall: Ryan, do you have any comments?

34 Commissioner McCauley: Jazmin, this is great. I share your caution about the
35 limitations on the survey responses because there are so few responses. Her



1 observational information that she has related here is really helpful. I look forward to the
2 next iteration.

3 Commissioner LaMere: Jazmin, thank you so much for making a preliminary stab at
4 gathering some data about our parks. With Megan coming back in the winter, are there
5 any thoughts to already reaching out and figuring out if we can get a volunteer or add
6 someone to her team to either gather more accurate data or survey additional parks?

7 Ms. LeBlanc: I hadn't thought about that, but that is an excellent idea. I think we could
8 definitely try to find ...

9 Commissioner LaMere: I don't know if there's any partnerships. It seems like it could be
10 a valuable volunteer opportunity for somebody who's doing something that has to do with
11 research. I don't know if the junior college is or even some of the high schools. That
12 could be of interest. How have we advertised the survey?

13 Ms. LeBlanc: We haven't done much advertising yet. I'd like to push that in the next few
14 months.

15 Commissioner LaMere: Maybe posting something on Nextdoor or something like that
16 might generate some interest from some people in the community. It's great that we're
17 starting to gather some data to help see what we might be able to do or start to inform
18 some of our decisions.

19 Chair McDougall: Jazmin, when I talked to you briefly before, I said I'd probably follow
20 up with you separately. I too echo everything everybody said. This is fantastic that we're
21 doing it. Jeff's idea on volunteers, I would even suggest that we could contact
22 Environmental Volunteers. They might be a candidate. I also think this is the kind of
23 project where we should be talking to Friends of Palo Alto Recreation to see if they could
24 participate in providing funding for something that would expand this. I would be glad to
25 help with that. I'll run through a whole bunch of stuff, and I don't expect you to answer.
26 Maybe we can have a discussion later. I assume that the survey that was done previously
27 was done with kids and teens and adults and seniors or whatever. I'm not convinced.
28 What the Library did was use a survey method that defined personas. The personas were
29 people that were active. For example, I have friends that are almost my age that play
30 soccer with the teens. I'm not sure how that gets captured here in terms of the way this is
31 done. The idea of personas even within each of the categories as opposed to just simply
32 age groups would be really meaningful. That would better allow us to say, "What should
33 we do about it?" When it's just age groups, I'm not sure that it tells us what to do. You
34 said that our park usage was two times the national average. If you had said 30 percent
35 more or 20 percent more or whatever, that wouldn't have raised a flag. Double says
36 something. It either says we don't have enough parks and so our parks are crowded. I'm
37 not sure what it means, but if that's really a legitimate number, that deserves serious drill

1 down. When you talk about weekdays versus weekends being 20 percent different, that's
2 a little misleading because in fact it's 40/60 when you look at it. Yes, that's a 20-percent
3 difference, but the usage is 40/60. 40/60 isn't far away from 50/50. The numbers are
4 different. When it's presented as it's a huge difference, that's misleading. None of the
5 activities have anything to do with nature. One of the things that we explicitly know is
6 that if you can get people out in parks—the Japanese call it forest bathing, and they go to
7 a local park and forest bathe. That's good for people. We didn't capture any way of
8 saying that. What we tended to say was that person was sitting on a bench. Maybe they
9 were sitting on a bench soaking up nature, and that was not too bad. One of the other
10 things we need to do is survey, for example, Heritage Park. Tuesday night, there's 30
11 dogs off-leash. We need to know that in this survey. I've recently sent a thing about the
12 green dog program that's in Brookline, Massachusetts, where they have explicitly allowed
13 off-leash dogs in non-fenced park areas at particular times but only if the dog has a green
14 tag and the owner pays \$50 if you're a resident or \$100 if you're not a resident to get a
15 green tag. That sounds like an interesting program that could cover an awful lot of sins in
16 terms of costs and whatever else. We should pursue that. I would like to echo what
17 David said about bathrooms. To say we need more programs to get seniors out, I'm not
18 so sure we don't need more bathrooms to get seniors out. The gathering place, the
19 concept of gathering places, for the last ten years I've convinced myself that I need to
20 write a blog that's all about gatherings, whether it's animals or people or whatever. If we
21 want to talk about how do we encourage more, it's not so much the activities as
22 facilitating gatherings. It's a really, really good term. With that, I'll give you a call.
23 What you've done and had Meghan do is spectacular. Before we start doing an online
24 survey, think about what are the questions we want to ask to make them relevant.
25 Council Member Cormack, I didn't give you an opportunity before I jumped in. I will
26 now.

27 Council Member Cormack: Thank you, Chair McDougall. Ms. LeBlanc, thank you so
28 much for this. Please extend our thanks to Ms. Schmiesing. It occurs to me that we had a
29 number of interns this summer in the City. Perhaps the Mayor's message in the next
30 month might want to highlight interns. If you get there first, perhaps the Mayor's
31 message would highlight this particular intern and her work. This is the kind of thing that
32 a lot of people would be interested in. I'm grateful that Commissioner LaMere already
33 mentioned Nextdoor. That'd be helpful. This is more than just a survey. It was also a
34 work experience for someone who sounds like is a former student in our own community.
35 I just wanted to offer that suggestion. Curiosity. Where is the horseshoe area at Mitchell
36 Park? How is there something in Mitchell Park I don't know where it is?

37 Ms. LeBlanc: In between the bowl and the parking lot, there's a horseshoe area.

38 Council Member Cormack: Is that that thing that's covered with like wisteria? Is that
39 horseshoe?

1 Mr. Anderson: Between that and the grass.

2 Council Member Cormack: I'll look more carefully the next time I walk my dog in
3 Mitchell Park, on-leash I might point out. I do want to emphasize the discussion around
4 more of our senior citizens being able to use our parks, whether it's programming or
5 bathrooms or what have you. I think it is a fruitful one. Please do extend our thanks to
6 Ms. Schmiesing.

7 Commissioner Moss: There was a specific recommendation about parking, especially at
8 Mitchell Park. There is just no way we're going to add more parking. That ought to be
9 noted that that may actually discourage additional attendance. There's a lot of other
10 things that we could do to mitigate that. I just want to make a note of that. What Anne
11 said about promotions to get special events in some of these smaller parks to get the
12 public to know that they're there is a really good idea that we should see if we can deal
13 with.

14 Chair McDougall: Keith, we've just had a very interesting presentation by Jazmin
15 relative to the survey. That was sent out ahead of time. If you have any observations or
16 questions you'd like to add, please feel free.

17 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'll put in my two cents. I noticed in the write up you
18 mentioned about shade and how that's attractive. When I walk through Bol Park during
19 the lunch time, if it's a shady bench, it's full. If it's a sunny bench, it's not. Although, on
20 winter days, that's flipped. Most of the time, the shade is preferred. The other thing was
21 seniors walking. I had relatives in town, and they were walking through the park. They
22 were not very mobile, and it was hard for them to go from one bench to the next. If we
23 can add benches, that would be appropriate. Very interesting report.

24 Chair McDougall: If there are no other questions? Jazmin, thank you very much. I'm
25 always glad when you bring controversy and discussion and numbers to our meeting. It's
26 always, always enlightening.

27 **3. Draft Plan for the 7.7-acre area at Foothills Park**

28 Chair McDougall: The next item on the agenda is the draft plan for the 7.7 acres.

29 Mr. Anderson: Good evening. Daren Anderson with Community Services here tonight
30 to talk about this draft plan for the 7.7-acre area at Foothills Park. My presentation will
31 include a very brief background on the area and then walk through the draft plan. It's
32 important to note that this draft plan is really just a starting place in our conversation with
33 the community and stakeholders about how to use the land. Staff plans on hosting a
34 community meeting soon to discuss the draft plan and collect their feedback. A little on
35 the background. The 7.7-acre parcel was a gift from the Lee family to the City in 1981.

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1 The Lee family retained an estate on the property until 1996. Between 1996 and 2005,
2 the City leased the land to a private resident who owns the adjacent property. In 2014,
3 Council passed an ordinance dedicating the parcel as parkland and directed the
4 Commission to work with the community and develop ideas on how to use it. Staff
5 hosted a community meeting at the park to collect feedback on what to do with this and
6 gathered a variety of different feedback, some of which focused on recreational activities,
7 potentially a dog park, additional camping, picnic areas. The vast majority of the
8 feedback really focused on different restoration opportunities for the site and wanted to
9 see improved habitat. In January 2015, the issue came to the Commission, and we
10 discussed the possible uses for the 7.7-acre area. The Commission recommended at that
11 time that we complete the Buckeye Creek hydrology study before we program out and
12 decide how to use this land. Staff did complete the study, and it was reviewed by the
13 Commission in January 2018. The study incorporates recommendations for various
14 improvements to these key issues of Buckeye Creek, mainly erosion and sedimentation.
15 It had three options to consider. One was upstream in Wildhorse Valley. Another was in
16 the middle section in Las Trampas, and the third in the 7.7-acre area. The Commission
17 reviewed that along with staff and came up with a recommendation of focusing on the
18 upper section. This is the Wildhorse Valley section. That ultimately went as an
19 informational recommendation to City Council. With that said, I want to say the draft
20 we're going to discuss momentarily is not in conflict. If the City ever did want to pursue
21 that option of improving the 7.7-acre area of Buckeye Creek, what we're proposing in this
22 plan, this draft plan, would not be problematic or interfering with that if the City ever did
23 want to pursue it. I should note the 7.7 acres was open to the public on November 10,
24 2018. Since that time, the Rangers have not been closely monitoring but keeping an eye
25 on how many people are using it. It's fairly small, about ten people a day. Typically, it's
26 just a stroll through, in and out, with one of the key features being to stop and look at the
27 native plant nursery and expressing interest in that area. The Foothills Park ad hoc
28 committee and staff worked with Grassroots Ecology, the City's restoration stewardship
29 partner, to create this draft plan. I'm extremely grateful for Grassroots graciously sharing
30 their expertise and time to create the draft plan. They did a wonderful job. Grassroots
31 Ecology maintains the native plant nursery on the site and has been conducting
32 restoration in Foothill since 2013. They've engaged with thousands of volunteers to
33 remove invasive species and plant native plants and provide hands-on education for all
34 members of our community. Their staff and volunteers have worked on the 7.7-acre area
35 controlling invasive weeds and installing willow stakes in Buckeye Creek to help with
36 the erosion and to create habitat. They've also experimented with test plots in
37 anticipation of this day. When we started talking about what to do, we wanted to know
38 what's possible, and staff worked with Grassroots to say, "Let's try some." We know that
39 the soil medium is compromised. There's approximately 5 feet of over-burden, which is
40 material that came from the adjacent quarry. Prior to the City taking ownership, it had
41 been spread across the hillside and the valley floor of the 7.7-acre area. When we talked
42 to Mr. Arrillaga's caretaker, who had done planting on that area, he talked about how



1 challenging it was. He talked about the trees being difficult to establish, but it was
2 possible when he added lots of compost and mulch. Eventually, he was able to establish
3 some trees that did make it. Likewise, we learned from Grassroots' experiments on that
4 area, and those lessons were incorporated into this draft plan. While this plan does focus
5 on restoration, there are other elements, a very simple loop trail that carries people
6 through this little area, some basic park amenities, a park bench, an interpretive sign, a
7 drinking fountain, that are in keeping with the rest of Foothills Park. The plan's broken
8 into phases. It gets a little complex when we talk about how long each phase would be
9 because in truth when we get to restoration, some phases never end. If we talk about
10 addressing invasive weeds, in truth that will always be part just like it is for the rest of
11 Foothills Park. We continually have volunteers go out into the park and address invasive
12 weeds. I guess the one caveat is don't get too hung up with one specific item and one
13 specific phase because some of them will be carrying on indefinitely, if that makes sense.
14 The game plan would be to start with building on what Grassroots has already been
15 doing, which is controlling the invasive weeds in those areas. We would also propose to
16 remove eucalyptus trees and add compost and mulch to restoration area A. That's this
17 area over here. Here's Buckeye Creek. Let me quickly show you just a few of the major
18 features. This is the City's maintenance shop, the entrance to the 7.7-acre area, and a new
19 pollinator garden that Grassroots built. This is the Grassroots Ecology nursery. The
20 creek flows right through the property and out of the property. This red line is the
21 emergency evacuation route that we've got to maintain. We've created these different
22 habitat areas, restoration areas. Phase 1 prepares restoration area A by putting in those
23 soil amendments that we talked about. This area would get that compost put onto it
24 during that first phase to try to prep it and get it ready, hopefully soften up some of the
25 soil, control some of the weeds, and make for a happier place for these plants that we
26 intend on putting in there and the trees we intend on planting. Other things in phase 1
27 that we want to do is plant some native plants along the perimeter fencing—that's this
28 area—to try to screen a little bit. There's already a fairly established tree section in there
29 that the caretaker had planted or was already onsite. We want to supplement that with
30 just a little more shrubs to help screen and provide a little privacy for the neighbors.
31 Then, plant some groupings of native trees that would help mitigate that removal of
32 eucalyptus that we talked about. In addition to that, we would establish those park
33 benches, the interpretive sign, and that trail, a very simple loop trail that you can see
34 highlighted here that just goes around this section. Phase 2, we're going to plant native
35 plants in that restoration area. This area here. Now, it would have about a year or so
36 with that soil amendment in the ground, hopefully softening it up a little bit and preparing
37 it for these plants to come in. Area B would get the treatment. We'd put the compost and
38 mulch down there to prep that for the next year's planting, if that makes sense. And so on
39 for area C. We would use acorns, oaks, and shrubs to be planted in little natural
40 groupings and then do a second phase of eucalyptus removal. You can see on this map
41 we've got the first phase of eucalyptus removal and then the second phase. We take any
42 tree removal very seriously in Palo Alto. It should never be done—even when it's a non-



1 native tree, it should always be done cautiously and with thought and planning. Even the
2 invasive ones do cause harm. When we talked to our experts at Grassroots Ecology and
3 our Fire Safe Council that we work with on fire hazards, it's best to remove them for a
4 multitude of reasons. Fire safety and environmental benefit is one. We recognize even
5 invasive trees and plants sometimes serve as habitat, and we want to be sensitive to that.
6 They key would to (a) phase it and (b) make sure we're planting right away to try to help
7 make up for that. Hopefully that in addition to all the other native plantings would
8 supply a good balance of habitat improvement. Also, in speaking with Grassroots
9 Ecology, they've seen eucalyptus removals from areas like this, very similar, and
10 explained to me that oftentimes when you take out that eucalyptus, you'll see the
11 surrounding vegetation, often native oaks and other species, that is under the canopy
12 thrive and grow and bounce back. We're looking forward to that, but they also have
13 some restoration and planting plans up here as well, in those gaps where the eucalyptus
14 are removed. In phase 3, native plants, particularly pollinators, would be planted in
15 strategic spots to help create a little added beauty and lure in additional pollinators. We
16 could put in additional benches and a picnic table at that time and then finalize the
17 arrangement of where that trail is. I think we should look at the trail as being flexible
18 depending on how the restoration goes. If for some reason we hit a good patch of soil
19 and the plants are doing great, then let's move the trail out of that area, and we'll put
20 people to the side. We've been thinking of a very simple rope to delineate where those
21 sections are to keep people from trampling plants but able to walk next to them. Next
22 steps. Of course, we'll welcome your feedback and questions. The next step would be
23 for staff to hold that community meeting, meet with our stakeholders and community
24 members, and give them a chance to weigh in on the plan as well as maybe other ideas
25 that we haven't considered that may be even better. That concludes the staff presentation.
26 I want to recognize two representatives from Grassroots Ecology. I've got Alex von
27 Feldt, who's the Executive Director, and Kristen Williams, the Habitat Restoration
28 Director, here tonight to address any specific questions you might have for them.

29 Chair McDougall: Welcome, visitors. Do you have any comments that you would like
30 to make to add to what Daren has said before we go to questions?

31 Alex von Feldt: Maybe I'll say a few words. First of all, thank you very much,
32 Commissioners, for your time in reviewing this as well as the other work that you do.
33 Probably this has been at least four if not five years of discussions with the City and
34 Parks and Rec Commission and also residents about what could happen at this site and
35 getting lots of opinions and feedback. We're excited that there's actually some movement
36 forward. The only thing that I would add is that if you were to show us the whole 1,400
37 acres of Foothills Park and say, "Where's the one area you want to restore," this would
38 probably not be it because there are so many other areas of Foothills Park with just
39 amazing native vegetation and biodiversity and things like that. We understand just from
40 a usage standpoint the reason to improve what it looks like right now, which has really

1 been a neglected plot. What we went for is basically what was a really cost-effective way
2 to try to expand the natural assets of the site, such as the creek, and also use it as a way to
3 showcase some habitat restoration techniques. We already have the native plant nursery
4 there. When I asked them, "Who's coming by and looking at the site," they say it tends to
5 be elderly people that like to walk on the flat, and they like to stop by and visit with our
6 staff and volunteers working at the nursery. Building on that, we're hoping to have more
7 examples throughout this area to show habitat restoration, different techniques. Also as
8 things progress, hopefully people can see the long-term process of healing our land and
9 what that's like.

10 Commissioner McCauley: Could you comment quickly on the point that Daren was
11 discussing, on removal of the eucalyptus and the transition period to oaks and other
12 native vegetation?

13 Ms. von Feldt: For the reasons that Daren mentioned, eucalyptus are often suggested for
14 removal. Not only is it a fire concern, it's also a safety concern in that they do tend to
15 drop limbs. Kristen just informed me when we were talking about this that this past few
16 weeks we've seen two major limbs drop back there. It is a concern when you're having
17 volunteers and things like that, the safety aspect of it. For the most part, we're
18 recommending removal because of the habitat value. There are so many wonderful
19 native species and trees in there. It's not really a shading issue; it's that they drop all this
20 debris and leaves, and it actually kills other plants. Once you remove them, everything
21 that has been struggling can really come back quite strongly. It's not just our opinion
22 about that. It's a generally accepted restoration practice. The San Francisco Estuary
23 Institute has really been promoting more oaks in Silicon Valley. They keep talking about
24 re-oaking, re-oaking or planting new oaks. What's nice here is there are so many other
25 really strong ones that, once the eucalyptus are removed, you're going to see an amazing
26 growth of those trees.

27 Chair McDougall: Before I go to the rest of the Commission, I do have a card on this
28 topic. Shani, would you like to comment?

29 Ms. Kleinhaus: Thank you. Shani Kleinhaus with the Santa Clara Valley Audubon
30 Society and resident. First, I want to thank you, staff, for keeping low key and not
31 looking to put campgrounds and barbecues and dog parks and all these other things near
32 the creek in such a sensitive area. I hope that the community, which supported low key
33 and not a lot of strong, active crowds making noise and so on, will allow it to remain this
34 way. About the trees, I want to look more into that before I speak about it because
35 eucalyptus does have value for birds, specific species as well. I'm going to look a little
36 more into that before I form an opinion about this issue. It would be something we'll
37 probably come back to. Thank you.

1 Chair McDougall: Thank you. Who were the ad hoc members who have worked on
2 this? Jeff and Ryan. I'll let you guys speak first then.

3 Commissioner LaMere: Thank you to Daren and the staff for preparing this and
4 Grassroots Ecology. It can be such a great space. The mention of it being flat and how
5 we have this great nature of Foothills Park, but not everything is accessible to everyone.
6 One of the things that we talked about on the trail were putting some benches, which also
7 seems to go with the theme of mobility and accessibility. To have that is a very good
8 idea. The explanation on the eucalyptus trees was also very helpful as we are sensitive to
9 the habitat removal as well as removal of trees. To know that other oaks and other native
10 species can come in there is exciting as well. Excited to see this plan, if we can get it
11 through, and the restoration. The increased use of that area is very exciting. Daren,
12 thank you very much.

13 Commissioner McCauley: I will echo Jeff's comments. Daren, thank you for
14 spearheading this. Thank you to our partners at Grassroots Ecology. Well done. Let me
15 make one quick clarification; I think it's a clarification on the Buckeye Creek hydrology
16 study. There definitely is a recommended course of action to do some additional
17 remediation of the creek in this area. As Daren was saying, number one, this plan is
18 consistent with the Buckeye Creek hydrology recommendation. In addition to that, as
19 you think about the bang for the buck in doing any of the work on Buckeye Creek, the
20 most significant impact is going to be on the upper reach of Buckeye Creek. Probably
21 the least significant impact is going to be on this portion of Buckeye Creek. It makes
22 total sense to move forward with a plan of the sort that Daren and Grassroots Ecology
23 have come up with here. It makes a lot of sense that this would be something we'd put
24 into action.

25 Commissioner Reckdahl: It was a good report. Thank you for the help. We appreciate
26 that. With regard to the eucalyptus removal, can we front load the tree planting and get
27 them started now? When we eventually remove the trees, we'll have something there.

28 Mr. Anderson: Yes, we can.

29 Commissioner Reckdahl: Are we planning to do that or is that ...

30 Mr. Anderson: It's actually in the plan. It talks about the need to start right away.

31 Commissioner Reckdahl: Alex mentioned the areas needing restoration, that there'd be
32 other places in the park. Can you name those off the top of your head?

33 Ms. von Feldt: I might be passing this on to Kristen because she's been overseeing what
34 we've been doing at the park. The biodiversity is quite phenomenal there. There's a
35 listed species, (inaudible) occidentale. There's some invasive species like yellow star

1 that's in the habitat. As you probably know, the Friends of Foothill have been working
2 for decades on that. We've been augmenting their help. When we're talking about
3 stewarding the whole park, that's where we spend a lot of our time to remove the
4 invasives and allow natural recruitment. If you wanted to keep getting volunteers out and
5 really have a habitat effect, that would probably be the best. There's a lot of reasons why
6 you do projects like this. A lot of it too is to make sure that the community is able to
7 engage with nature in a meaningful way so that they're more activated to protect it. This
8 project is still in line with that goal.

9 Commissioner Reckdahl: Your areas of restoration are mostly invasive weed species
10 taken out. Were there any erosion areas or anything, plantings where we'd want to put
11 things?

12 Ms. von Feldt: This Buckeye Creek idea, we are fully behind. We started talking with
13 Daren about it years ago because that's what we see as really the big restoration impact
14 that you could have there because right now the creek is so channelized that if you could
15 reconnect it to its historic floodplain, that would be amazing. We really support that, but
16 it is a long and very expensive project. We realize that that's what would be great to have
17 in the future, but it's nice to have these interim steps along the way.

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you. Daren, with regard to restoration, do we keep a
19 wish list of places that, if we had money, in any of the open spaces we would do
20 restoration first and rank them?

21 Mr. Anderson: Yes. I should qualify this that we've got a list that are achievable with
22 existing resources. We address that with our operating budget as it is, with our capital
23 budget as it is, and with our volunteer base as it is. That partnership with Grassroots is an
24 excellent one. We've done amazing work at restoring large areas of Pearson-Arastradero
25 Preserve, in Foothills Park. We're talking 25 years of the Friends of Foothills Park
26 working up there and restoring it. We prioritize spots. Along with staff, those volunteers
27 have made good headway. I would say the same at the Baylands. We've had 20 years of
28 partnership with Save the Bay and restored significant sections of San Francisquito Creek
29 and other areas in the Baylands. There's that kind, and we prioritize areas. There's a
30 bigger kind like the new ITT marsh area. That's not going to be done or restored without
31 a big capital endeavor. I think Buckeye Creek falls into that same category. Those two
32 standout really high as important areas. Others are identified in the Baylands Master
33 Plan, and these are fill areas that were filled when they first established the park. They
34 are called out as areas that the fill should be removed and restored. One of those sites is
35 where we want to put the horizontal levee so it essentially meets that. Those are three
36 examples of those large capital expenditure waiting projects that are really important and
37 just waiting for the funding source.

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: The willows, I like that idea of planting the willows in the
2 streams. Like 200 years ago, would the stream have had willows in it?

3 Mr. Anderson: Yes, very commonly.

4 Commissioner Reckdahl: What about upper and middle, would we consider planting
5 willows there at all? Would that be useful at all?

6 Mr. Anderson: Luckily the Buckeye Creek study gave us a good recommendation for—
7 the upper stretch they talk about rerouting it, so we put it through that meadow. In that
8 area, they call out a bunch of techniques, one of which is to plant some native trees that
9 would help slow the water and create a more natural flow.

10 Commissioner Reckdahl: The Buckeye Creek plan did have some willows in it?

11 Mr. Anderson: Mm hmm.

12 Commissioner Reckdahl: I did not remember that. That would be good both for habitat
13 and also slowing down the water. It's a win-win. That's it.

14 Commissioner Moss: This is a really terrific plan. When you look at the whole thing, it
15 seems daunting. When you break it up into smaller pieces, each one is somewhat
16 manageable. Also, it's a lower cost to deal with so you don't have these huge projects like
17 Buckeye Creek. You can bite off a little bit every year. That is a great way to go. One
18 thing I was trying to figure out is—maybe this is a question for you or for Grassroots.
19 The existing Buckeye Creek channel is very narrow. Is there a plan or a suggestion to
20 widen it like we were thinking of doing for Buckeye Creek? In other words, get some of
21 the benefit of the Buckeye Creek project, which is \$9 million, do it here, widen it out,
22 take a little bit of those other two areas, and get some of the benefit short term.

23 Mr. Anderson: Great question. As I mentioned, there were three spots recommended in
24 the Buckeye Creek study. This was the third, the least impactful. If you went from the
25 creek's edge, it created a widened floodplain that stretches into this restoration area here,
26 which is why in our plan we don't call for planting any trees in that spot. If that day came
27 where we wanted to remove—what that looks like is at the base of the creek, you would
28 remove fill and widen the floodplain as you're talking about. We have a price estimate. I
29 want to say it was like \$1.2 million to do the 7.7-acre stretch. What we're proposing is in
30 the third phase, the last phase. We would eventually plant that area too. If the plants had
31 to go, if we try the upper creek technique and for some reason it's not successful and we
32 have to do the middle and perhaps the lower stretch to really resolve the Buckeye Creek
33 problems, all you've had to do is get rid of some native plants. We wouldn't have oaks
34 there, that kind of thing. If we didn't do anything at all, you'd still have plants there. It

1 would just be grown in with weeds. All the better to have viable habitat in the interim. It
2 may not even be necessary once we address that upper stretch.

3 Commissioner Moss: What I was just suggesting is that maybe you think of phase 3 as
4 phase 1, switch them for a short-term benefit. I don't know if that's possible, but just
5 something to think about. One other thing is that the soil, you said, was of such a
6 consistency that the water would not pool very easily there. It would sink pretty quickly.
7 Are you thinking that you would want—in order to get willows, for instance, it has to be
8 wetter and it has to be cooler. You would have to do something to the soil to make it stay
9 wetter longer. I was wondering what would you do in that case.

10 Mr. Anderson: I probably didn't explain myself well. The majority of the 7.7 acres is
11 highly compacted over-burden, so it doesn't percolate well at all. The water would pool,
12 and it wouldn't absorb or soak in. The intent of that mulch and compost would be to
13 break down that soil and allow a little bit more penetration. The willow planting would
14 primarily be in the creek and on the banks of the creek where it does have access to water
15 and do well.

16 Ms. von Feldt: The first comment you had about doing phase 3 first, I asked the same
17 thing. I thought let's start down here if this is where the interest is, but then other people
18 with more expertise informed me that you typically want to start at the top of the
19 watershed and then go down because of the head cuts and things. You could do some
20 stuff down below, but it really wouldn't fix the problem because you still have this
21 constraint above. That was what the hydrologists said. I'm going to ask Kristen to come
22 up and talk about the willowing that we've been doing in the creek for the past few years
23 and some of the amazing things we've actually seen just in the current part of the creek on
24 this site.

25 Kristen Williams: We actually started doing some willow installation this past winter in
26 the 7.7. We did a mix of willow stakes as well as willow bundles to help catch sediment
27 as it's either coming down the creek bank or down the creek. It's a lot more successful
28 than we expected, which is really exciting. We have probably about 20-30 feet along the
29 creek that now has willows that are about 3-4 feet tall. They are collecting a lot of
30 sediment already. It is not a huge change to the floodplain area, but it is having some
31 impact already. Like how our nursery was doing test plots in the upland area, we're also
32 doing this little testing closer to the creek. We're figuring out what's the right technique
33 when we really put this project into play.

34 Commissioner Cribbs: Thank you very much. Daren, thank you for this report and the
35 staff. Thank you all from Grassroots. It's really fun to see the excitement about what's
36 going on down there. It sounds like we need to publicize the fact that people can make a
37 donation on behalf of their family for benches, both in the parks and also up at Foothills.
38 Maybe we could resurface that. I love the phasing. Are you able at this point, Daren, to

1 put a price tag? Where does this money come from to do this and how is it parceled out
2 over the years?

3 Mr. Anderson: Not yet. We started a preliminary look at a price estimate, and I thought,
4 "Let's do the public outreach first and find out a little bit more of what the scope really
5 might look like." Sometimes through that process, it alters so much that what I originally
6 propose doesn't always look the same. I figured we'd do the public outreach and then
7 start digging into this. We're keeping an eye on trying to keep the cost modest, working
8 with a lot of volunteers. For example, that compost and mulch might very well come
9 from City resources. All the mulch we'd need would come from the tree department for
10 free, for example. We've got a great partner that has a native plant nursery. We can work
11 together to get the plants and try to do this as cost effectively as possible. That said,
12 depending on how it shapes out, it might be a CIP request for a certain amount. I think
13 we'll play it by ear. As the scope develops, I'll put together a meaningful cost estimate
14 and share it with you at that time.

15 Council Member Cormack: I always love a staff report. I always learn a new word, and
16 allelopathic was one I had to look up earlier today. You always learn so much about
17 trees. If you haven't read *The Overstory*, I do recommend that by Richard Powers. The
18 only point I wanted to emphasize was the one that Commissioner LaMere made about
19 accessibility. I think it was introduced by the Executive Director as well. Am I right that
20 this is the only part of Foothills Park that's really flat in terms of a trail?

21 Mr. Anderson: I think that's fair to say.

22 Council Member Cormack: That's an important reason to make it accessible for our
23 increasing senior population and for the significant number of people in the community
24 who have temporary or permanent mobility disabilities. That's a benefit of working on
25 this area that I probably didn't appreciate it when we first started talking about it.

26 Chair McDougall: Alex and Kristen, thank you for being here. The fact that you guys
27 tend to agree that something could grow there—I think every time I've been there on any
28 of our things, all I got was there's 5 feet of over-burden here and nothing ever is going to
29 grow here. Some of those squared-off plots didn't look like—it looked like it was
30 proving that nothing was going to grow there. I'm glad to hear you're optimistic. That's
31 great. The thing we do say and the thing I've been hearing all along is we're saying native
32 plants. With climate change and whatnot, we know that where native plants are is
33 moving. I would be interested in if we looked at this as climate sensitive or climate
34 appropriate or whatever. What we do there doesn't have to be absolutely native if there's
35 something that's better. The railings that you talked about, I would really encourage that.
36 You've been talking about the trails and the fact that that's a flat area. I suggest we start
37 now talking about it being an ADA trail instead of just talking about, as this map shows,
38 the trail going around the 7.7 acres. The parking is the other side of the construction



1 shed. I would say that the trail needs to be planned right from the start to be an ADA trail
2 that goes from the parking lot as part of the whole process because it's no good if you
3 can't get to the trail. I would really like to encourage that. There was some conversation,
4 Alex said, about showcasing habitat. At some level, this is a research opportunity to see
5 what's going on. I would really encourage that we do everything we possibly can to
6 establish what the baseline is today. If this is going to be good for habitat, are there six
7 birds there today and, if we do this right, we'll have 12? Are there deer there or what
8 kind of plants are there or not there? Working between what you do and what the City
9 does to establish a baseline so that we would understand are we really making an
10 improvement, particularly relative to even the eucalyptus. I hate eucalyptus, but they're
11 there. Maybe they don't need to be removed in all of those spots. I was struck not by this
12 map but the other one that showed where the eucalyptus were, that they were circled in
13 different areas. It seemed to me that it might be an opportunity to, in one case, maybe
14 divide that off and that some of the eucalyptus might be left. We could measure what
15 happens there versus what happens where we take them out. Particularly if we're looking
16 at the opportunity to show what restoration can be, anything we can do to say, "We took
17 these trees out, and now look what's happening. Overnight, we have a 20-foot oak tree
18 that we didn't have before." Simply making sure that we understand that. I'm struck by
19 the number of times that volunteers get mentioned. We've had this conversation before
20 briefly relative to other activities. I doubt that, if I looked at the Palo Alto recreation
21 catalog, one of the potential recreation opportunities is to volunteer for the 7.7 acres or
22 any other part of Foothill or whatever. My guess is there's lots more clever ways that
23 we're not taking advantage of. Again, we've had this conversation about does the City
24 need a volunteer coordinator or even Parks and Rec. Do they deliberately need
25 somebody maybe not totally dedicated to it but actively interested in promoting
26 volunteers? The benches, I don't know if it's in the Park regulations part or whatever. I
27 did get stopped on Byxbee the other day. I guess you get a ten-year lease on a bench
28 naming or whatever. The question is at the end of the ten years, are you going to give me
29 a new bench or are you going to charge me again even though the bench is now
30 deteriorated. Will I get a new plaque? It was a reasonable question. I certainly don't
31 know the answer or don't even know where I could find the answer. It would seem to me
32 the regulations might be a place to look for that. Although I've said let's make sure it's an
33 ADA trail that goes through there, I would still be interested in the previous conversation,
34 was there a way, even if it was just a tail, to connect to at least one of the other paths in
35 the park. That's my rant for the moment on that subject.

36 Commissioner Cribbs: Is there a comprehensive list of all the volunteers who do all this
37 wonderful stuff?

38 Mr. Anderson: We do track all our volunteer hours.

39 Commissioner Cribbs: Not the hours but the names of people.

1 Mr. Anderson: Of every volunteer?

2 Commissioner Cribbs: Yeah, that are associated with all the Friends of this and the
3 Friends of that and Grassroots and all that.

4 Mr. Anderson: Our Friends, yes, we have all that.

5 Commissioner Cribbs; Maybe I don't know this, but wouldn't it be fun for the Recreation
6 Commission to have a big party to get everybody together and say thank you very much
7 for everything that you do?

8 Chair McDougall: Great idea.

9 Mr. Anderson: Sounds good. I'll reach out to the groups.

10 Ms. von Feldt: Just a few points of data that you might be interested to know about the
11 volunteers. I was just checking with Kristen, and I said, "How often are our volunteer
12 workdays full?" She said, "90-100 percent of the time." We have at least 30 workdays
13 per year at Foothills. We have another 75 workdays at Arastradero. About 80 percent of
14 the people that come to the workdays are teens. If they're not in the City parks, I guess
15 they're all out pulling weeds in the open spaces. It's great that we have so many people.
16 A volunteer appreciation party would be lovely. The list of names would be about 3,000
17 or so from our side, but a lot of them are teenagers. They repeat from Friends of Foothill,
18 and we have dedicated volunteers as well both at the nursery and other places. That's a
19 smaller number.

20 Commissioner Cribbs: That would be a great celebration and a great focus on how much
21 we have from volunteers.

22 Chair McDougall: I agree.

23 Commissioner Moss: Chair McDougall reminded me that just three weeks ago
24 Midpeninsula Open Space opened their brand new Bear Creek Open Space Preserve.
25 They completed an ADA-compliant pathway at the entrance. It's about the 7.5 acres that
26 we're dealing with. I encourage staff and the subcommittee to visit it. It's a beautiful
27 park, and it's just brand new.

28 Chair McDougall: Are there any other additional questions or comments? I see lights
29 on, but I suspect the lights don't mean anything. Alex or Kristen, would you like to add
30 any final comments? I would just like to thank you both for coming and spending the
31 time with us and answering the questions and giving us confidence that we're doing the
32 right thing here. Daren, thanks again for everything you're doing here.

1 **4. Update of the Parks and Open Space Regulations**

2 Chair McDougall: Which allows us to move on to the next item, Item Number 4, which
3 is the Open Space and Parks Regulation discussion.

4 Mr. Anderson: Hello, Commissioners. Daren Anderson again, Community Services,
5 here now to discuss the updates to the Park and Open Space regulations. The
6 Commission's ad hoc committee and staff have reviewed the regulations and recommend
7 the Commission discuss the proposed changes that were in the staff report and the
8 attachment. The changes are suggested in order to keep the regulations relevant and
9 reflective of current City policies. Some of the revisions are new regulations to address
10 emerging issues, and it's designed to make the regulations a little easier to understand.
11 References to the Municipal Code show the connection between the regulations and the
12 Muni Code. Wording changes reflect that current City policy. In the staff report, I
13 highlighted several of the significant changes, and some of the updates are self-evident
14 and explanatory, but a few of them I'd like to go over now and explain just a little bit of
15 the context. Of course, if you have any questions along the way, we'll revisit any and all
16 of them. The first one I'd like to highlight is R1-21. This is the one about commercial
17 photography and filming. This was edited to allow an exception for small photo and film
18 events consisting of a single photographer or videographer with a group size of no more
19 than 24. The intent of this edit was to allow small photo or film activity that would have
20 little or no impact on park visitors or park resources to be able to come to the park and
21 take those photos. I did receive some feedback from one community member with some
22 suggested edits to this regulation. This gentleman sent an email to the Commission, so
23 you probably have seen some of the suggested edits to that. With a few minor edits, the
24 ad hoc committee and staff have reviewed his proposed change and find it acceptable. I
25 look forward to hearing your feedback on that. Another regulation that was updated is
26 R1-30(D). This one's about pets in parks. This was edited to require that pets must be
27 kept on a leash that can be extended no further than 6 feet while in open space lands. The
28 reason for this one is Park Rangers have observed people with long, extended leashes
29 where oftentimes dogs are going way off trail into areas where there is habitat, where
30 there is wildlife. You can see the wildlife get flushed out. It's been an issue. We didn't
31 feel it was necessary to do this in our urban parks. Notably, this just pertains to open
32 space. We thought in urban parks it is far more appropriate and less problematic. R1-31
33 is about nuisance dogs. It was edited to require people with leashed pets in playgrounds
34 to ensure that their pets don't impact children's use of the playground and to add a caveat
35 that they're required to remove the dog if someone else is using the playground and asks
36 them to. The reason we've edited this one is because park staff has received requests
37 from playground users to prohibit dogs in the playground. This edit is trying to balance
38 the need for people who come to a playground with their child and their dog and maybe
39 there are very few people in there and the dog causes no problem. They want both the
40 dog and the child to be in the playground with folks who just don't want to be around



1 dogs in playgrounds. That's an attempt to balance it. The ad hoc was very helpful in
2 trying to reach this compromise position. R1-39 was added to ensure people using
3 exercise equipment in playgrounds do not inhibit children from using the playgrounds or
4 damage the equipment. The reason for this one is we're increasingly seeing our
5 playgrounds in parks used as gyms. We talked a little bit earlier about how active our
6 community is in our park system, which is wonderful and something we want to
7 encourage, but we want to make sure it doesn't impinge on children using playgrounds or
8 harm the equipment. Oftentimes, people are working out with dumbbells or straps, and
9 they're slung over swings. R1-39 was an attempt to balance that without stopping people
10 from being active. R1-40 was the one that pertained to community gardens. The vast
11 majority of the bullet points in R1-40 were just merely about details of how the garden
12 program functions. The ad hoc and staff have created the draft of a new document, the
13 Community Garden Guidelines, that will house those kind of details about how the
14 program works. These guidelines would be sent to all participants in the City community
15 garden program as well as be part of the licensing process. They would all get essentially
16 these guidelines as they join the program. They are currently being reviewed by the City
17 Attorney's Office and will come to the Commission for review soon. The remaining
18 community garden regulations that end up in this update do pertain to the general public
19 and are far more appropriate for this one. That concludes the staff presentation. Thanks
20 again to the ad hoc who was so helpful in looking at so many iterations.

21 Chair McDougall: Would ad hoc members like to speak first?

22 Commissioner McCauley: Thank you to Daren for his patience. We definitely looked at
23 many, many iterations. Where we've ended up with this document is actually a pretty
24 good place. Don, I would wonder whether you had some specific comments. One of
25 them, I think, is a big organizational threshold question. It maybe would be beneficial if
26 you wanted to pose that so that Daren would be able to respond. It might actually inform
27 the conversation a little bit. I definitely look forward to the Commissioners' input on this
28 and letting us know if there are other things that we should be tweaking and revising. As
29 a general matter, the idea was not to wholesale revise these regulations but rather do a
30 fairly modest revision of things that needed some attention. Don had suggested an
31 organizational change, which may not be necessarily substantive in some respects but
32 definitely an organizational change that would be a more significant revision. Don, do
33 you maybe want to mention that and then other Commissioners would be able to weigh in
34 on it as we continue the discussion?

35 Chair McDougall: Is that okay, Daren? I went through and sent a bunch of notes back
36 more in the Comprehensive Plan approach than going through a list here. Before I start,
37 I'd like to say I really thank you, both you and the ad hoc, for what is really good work. I
38 found in many places it was confusing whether I was talking about dog parks or cattle or
39 Foothills or parks. I really felt that it might be useful if there were two documents, one

1 that dealt with the open space, both Foothills and Baylands, and one that dealt with the
2 parks. I feel that the users and the use cases are quite different. The kind of people that
3 go to those places are different. The document's become such that if somebody wanted to
4 object to somebody with dumbbells in the park, it would be very hard to find. Maybe an
5 officer could find it or maybe we could find it, but a general citizen wouldn't. I briefly
6 discussed that in the note that I sent. I did discuss it again with Daren as he walked in.
7 Daren's modification to that, I might as well mention, is maybe we could look at this as
8 one document but with a general section and then a parks and then a Foothills section in
9 some way that outlined it more briefly. I agree that this isn't substantive relative to any of
10 the particular rules and regulations. It is important relative to the usability of the rules
11 and regulations. Does that cover it? Is there anybody else on the ad hoc who would like
12 to comment? By the way, I appreciate that the goal here was to update it, not to totally
13 redo it. I would point out that this document was written in 2004, modified in '04, '05,
14 '06, '08, '11, '12, and '13. Basically every other year or every year, it has been modified
15 until, between '13 to '18, for five years it wasn't looked at. The other thing I would
16 encourage is that maybe it does deserve a more complete look and some commitment that
17 it not be another five years before it gets looked at again. My other thing is, if we're
18 having discussions about access to parks and if we're having discussion about dog parks
19 and other things like that, it would be much easier to deal with all of those things in
20 separate sections and the modifications that might ensue rather than in a single, total
21 document. With that, I'll start back on the far end. Jeff, do you have any comments?

22 Commissioner LaMere: Thank you so much both to the ad hoc committee and Daren for
23 looking at these rules and regulations and providing an update. As you went through this,
24 were there things you were able to pick up that may change the way we look at the parks
25 or change what is in the parks? One thing I'm looking at is R1-39, for example. Does
26 this mean that we need to look at—this is about people using the exercise equipment in
27 the playgrounds. Should we start thinking about can we put a separate pull-up bar that
28 can also be used to throw their TRX straps over, that they can use what they want to use
29 and make it more multiuse where it's not necessarily impacting the children but also
30 seeing that we do have a need?

31 Mr. Anderson: That's an excellent point, and something we have been talking about.
32 We're addressing it, for example, at Cubberley. With that track and field, we're trying to
33 put in a place for adult exercise or multigenerational exercise, where you'd have gym
34 equipment there. I envision that being extremely popular, seeing other communities with
35 those outdoor gyms. I see seniors active, I see kids active, and I see exercise groups
36 there. I think it has a lot of potential. To your other point, we can't have those
37 everywhere. We don't have space for that kind of thing everywhere, so it needs to be
38 perhaps incorporated in those playgrounds where we see that happening. We tried that at
39 the Magical Bridge, for example, where right on the periphery of the playground you'll
40 see adult exercise equipment like aerobic exercise, for example. I think you're right that

1 maybe we need to start addressing it. If we see people using the swing set for the TRX
2 cables, then maybe they need an appropriate piece of equipment to do that in that area. I
3 think it's wise.

4 Commissioner McCauley: Forgive me. I'm going to jump in again. Daren, I was
5 wondering if you had a response to Don's comment that you wanted to share with the
6 entire Commission.

7 Mr. Anderson: On that topic of separating the parks from the open space regulations, I
8 can certainly see what you mean, Chair McDougall. There's an opportunity to maybe
9 group them up. In my opinion, it just seems that the overlap is so significant it warrants
10 having one document to me. Maybe I'm naive, but I'm one of those people who see that
11 people who are going to go to open space are probably going to be at a park eventually
12 and vice versa. Having knowledge about what the rules are there would behoove them,
13 and have one place to go. I worry sometimes about having split documents. Somehow
14 they get confused and can't find the open space one; they can only find the parks one.
15 Lastly, it's consistent with the way we have structured our Palo Alto Municipal Code.
16 We have Section 22 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code that has all our Muni Codes relating
17 to parks and open space, and it's housed in one area. It would be consistent with that.
18 That was my thoughts on separating out the two sections.

19 Commissioner McCauley: I will offer one other thought on this. Just as a practical
20 matter in terms of trying to track what the changes are that are being made, if we're
21 dramatically changing the organization, it would be a little more difficult to understand
22 and comprehend just what we're doing in terms of edits. The flip side of that is it may
23 make it more difficult for the City Council to comprehend and understand what we've
24 done here. Right now, these look like, at least from my perspective, relatively modest
25 edits. If we were to entirely rewrite this, even if we didn't change the substance much but
26 reorganized it significantly, understandably both members of the public and the City
27 Council Members might have a lot more questions about it. For whatever that's worth,
28 not to say that it shouldn't be done if it's the right thing to be done. I'm sure the ad hoc
29 would be excited to jump into that. We look forward to the rest of the group's direction
30 on that.

31 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'd like to thank the ad hoc. This was a very tedious edit, I'm
32 sure. I appreciate you going through here with a fine-toothed comb. That's a lot of work,
33 but it has to be done. Echoing Jeff's comment, you get better compliance if, instead of
34 saying don't do this, you say do it here. I agree with that. On the swimming part, it said
35 dogs and cats and other animals not permitted on the pool deck, but we don't have an
36 exception for service dogs. Was that intentional?

37 Mr. Anderson: That might be an omission. Likewise, Chair McDougall caught one on
38 our restrooms, who could be there with children with special needs. He questioned

1 whether that should be updated. I think it should. It didn't rise to my attention as we
2 reviewed the document. Maybe the one you just mentioned about service dogs too. I'd
3 be glad to look into it.

4 Commissioner Reckdahl: I would assume we don't get a lot of service dogs on the pool
5 deck, but it's conceivable. Let's just be consistent. The other thing was about Lytton
6 Plaza and the open flames. Can you refresh my memory? What is the regulation both in
7 City parks and open space for gas grills? If I want to bring my Weber to the park, if I
8 have a picnic area, can I bring my own gas grill and put it in there or can you only use the
9 built-in grills?

10 Mr. Anderson: We've got a no portable barbecue rule that was instituted in the parks. It
11 was because of what happens when people bring their own barbecues. All the other
12 amenities that need to come with a barbecue, like tables, chairs, trash cans, recycling, and
13 compost, aren't there to support because other people are already using the existing tables
14 and barbecues and have the right number of trash cans. That's why that rule got put in,
15 prohibiting that.

16 Commissioner Reckdahl: The same with Foothills Park?

17 Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: Foothills Park, you can only use charcoal, right, no wood?

19 Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

20 Commissioner McCauley: Again, forgive me for jumping in. We actually had a little bit
21 ...

22 Chair McDougall: Sure, Ryan. Is there anything you'd like to say?

23 Commissioner McCauley: ... of back and forth on the portable grill question. My
24 understanding is that propane grills are actually preferred, particularly in open space
25 areas, because they pose a far lower fire hazard than charcoal. Notwithstanding that, this
26 is not being changed at the moment, but this is something that Daren was checking with
27 his partners at the Fire Department on. Daren, was there any further feedback on that?

28 Mr. Anderson: The one part I didn't explain is it is allowed with camping. They are
29 allowed to use the propane grills when they're camping, but not for picnics. Again, it ties
30 back into that issue of are they going to exceed the capacity of our existing facilities. I'd
31 be glad to reach out to them and talk to the Fire Department about that option and see
32 what other alternatives we can work out.

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: From a fire standpoint, we might want to consider allowing gas
2 grills at Foothills Park if it can be done some way where we don't stretch the facilities. I
3 don't know.

4 Commissioner Cribbs: What is the process after these rules get updated? How do people
5 know about them and what kind of community outreach? Is that necessary? Just as the
6 changes happen.

7 Mr. Anderson: Very good question. This would be a recommendation from the
8 Commission to Council to make the change. In terms of publicizing it, we don't do a lot
9 of outreach. The typical way it's done is for a special event or maybe a user group was
10 having some sort of gathering, we'll send them the revised and updated rules and
11 regulations. Oftentimes, we'll pull out salient pieces. If you're having a run event, maybe
12 I'll find two or three that are really important for them to be aware of. If there's a new
13 one, of course I'll add that to it. That's the predominant way. Our website and every once
14 in a while we'll get calls from folks, and that's when we share.

15 Commissioner Cribbs: How does the enforcement, if at all, happen?

16 Mr. Anderson: There's two ways. One is the Municipal Code, which has a lot of these
17 but not all of them. That has a mechanism for citations. The rules and regs also have it,
18 but typically at a far lower rate. The bail amount that you get cited for a regulation
19 violation is less. It's not very frequently cited. Most of these are the kind of thing
20 where—although not a current regulation now, if we saw people with leashes and they're
21 harassing wildlife, which is a separate regulation violation, a Municipal Code violation. I
22 was a Ranger for over a decade, and I don't think I cited a single person for it. Everyone
23 was usually compliant. It's almost always compliant-based, but for those who are repeat
24 offenders, it's very nice to have the tool to write a citation if you need to.

25 Commissioner Cribbs: The King Plaza has no alcohol allowed, is that right?

26 Mr. Anderson: I'd have to double check. I don't have it handy, but I'd get back to you on
27 that.

28 Commissioner Cribbs: A little history on that. Many years ago we had a concert series
29 on the Plaza that was the Friday night series. It served wine and beer. We, staff, didn't
30 realize that we needed to have a special something or other, so there was an ordinance
31 passed that we could do alcohol on King Plaza. It got probably changed around. That
32 was a gathering place kind of thing, Don.

33 Chair McDougall: Always an attractive way to arrange a gathering and to make a
34 gathering civil, of course. Jeff, would you like to make any comments?

1 Jeff Conrad: Hi. I'm Jeff Conrad. I'm from Palo Alto. Maybe I should start here by
2 saying that if you people have read my email, I think it covers everything that I would
3 have to say. If it's clearly conveyed in there, I'd just as soon save everybody's time and
4 not repeat it. If you wish, I'd also be glad to make a few comments here.

5 Chair McDougall: Jeff, I know that Daren has read the email, and I know the ad hoc has.
6 I believe that they've actually made some modifications to the regulation as it was
7 originally drafted based on your comments. We appreciate that very much. We also
8 appreciate your willingness not to repeat them here. Thank you.

9 Mr. Conrad: Thank you.

10 Chair McDougall: Thank you for getting involved in the process. We really appreciate
11 that kind of participation.

12 Mr. Conrad: I apologize for missing it in 2004. If I knew there was such a thing as
13 administrative regulations, I'd have commented, but I didn't (inaudible).

14 Chair McDougall: I have no real additional comments except to thank Daren and the ad
15 hoc. My proposal, by the way, is not to do anything different than what you've currently
16 done with this particular iteration. I would have left it alone except the use case that you
17 just responded to Anne with, which is how people find out about the regulation, is they're
18 going to do something in a park or they're going to do something in the Foothills, and
19 then you send them the document or whatever. Now, they have to go through the whole
20 document to find the relevant piece. I really like the idea that there's one document, but
21 maybe there's two separate headings where particularly relevant things specific to the
22 open space or specific to the parks can be pulled out. I know dogs are mentioned at least
23 three different places. It would be much easier if it was called—it was easy to find the
24 dog parks. I'm not proposing that for this ad hoc or this iteration. I am proposing that we
25 should encourage that it not be another five years, and the next iteration might benefit
26 from restructure. I'll give Council Member Cormack an opportunity to comment.

27 Council Member Cormack: Mr. Anderson, I'm just curious if you would characterize the
28 proposed changes as minor, moderate, or major.

29 Mr. Anderson: Relative to the previous changes, where they were really specific to—
30 maybe it was a dog park change, so it was just one or two. I would say this is moderate
31 compared to the previous ones I've been involved with.

32 Chair McDougall: I think we've completed that discussion. I am going to suggest a
33 slight change in the agenda if everybody would agree. Number 7 on here is the Hike to
34 the Sea attachment, and I'd like to give David a few minutes to comment on that at this

1 point before we get into the rest of the ad hoc unless anybody's got any major objections.
2 David.

3 [The Commission moved to Agenda Item Number VII before proceeding with Agenda
4 Item V.5.]

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

6 Chair McDougall: This month we've had an extremely good job of people submitting all
7 of the reports, so we don't have to go through it in great detail. Personally, part of my
8 reaction to looking at this whole list is the 10.5 acres. It sounds to me like sometime in
9 the next couple of months we might want to bring that forward from the ad hoc to the full
10 Commission. The Foothills Park access, there's obviously work going on, on that. That's
11 sort of a continuing update. I don't know if David wanted to comment on his memo or if
12 Ryan wanted to make a comment.

13 Commissioner McCauley: We've got a pretty solid draft ready. I met with Jeff
14 Greenfield yesterday. I think we're anticipating that that will be back before the
15 Commission in September for discussion and further public input. Based on that
16 discussion, there would be an action item sometime later in the fall for the Commission to
17 consider.

18 Chair McDougall: I did see in some of the correspondence relative to the agenda, Daren,
19 that Kathleen is now starting to collect information on how many rolls of toilet paper are
20 used and various other ways of indirectly measuring the use of the park. I would
21 encourage other Commission members to think of things that ought to be measured. Too
22 often we don't think of what we want to measure, the same with the 7.7 acres. How will
23 we know when we've had success or we've had failure? One thing that wasn't on that list
24 was any kind of incident report. Was there an encounter with a guest or a visitor who had
25 a problem or an issue? We need to make sure we're recording that too because that could
26 be one of the things that becomes—as it was noted, one of the potential issues is safety.
27 If we're not recording that now, then we won't have a benchmark for it. Is there any other
28 comments on any of the ad hocs? David.

29 Commissioner Moss: Going back to the one about Foothills Park, I will not be at the
30 meeting in September. Without violating the Brown Act, is there some way that you
31 would give me feedback on some of the items that I mentioned in the memo that I sent
32 afterwards, things that may or may not jive with what you're planning to do? I don't
33 know how to address that. Was there anything that was particularly an issue, primarily to
34 do with limits, primarily to do with student groups, primarily to do with volunteer groups,
35 primarily to do with barbecues in the wrong place, and fire protection and maintenance
36 with a larger volume of people?

DRAFT

1 Commissioner McCauley: The draft that we have is fairly detailed, and it will probably
2 answer a lot of the questions. Without going into too much detail about what that draft is,
3 your comments are consistent with that draft generally. We're incorporating that
4 feedback.

5 Chair McDougall: Is it fair to say that you have a different draft today than the one that
6 was floated at the last meeting? There is a potential update from what Commissioner
7 Moss would have referred to?

8 Commissioner McCauley: Absolutely. The draft is much more detailed. Previously, it
9 was sort of a menu of options. Now, it's one particular proposal.

10 Commissioner Moss: I had a comment about the Baylands Comprehensive Conservation
11 Plan. I mentioned earlier that they are reviewing the horizontal levee project this coming
12 Friday. That will be a very important impact on the Baylands and the City. I will be
13 coming up with a response after I've seen that presentation. That has to do with a smooth
14 transition, not a sheer drop-off. No matter what the sea level rise is, it'll still be a smooth
15 transition.

16 Chair McDougall: When you say presentation, you mean the tour that's being offered?

17 Commissioner Moss: That's right, a tour. Daren and I have talked with Commissioner
18 Greenfield about, with all of the projects being worked on north of us by SFPUC and the
19 Dumbarton Rail project and also the Ravenswood Open Space District working on the
20 San Francisco Bay Trail, there will be increased pressure on Palo Alto to make
21 improvements on our portion of the Bay Trail north of the Baylands in what's called the
22 Faber-Laumeister Tract. Right now, there's one intransigent homeowner/landowner who
23 the City is trying to work with to allow us to make improvements to that trail. It's not
24 going well. Hopefully, you can continue to push forward with that, but that is an open
25 issue.

26 Chair McDougall: We can ask that in a future staff report that we get an update on that.
27 Would that be fair?

28 Mr. Anderson: I think so. We'll just have to be cautious that it doesn't turn into an
29 agendized kind of discussion.

30 Chair McDougall: That's why I'm suggesting a future staff report. If there are no other
31 comments ...

32 Commissioner Moss: I'm so excited about the pickleball court development and the
33 tremendous response that the City made to the pickleball community to move them
34 during this fairly long break in the action. It's at least six to eight weeks, something like

1 that. You were able to move them to another part of Mitchell Park. I think some of the
2 tennis players who were there are moving over to Cubberley. I'm not sure how that
3 worked. Thank you so much for accommodating that very large and very vocal
4 community during this upheaval. One other thing about the pickleball. I don't think that
5 they contribute a dime to the City for anything we're doing for them. I'm a little
6 concerned about that. I wonder if we're able to charge fees to groups to help with
7 maintenance and some of the upgrades. This is coming out of CIP, I think. No, I think
8 it's coming out of maintenance.

9 Mr. Anderson: It was CIP funding to build the new courts.

10 Commissioner Moss: I don't know what staff can do about that.

11 Chair McDougall: Commissioner Moss, I would think the ad hoc involved in recreation
12 should probably take that up, and we don't discuss that further.

13 Commissioner Moss: That would be great.

14 Chair McDougall: Do you have something else you want to add?

15 Commissioner Moss: On the turf management with the Cubberley field, they needed to
16 remove at least six or so redwood trees. I was surprised at that, but they were not in good
17 health. Will those be replaced or anything like that?

18 Mr. Anderson: I believe six were removed. Three were already dead, and three were still
19 living. Yes, we will have replacements, not necessarily redwoods but perhaps a different
20 species that may be more appropriate and might do better there.

21 Chair McDougall: Council Member Cormack, do you have any last questions or
22 comments that you'd like to add?

23 **VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 24, 2019 MEETING**

24 Chair McDougall: Is there any topics that Commission members would like to
25 recommend for future meetings?

26 Commissioner Moss: I don't know if it's parks and facility use or park rules, but I notice
27 a proliferation of advertising signs where the soccer teams play and tennis classes are
28 given, big, big, big signs and multiple ones. They stay up a lot longer than the event
29 they're advertising. Is that advertising something they pay for?

30 Chair McDougall: Once again, I'll submit that to staff as an update on that at the next
31 meeting. It sounds like a reasonable question. Rather than discussing it now, we'll put it
32 as a request for a staff update at the next meeting.

1 Commissioner Reckdahl: I received an email today about the recycled water plan for the
2 north county. Are we going to get a purple session? Is that in the works?

3 Chair McDougall: That's a good idea. We did have that as an agenda item sometime.
4 I'm not sure it showed up, but let's put that on the list as a potential topic.

5 Mr. Anderson: Commissioner Reckdahl had forwarded me a number of those kinds of
6 things. I sent it to Public Works, and they said they'd be interested in coming in
7 November to talk about that and maybe a couple of other items, GSI, etc.

8 Commissioner Reckdahl: I don't see any particular rush, but we should get it.

9 Commissioner McCauley: Don, I was just going to echo your comment. It'd be great to
10 have an update on the 10.5 acres at Baylands in the not too distant future.

11 Chair McDougall: Specifically for the September meeting, we do have an update on the
12 Foothills access. Anybody have anything else?

13 Commissioner Cribbs: The timing might be off on this for our meetings. I wondered if
14 we should have any kind of information about what's going on with the Stanford GUP.
15 We mentioned it last meeting. There's some implications for recreation possibly and that
16 kind of thing. Maybe it's just enough to get information off the website and listen to the
17 Council meeting.

18 Chair McDougall: Council Member Cormack might have a comment on that.

19 Council Member Cormack: Council Member DuBois and I are the ad hoc committee for
20 the Stanford GUP. We provided an update at the end of last week's meeting, could have
21 been the week before, just indicating that we anticipate there being a series of meetings
22 starting in the fall in San Jose and potentially one up here. Attendance at that will be
23 welcome. There's no other additional information that we have to share. I'm not quite
24 sure what an action item or a discussion would look like. At this point, that's where we
25 are.

26 Commissioner Cribbs: It's good to know that you have that ad hoc committee. I was
27 thinking, "Wouldn't it be great for you to make a presentation from Palo Alto's
28 perspective?" If there's nothing to share ...

29 Council Member Cormack: There isn't really anything. The Planning Commission has
30 recommended its (inaudible). Everything is out in the public. We're waiting until the
31 next series of meetings.

32 Commissioner Reckdahl: With Rancho San Antonio closed because of mountain lions,
33 do we have any evidence of mountain lions in Foothills Park?

1 Mr. Anderson: We've always had evidence of them. We have wildlife cameras that
2 occasionally pick them up. We take notes on where they're at and monitor behaviors
3 when we observe them or have park visitors' observations. Right now, we don't have any
4 threats or concerns.

5 Commissioner LaMere: I have one question about setting dates for November and
6 December meetings. Just wondering if there's any discussion of that in the near future.

7 Chair McDougall: We haven't had discussion. We'll make sure that we have that
8 discussion in preparation. For the September meeting, we'll lay out the rest of the year
9 appropriately.

10 **VII. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

11 Commissioner Moss: On August 14, the Midpeninsula Open Space District Board of
12 Directors had a very unusual meeting that I was allowed to be part of. I did not represent
13 the City of Palo Alto, but I did talk about the inspiration of the Parks Master Plan to
14 finding routes from our open spaces to other open spaces, other regional trails from Palo
15 Alto to the sea. It was very well received. The amazing thing was the meeting itself.
16 There were seven other organizations that had something to do with regional trails
17 through Midpeninsula Open Space lands. What was amazing is that many of them
18 touched Palo Alto. That was not lost on the Board nor was it lost on the other
19 participants. For instance, one of the partners was San Francisco Bay Trail, which
20 certainly runs through our Baylands, and they have major changes that they're making.
21 The Bay Area Ridge Trail, which we connect to at the top, and the SFPUC and the
22 Dumbarton Rail Corridor, which are going to be integral to moving people and
23 commuters and recreational bike riders and walkers from Dumbarton Bridge and from all
24 points north to all points south. They are doing major changes. They also talked about
25 San Mateo County parks is creating the Ohlone-Portola Historical Trail, which ends up at
26 El Palo Alto, which I didn't know. It's going to span all the way north almost to San
27 Mateo. All of these regional trails touch Palo Alto in some way. They were very
28 receptive to changing their priorities to help this Palo Alto to the Sea Trail because they
29 have one major project that they need to do with the Cloverdale Ranch, which is at the
30 very end of the trail, that they would like to move up to allow this regional trail to be
31 more useful. That's all I really want to say right now. It was very well received.

32 Chair McDougall: In the planning meeting we had for this meeting, when we talked
33 about it, Commissioner Greenfield, who went to the meeting with you, was extremely
34 complimentary about the presentation that you did, the reaction you got. Although you
35 weren't representing the City, as you say, you did do a good job of representing the City.
36 Thank you very much. I don't know if anybody has any particular questions for David on
37 that. With that, I'd like to go to the ad hoc committee update.



1 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

2 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Reckdahl and second by Commissioner
3 Cribbs at 9:15 p.m.