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**MINUTES  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
November 12, 2019  
CITY HALL  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
Palo Alto, California**

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

15 **Commissioners Absent:** None

16 **Others Present:** Council Member Cormack

17 **Staff Present:** Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin

18 **I. ROLL CALL**

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

20 Chair McDougall: The agenda tonight is really brief in terms of the number of items.  
21 Are there any additions or requests or deletions that anybody would like to ask for or  
22 suggest?

23 Commissioner Reckdahl: There were no minutes because there wasn't enough time?

24 Chair McDougall: I was getting to that as the next topic. We will not be approving the  
25 minutes of the last meeting because we have a change in staff, and we have a short  
26 meeting. I expect we will be lucky to have time to get this for the next meeting, but we'll  
27 catch up in the meantime. At the next meeting, we will have the October minutes. If  
28 there are no other comments or additions, I'd like to proceed with Oral Communications,  
29 comments from the public on topics that are not on the agenda tonight.

30 **III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

31 Chair McDougall: I'd like to start with Dr. Bruner [phonetic].

32 Good evening. How nice to be meeting all of you. I just moved up here about six  
33 months ago and have fallen in love with the area. What I'm talking with you about



1 tonight is a grove of trees, a grove trees that—let me give you a little of my history. I  
2 was senior psychologist for the State of Nevada, and I was senior psychologist for  
3 Scripps Memorial Hospital in San Diego—in La Jolla, excuse me. In that capacity, I  
4 worked with the executives who were stressed. This particular grove of trees that I want  
5 to talk to you about, the one that's on Arastradero, I think it's in the Charleston rebuilding  
6 district. If I had had that down there, they wouldn't need me. From the people that I have  
7 talked with about this particular grove of trees, they experience an oxycontin high. That  
8 is, your body goes into a state of relaxation, and it can be brought on by the area that  
9 you're in physiologically. You go into relaxation. Your stress hormones drop. The  
10 cortisol itself that gives you the heart attacks or can set your body up to have a heart  
11 attack or strokes or any multiplicity of diseases—your body responds to an area like this  
12 particular grove of trees, and it calms you down. These are the kind of places I would  
13 send my people to, to go find, to sit, to meditate, to get away. The next thing I notice  
14 about the Palo Alto area is how phenomenally stressed the population is. You've got a  
15 traffic problem; you've got a population problem that's going on. There aren't a lot of  
16 those places that are still remaining in a natural zone, that induce the relaxation in your  
17 population. The people I've talked to are deeply in love with this one particular area. I  
18 posted one question on Nextdoor. The next thing I know, within two days I had 120  
19 responses from the public about wanting to keep this particular grove of trees intact. I  
20 thank you for your attention. Good evening.

21 Chair McDougall: Dr. Bruner, thank you. I assume you're familiar with Nature Fix.

22 Dr. Bruner: I am not. Sounds like I need it.

23 Chair McDougall: It's what you're talking about. The Japanese, in fact, practice  
24 something called forest bathing, that you're probably familiar with as well. Thank you  
25 for your comments.

26 Commissioner Moss: What's the grove she's talking about?

27 Dr. Bruner: It's the one that's on Arastradero. Could you describe to him where it is?

28 Geoff Paulsen: It's a bike/pedestrian path behind Alta Mesa Memorial Park. It's popular  
29 with both Palo Alto and Los Altos. It's a bike/ped path near Gunn High School, between  
30 Gunn and what now is Emily (crosstalk) Park. It's a place where some trees are  
31 threatened by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission because it involves the  
32 Hetch Hetchy waterline.

33 Council Member Cormack: From the City Manager, based on community concerns  
34 received regarding planned tree removals and trimming planned for the San Francisco  
35 Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) right-of-way between Arastradero and the Los  
36 Altos city limit, Public Works has put a pause on the tree work planned. The City will

1 schedule a meeting to share information about the project and answer questions. That  
2 meeting is still in the planning stages, but community members interested in this project  
3 can sign up to receive a meeting notification once it is announced at  
4 [www.cityofpaloalto.org/cacorridor](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/cacorridor). I'll be happy to write that down for you.

5 Chair McDougall: I have two cards from Geoff Paulsen, one I think has got non-agenda  
6 item ticked.

7 Mr. Paulsen: I'm Geoff Paulsen. I'm speaking as a Board Member of the nonprofit tree-  
8 planting group Canopy but really from a bureaucrat's perspective. My dad was a  
9 psychiatrist. We had a little meeting this morning for our advocacy group, and I would  
10 suggest that the City consider agendizing having some kind of dotted line communication  
11 responsibility or connection between Public Works projects and the Parks and Rec  
12 Commission so that you can all facilitate public communication. It's difficult for this  
13 City when a public outcry occurs after a project has been almost finalized or when the  
14 chainsaws have been started. It's much better to have communication at the outset. I  
15 would suggest that you agendize that for a future item, and Canopy can give you some  
16 thoughts on how to specifically implement that. Thank you.

17 Chair McDougall: Thank you, Geoff. Shani Kleinhaus, not an agenda item.

18 Shani Kleinhaus: Thank you, Chair McDougall. I would like to support the comment by  
19 my esteemed colleague here. I speak for Audubon and the issue of lack of transparency  
20 and for the public not always knowing whether something is Public Works or parks.  
21 That's especially important in the Baylands and Byxbee. I think it would be a very good  
22 idea to try and put something together so there's more transparency on that. My other  
23 comment is about the horizontal levee. The people from Public Works who are working  
24 on this project came to the Conservation Council, which is an assembly of organizations  
25 in this area, and presented that to us. We had a few comments, but I think the one that  
26 really should be paid attention to by you is that we recommended that the trail should not  
27 be on top of the levee but put more towards the road. If the intent is indeed to promote  
28 wildlife use it, especially endangered species, when the water comes up, then having  
29 people walking on top is not a good combination. People can go a little further down.  
30 They can have an access point where they can see that people just want to get through,  
31 don't have to because the disruption that walking or biking on top of a levee would cause.  
32 It's a better design so the levee has a ledge. At the bottom of the levee is where people  
33 that just want to get through are going. Whereas, the top of a levee just has a few  
34 viewpoints but is not for continuous movement. Thank you.

35 Chair McDougall: Thank you. I don't intend to start a discussion on either of the last two  
36 speakers, but they should be encouraged by the fact that we are in some cases doing a  
37 much better job at the moment of having ad hocs meet with Public Works and looking at  
38 specific parts of Public Works where we can interact. Specifically, we have been

1 working with them on the horizontal levee issues. We don't disagree that more  
2 transparency is a good idea, but I think there's some progress. I think we have all of the  
3 public comments on non-agenda items.

4 **IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

5 Chair McDougall: I'll ask for the Department Staff Report.

6 Daren Anderson: Good evening. Daren Anderson, Community Services Department.  
7 I've got a couple of updates for you. One is sort of a sad one. Natalie Khwaja, who has  
8 supported the Commission for a couple of years, is leaving the City for another job  
9 opportunity. In the interim, we've got Catherine Bourquin, who has previously served the  
10 Commission. She'll be filling in for the time being. Regarding the Boulware Park and  
11 the Boulware Park addition, we had a community meeting last Saturday, November 9.  
12 Approximately 30 people attended. It was the style where people could stop in anytime  
13 during a two-hour period and make notes and put stickers on boards and say, "these are  
14 the kind of things I'm interested in or support." Some of the main topics are having a  
15 restroom, closing the road that separates Boulware from the new Birch Street property,  
16 having a dog park, and then a lot of miscellaneous one-offs. All this information will  
17 come to you via a presentation soon. Peter Jensen, Landscape Architect, is going to  
18 develop a conceptual plan based on the feedback that he got at the community meeting  
19 and share it at a second community meeting in January. After that January meeting, we  
20 would come to the Parks and Rec Commission for their regular January meeting, and  
21 we'll share that plan with you as well as the feedback. Pickleball, just a minder. Our  
22 Mitchell Park pickleball court is complete now, and tomorrow at noon, we'll have the  
23 ribbon cutting for that. The Mayor will be there to cut the ribbon. We welcome a  
24 Commissioner to come speak if they would like to as well. We'll certainly offer to  
25 Monica Williams, the President of the Pickleball Association, to say a few words too.  
26 The Hoover dog park fence, I mentioned this at one of our previous meetings, that we  
27 were going to be raising that fence. I had mentioned it had been put in and installed  
28 many years ago at a height of 3 feet and received a lot of complaints from park users over  
29 the years. We raised it to 5 feet last week. Peers dog park is another one I've mentioned  
30 in the past. One of the challenges with that dog park was the grass. This has to be our  
31 most beloved dog park in terms of use. It's certainly the highest and the newest. It wore  
32 that grass out very quickly. It couldn't be sustained with that level of activity. We  
33 explored options, and we tried about half the dog park in this engineered mulch that's  
34 designed for dog parks. We got positive feedback, and we came in just last week and did  
35 the remainder of the dog park and received positive feedback. This was timed to precede  
36 the rainy conditions to avoid the muddy conditions that dog park users hoped we would  
37 avoid. So far, we've got happy users over there. Ramos Park CIP is tied with the  
38 restroom CIP. I've said in the past we had hoped to target November. Peter Jensen who's  
39 leading that endeavor has been very, very busy with some other projects, namely the

1 Boulware and CIPs and others. He says he thinks he can do it in the first week of  
2 December, but he hasn't confirmed a date. I apologize that we haven't been able to firm  
3 something up yet. I'm hopeful it'll be the first week of December. As soon as that's  
4 confirmed, I'll send an email to the full Commission. The Highway 101 bike bridge goes  
5 to Council on November 18 for award of contract. It's \$15.5 million. Again, the  
6 construction would start in the fall of 2019. It's an 18-month construction window to  
7 complete it in March 2021. The 7.7 acres community meeting, the Commission received  
8 an invitation on this. This is for Saturday, November 16, at 11:00 a.m. at Foothills Park  
9 Interpretive Center. An update on Cubberley. The draft Cubberley Concept Plan,  
10 previously called the Cubberley Master Plan was posted on the project website on  
11 November 7. Staff will be doing email blasts to get the word out, get people to  
12 participate. The project website is [pausd.org/cubberleycodesign](http://pausd.org/cubberleycodesign). I can share that with  
13 the Commission via email after the meeting. The public can provide feedback on the  
14 plan or the codesign process by emailing [cubberleycodesign@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:cubberleycodesign@cityofpaloalto.org). The  
15 CEQA environmental assessment is still being prepared, and it's expected that the  
16 Concept Plan and draft CEQA document will come to the PRC in the spring of 2020 and  
17 then to Council for adoption in June 2020. Kristen's planning on meeting with the ad hoc  
18 later this month to determine the best time to bring this to the Parks and Rec  
19 Commission. We talked about sea level rise the last time and that Public Works will  
20 bring the horizontal levee project to the Commission for discussion in December or  
21 January. It'll probably be January, but I'll confirm that. An update on the Arastradero  
22 Gardens. The garden is now open, I'm very pleased to say. There are 32 plots, and three  
23 gardeners are already signed up and working on their plots. Catherine Bourquin, who  
24 helped lead this project, is scheduling appointments with 14 additional people who are  
25 interested in having a garden at this site. One has already volunteered to be a garden  
26 liaison. The aforementioned project involving some trees slated to be removed  
27 associated with the SFPUC, I've got a similar email that you got from Public Works but  
28 with a little more information, details on the meeting. I'm going to recap the whole thing  
29 just in case anyone missed it earlier on. Several community members have raised  
30 concerns about the tree removals and trimming planned on the pathway in the San  
31 Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) right-of-way. This is between  
32 Arastradero Road and Los Altos city limits. In response, the Public Works Department  
33 has paused the work and is hosting an onsite meeting and walk-through to discuss the tree  
34 removals and the trimming. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 20, at  
35 3:30. I'll repeat that. The meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 20, at 3:30  
36 p.m. at the entrance to the pathway on Arastradero Road. If you'd like more information  
37 or have questions, please call Public Works at 650-329-2295. An update on the Renzel  
38 ponds on East Bayshore Road just north of the Municipal Services Center. You might  
39 remember they were rebuilt not too long ago. One of the things that came with the  
40 rebuild process was a tremendous amount of algae. It blanketed both of the two ponds.  
41 It seems that that has died away. I presume it's the cold weather, but it's almost  
42 completely gone. Before the algae left—people have corroborated this—I noticed an



1 increased number of waterfowl on the ponds. I talked to the Chair and Vice Chair about  
2 bringing in a photo. I took photos, but they don't do it justice. I went out and did a count  
3 and thought I'd share some of the wildlife that I observed today at 4:30. There were 75  
4 coots, 25 Canada geese, 3 American pelicans, 10 canvasback ducks, 10 northern  
5 shuttlers, 4 snowy egrets, 3 black crowned night herons all within a 10-minute walk. It  
6 was nice to see that the place is being used by wildlife even though the vegetation has not  
7 fully grown back. An update on the 10.5-acre plan. The next steps are—the project lead  
8 is Lam Do, Superintendent with the Parks Division. He's going to meet with the  
9 environmental stakeholders in about two weeks. He'll be sending out invitations soon.  
10 He'll meet with the ad hoc committee to debrief on that. The next piece in the process is  
11 the community meeting. It will hopefully bring everyone together to talk through what  
12 we'd like to have happen there. You might remember our last Commission meeting we  
13 talked about the garden guidelines. The next steps on that process are Catherine has met  
14 with the garden liaisons to get their feedback on some of the feedback we heard from the  
15 Commission and other members of the community. The next step is we'll meet with the  
16 ad hoc next week. That concludes the Department Report.

17 Commissioner Reckdahl: You mentioned the water foul at Renzel pond. They were  
18 staying away because of the algae or because the remnants of the algae are attractive for  
19 some reason?

20 Mr. Anderson: I'm not totally sure if it's the algae. I think it's partially because new  
21 vegetation is growing on the bottom; some of it is algae. I'm certain there's a lot of  
22 insects because I've seen them. There is vegetation coming up slowly on the edges. I  
23 think all that contributes to make it more hospitable and welcoming. I anticipate it  
24 getting better as more vegetation grows in, particularly the cattails, which are just  
25 starting. I think that's going to spread fast based on my experience in seeing that in the  
26 past. Even in areas where we've removed cattails, it comes back pretty quickly. I think  
27 it'll continue to get better. We've started spreading some native seed and occasionally put  
28 in willow trimmings to re-root itself. Some of it has taken, and that'll help too.  
29 Hopefully we'll get going with a more robust volunteer effort. We've got some higher-  
30 priority areas in the wetlands that we focus on. My hope is we can help that be a vibrant  
31 habitat.

32 Commissioner Moss: I don't think the algae is good for the birds. I think they're there in  
33 spite of the algae. I thought they were going to try to control the algae by changing the  
34 depth or some other way. Do you have anything on that?

35 Mr. Anderson: I spoke with Phil Bobel, the Public Works Assistant Director, who helps  
36 manage the discharge of treated water to the ponds. We had brainstormed different  
37 things. My suggestions were mainly only increased aeration. There are solar aerators.  
38 Phil was here when we first built the Renzel ponds, and he said we had a similar algae

1 situation in the beginning, and it went away on its own. He said just give it some time, so  
2 that's what we're trying right now. I don't believe the situation has resolved or gone. I  
3 think it will come back. I think it's the colder weather, but I could be wrong. We'll keep  
4 monitoring it. I think you're right that they weren't necessarily drawn for the algae, but  
5 there is other aquatic vegetation growing in there as well. I think that helps the wildlife  
6 come.

7 Commissioner Moss: It cuts down on the number of fish there because they don't have  
8 enough oxygen. Also, it cuts down on the amount of light that gets down to the bottom  
9 where you want those plants to grow. Keep working on that. What did you say was  
10 November 16th in Foothills?

11 Mr. Anderson: That's the community meeting on the 7.7 acres.

12 Commissioner Moss: Peers dog park, what was the solution? You replanted the grass?

13 Mr. Anderson: No, we didn't replant the grass. We put in an engineered mulch. It's  
14 softer on the dogs' paws.

15 Commissioner Moss: It's not Astroturf. It's a mulch.

16 Chair McDougall: Any other comments, questions? I'm not sure if the algae is hurting or  
17 helping. An awful lot of the birds seem to be moving through it as if it wasn't there. The  
18 point I passed onto Daren is the algae is 400 times better than trees for taking carbon out  
19 of the air. When he said, "Let's rake it all away," my reaction was, "Let's talk about this."  
20 On top of the birds he was talking about, when I was there yesterday—I don't know if  
21 you mentioned the snowy egrets—there were also great blue herons and double-crested  
22 cormorants. Double-crested cormorants are fun to see. I sent Daren this morning an  
23 iNaturalist. It's amazing how many birds and animals and insects are in the Baylands. I  
24 would like to ask relative to the tree event November 20th, are we providing enough  
25 other publicity rather than just mentioning it here.

26 Mr. Anderson: Thanks for the question, Chair McDougall. I just found out about this  
27 today. I'll check in with Public Works and see if there is some other good way to help get  
28 the word out.

29 Chair McDougall: It was a rhetorical question. Relative to the gardens, I want to  
30 reiterate—Catherine, it's pleasant to have you back again tonight. The garden stuff you're  
31 doing is amazing. The fact that it's moving on already is amazing. We'll move onto  
32 business for the evening, which does not include the minutes as we've already discussed.  
33 One of the notes I just got was Foothills. The other was renting the tennis courts. I'm  
34 going to allow Kim Grant, if you'd like to speak about the tennis courts. If you're here,  
35 we'd like to hear you.

1 Kim Grant: Good evening. My name is Kim Grant. I'm a former professional tennis  
2 player, now the owner of Kim Grant Tennis Academy, which is located in Midtown, Palo  
3 Alto. We've been operating there for about 12 years. We're a school of about 7,000  
4 people in the Palo Alto area. We would like to ask the Board of Supervisors to change a  
5 policy which we feel has become outdated. We would like to ask for a use permit or to  
6 have permission to rent the public tennis courts in the Palo Alto area to host some tennis  
7 tournaments for the community. We each offer our services to the community. We'd  
8 promote the tournament for the public and cater to any gender, age, and level. The  
9 United States Tennis Association is a nationally respected organization. There's a new  
10 organization that's been formed and called Universal Tennis Rating, UTR. Roger Federer  
11 and Novak Djokovic have invested in this company because it's such a great and new  
12 system that allows everybody in the whole world to participate. It would be a shame to  
13 exclude ourselves from this opportunity. We would like to ask permission, myself and  
14 my team, to run the tournaments for the community. We want to run it every Friday if  
15 possible and open to everybody if at all possible. As the policy is right now, we're not  
16 allowed to rent the courts at all. This UTR system is great because anybody can plan at  
17 any time. If a top player were to enter, the system would categorize the players together  
18 in the same order so they would be able to play each other, so they don't have  
19 mismatches. We'd really like you to consider this opportunity for the City of Palo Alto  
20 and the people in it. Thank you.

21 Chair McDougall: Kim, thank you. It's not appropriate to discuss in this forum, but we  
22 have your contact information. We'll make sure that either members of the ad hoc  
23 committee or staff contact you to fully understand your requests. Thank you for being  
24 here.

25 **V. BUSINESS**

26 **1. Park Improvement Ordinance for Utilities at Peers Park.**

27 Chair McDougall: We move to the Park Improvement Ordinance for the utilities at Peers  
28 Park. I'll let Daren introduce that.

29 Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. It's my pleasure to introduce Henry Nguyen. He's the  
30 Senior Electrical Engineer for the Utilities Department. I'll let you introduce your  
31 colleague.

32 Henry Nguyen: Good evening, Council and Commissioners. Thank you for having us  
33 tonight. My name is Henry Nguyen. I'm a Senior Electrical Engineer with the Electric  
34 Utility Engineering. This is my colleague Greg McKernan. We're working on the  
35 project to underground or raise all the overhead that are crossing the railroad to prepare  
36 for their plan to electrify the railroad. You've probably seen the report already. Would  
37 you like me to go through it? Okay. At Peers Park, we have two overhead crossings.





1 We would like to combine those two overhead crossings into one underground crossing.  
2 By doing that, we will make the park look better without the overhead lines. We will  
3 increase the reliability of the electric system. In doing that, we will have two bores  
4 across the railroad. It's going to be a little bit of disruption during that process because  
5 we have an 18-inch casing that we have to, per Caltrain spec, pull underneath the  
6 railroad. In that process, they will tunnel a big hole underneath the railroad. For about  
7 two days, we have to lay that casing, assemble the whole thing, and then pull it all at once  
8 to prevent the channel from collapsing. After that, we will have another two days to  
9 assemble all the conduit going inside the casing and put them all in it once again. Those  
10 conduits will be interconnected by a few boxes. We have 4 feet 6 inches by 8 feet 6  
11 inches box connecting with a utility switch on top of a 5-foot by 10-foot box and two  
12 more of the smaller boxes for fiber optic cable, about 30 by 48 inches. Out of all those  
13 boxes, two of them will be sitting in the mulched area. Right now, it's covered by mulch  
14 or tree bark for the dog run, I believe. Those boxes can be covered with the existing tree  
15 bark with no problem. The switch will be installed in front of an existing emergency  
16 water pump station. The switch will be sitting in front of that pump station. Other than  
17 that, after the project is complete, nothing will be seen. Everything will be in the ground.  
18 The only thing that will be seen will be the utility switch sitting in front of the existing  
19 pump station, and it's in the paved area about 150 to 200 feet away from the dog run, I  
20 believe. This is where the existing pump station is. In front of it, there are two boxes.  
21 One is a 5 by 10, which is underground. On top of that 5 by 10 will be that utility switch  
22 that I mentioned in the report. That little box next to that would be the fiber optic box  
23 that's 30 inches by 48 inches. Over here are the two boxes sitting in the middle of the  
24 dog run by the end of the project. That's the 4-6 by 8-6 for the electric. The smaller one  
25 is 30 inches by 48 inches for communication. Out here, we'll have one more box that's  
26 going to be 4-6 by 8-6 feet for the power to come down from the pole over here. This  
27 pole will bring the power down to the box and to the switch and eventually to that box in  
28 the middle of the park. Then everything will cross at the railroad right here. That in a  
29 nutshell is our project.

30 Chair McDougall: That would be the report. I think everybody might want to ask  
31 questions about it. Since this is an action item, do you or Daren have wording that you  
32 would like to have the Commission consider?

33 Mr. Anderson: It's under the recommendation in the staff report. Essentially, we would  
34 like the Parks and Rec Commission to recommend that the Council adopt this Park  
35 Improvement Ordinance for the installation of electric utility equipment at the existing  
36 Peers Park water pump station.

37 Chair McDougall: Does anybody have any questions?

1 Commissioner Moss: This underground tunnel, how long will it take to do and when  
2 approximately were you planning to do it?

3 Mr. Nguyen: It's going to take about three weeks to install that tunnel. We are going  
4 through this Commission. If we have a pass, we're going to have to go through to  
5 Council for approval in January. We anticipate, if everything goes well, we'll probably  
6 do it in February.

7 Commissioner Moss: The rain is not an issue?

8 Mr. Nguyen: No, it shouldn't be.

9 Commissioner Moss: The location of the tunnel, will it have to be moved in the future if  
10 the high-speed rail project—how does this dovetail with that at all?

11 Mr. Nguyen: We took that into consideration. It's not definitive either way whether  
12 they're going to raise or lower. Considering the scale of that project, this one has to go  
13 one way or the other. We cannot wait for a final decision on that one to decide. That's  
14 why what's best at this point is to go underground. If they decide to go below grade at  
15 that point, we'll have to deal with it at that point.

16 Commissioner Moss: There will be minimal impact to the grassy areas? Can you get  
17 your trucks and things like that in without disturbing most of the grassed lawn there or  
18 will you have to destroy that and then replant it?

19 Mr. Nguyen: We can certainly put down boards to protect the grass during construction.  
20 If it comes to a point where it's not practical to do it, we can certainly replant the grass.

21 Commissioner Moss: Will the dog park be closed?

22 Mr. Nguyen: Briefly, yeah. During the construction, part of it will have to be closed.

23 Commissioner Moss: For three weeks?

24 Mr. Nguyen: For the three weeks, yeah.

25 Commissioner Moss: Could you close just half of it?

26 Mr. Nguyen: We could certainly do that. We can probably set up the fence to close  
27 maybe the middle portion and leave the two ends open.

28 Commissioner Moss: When it's all done, can you make plantings so that you hide the  
29 boxes that remain? You talked about putting some of it under the mulch of the dog park.  
30 That's great. You had some 8-foot boxes. Can you hide those in some way?

1 Mr. Nguyen: The green box you're talking about is going to be in front of the pump  
2 station. We have a better picture. This is what it is right now. That's going to be after,  
3 with the switch sitting in front of it. It's already sitting on top of the paved area. There's  
4 not much we can plant. Plus, we need an 8-foot clearance to operate the switch. When  
5 we operate the switch, we don't stand up close. We use a hot stick, insulated stick, about  
6 8 feet long in case the switch flash over. We can stay away from the flash.

7 Chair McDougall: Are there any other questions?

8 Vice Chair Greenfield: Overall, undergrounding seems like a good approach. How deep  
9 is the tunnel that goes underneath the railroad?

10 Mr. Nguyen: We're doing 15 feet below the railroad.

11 Vice Chair Greenfield: As far as the vaults in the dog park, they're located there because  
12 that's where they need to be for the proximity of the (crosstalk)?

13 Mr. Nguyen: Right. On the other side of that is Seale Road. We have to line up with  
14 Seale Road in order to have the equipment to bore from that side over. On the other side  
15 on Seale Road, that would be where they have the boring machine set up. They bore over  
16 to the dog park. When we line up the casing, we have room on the dog park to line it up  
17 all at once and pull it in all at once.

18 Vice Chair Greenfield: I understand the dog park would need to be closed for a few  
19 weeks during the initial construction period. You mentioned there would be annual  
20 maintenance or perhaps it was in the report. Will this impact the vault area in the dog  
21 park or does the maintenance only occur at the switch?

22 Mr. Nguyen: You are exactly right. Mainly, it will be the switch. We'll come back  
23 periodically. I've forgotten how often. We have to come back and do a visual inspection  
24 and shoot the infrared camera to make sure every connection is not hot. As far as the  
25 vault with cable in there, the cable is designed to last 30, 40 years. Typically, we don't go  
26 into the vault that just has cable. Usually, we only come into area that has equipment  
27 other than cable.

28 Vice Chair Greenfield: If I understand correctly, the maintenance checkout is only once  
29 every three years, and that's at the places in the picture we're looking at by the fence. In  
30 general, the dog park should not be impacted except for unforeseen circumstances.

31 Mr. Nguyen: That is correct.

32 Commissioner Reckdahl: I want to echo David's concern about this looking ugly. It  
33 doesn't look real pretty right now. If we can do anything on the left side, plant some type  
34 of boundary to prevent the park from being uglier, that would be good. I really want to

1 minimize the effect on the park users during construction, particularly the dog park users.  
2 If you can put a fence around that, it'd be great. I'm worried about the top of that vault  
3 being slippery and having that engineered mulch just be pushed aside. I'm not sure if you  
4 can recess it a little or make it a rough surface so the bark doesn't get pushed aside. What  
5 can you do to minimize that?

6 Mr. Anderson: Commissioner Reckdahl, we have a few spots on our synthetic turf fields  
7 where there's infrastructure like that. What I've seen done is a chunk of turf built to spec  
8 fits right in there, and it's got a little base on it so it provides stability, something you  
9 wouldn't slip on. Maybe there's something like that we can look at. I'd be glad to work  
10 with Henry and his team to see if we can find something that would be appropriate for the  
11 site.

12 Commissioner Reckdahl: That should be doable, find something that makes it so it's not  
13 slippery. I agree undergrounding will be better than having it hanging from the pole. I  
14 think this is a good thing.

15 Commissioner Moss: In the answers you just gave him, didn't you say that you have to  
16 have enough space so that there's no fire danger?

17 Mr. Nguyen: That would be in front of the switch, that green box right here.  
18 Immediately 8 feet in front of this switch right here, we need 8 feet.

19 Chair McDougall: If there are no other questions, can I have a motion to recommend the  
20 Park Improvement Ordinance per the description that Daren gave us?

21 **MOTION**

22 Commissioner Reckdahl: I so move.

23 Chair McDougall: Can I have a second?

24 Commissioner Moss: I second.

25 Chair McDougall: All in favor. Any opposed? Passes unanimously. Henry, thank you.

26 Mr. Nguyen: Thank you. You made my day.

27 Chair McDougall: We're glad it was that easy.

28 **2. Foothills Park Access Pilot**

29 Chair McDougall: The next item is the Foothills Park Access Pilot. Just before we start,  
30 I'd like to describe what I think the process might be, should be. I would hope that we

1 could come to a conclusion that the Commission gave a unanimous recommendation to  
2 the Council. If not, then we have before proceeded with non-unanimous actions. I'm  
3 going to let Ryan describe it. Instead of having public comments first, we're going to  
4 have public comments after so that comments are relative to what Ryan's saying, then  
5 we'll have Commission comments and a vote. I want to point out before we start that the  
6 recommendation has in it—Ryan can describe it—both a pilot project component and a  
7 permanent component so that we're not hiding one inside the other as we go forward.  
8 Ryan, Jeff, and Jeff constituted the ad hoc that has put all the work into this. It's also  
9 appropriate to be clear that—I'll let the ad hoc members talk about this. I don't think they  
10 come to us with a totally unified conclusion. With that, I'm going to let Ryan start.

11 Commissioner McCauley: I'm just going to hand it right over to Jeff LaMere.

12 Commissioner LaMere: Don, thank you for your introductory comments. In addition to  
13 Daren, we would also like to thank the many people who have taken time to look at this  
14 proposal and comment on it. We've had a lot of help from the Rangers and input from  
15 Rangers in regard to this. We understand the sensitivity of this topic and have spent a  
16 great deal of time with it. Not only the ad hoc but the Commission itself has spent time  
17 to be very thoughtful with what we're presenting. I'm going to give a brief overview, and  
18 then I will hand it off to Ryan to finish up and drill down into some more details of what  
19 we propose. To begin, it's a one-year pilot test. It's not something that is permanent. It's  
20 something we want to use to study. It is a year in duration. There will be a limited  
21 number, an adjustable number of passes for nonresidents. It's not something that we've  
22 said there's going to be 200 passes for nonresidents every day. It's a limited number and  
23 an adjustable number. We'll get into those numbers in a little more detail. We also have  
24 a very important focus on school field trips. As our speaker previously said at the start,  
25 talking about the effects of nature on health, we think those effects are very important for  
26 our youth. Increasing access for field trips for those outside the Palo Alto area to visit  
27 Foothills Park is something that we see as a great addition and something that our City  
28 can offer. It's something for the youth. We're talking about environmental stewardship.  
29 This helps environmental stewardship. We want to continue to prioritize resident access  
30 and not change the current access policy for residents and their guests. Residents of Palo  
31 Alto will still have priority to this park. At the conclusion of the pilot, the staff and the  
32 PRC will review the park visitation, the data, and then make a decision on how to move  
33 forward. This is exciting because we will be able to gather data. We'll see how the park  
34 is being used, and we'll see the impact of the increased visitation on the park. With the  
35 field trips, we want to formalize a program and a reservation process. We think that will  
36 help with the field trips, with the process. That's already started in terms of the  
37 communication and the planning for that. The nonresident passes will be available on the  
38 City's new online reservation portal, which I believe Ryan has looked at. From the  
39 comments that I've heard from the City, the City is excited about this new system. It can  
40 collect more robust data, but it's also easier to use. As we said, there's going to be a

1 maximum cap, and that cap is on 50 nonresidents per day. That's a maximum. On days  
2 where there is historically much greater visitation, Mother's Day for example, there may  
3 not be any nonresident passes available. It will be minimal. That is something based on  
4 historical data, that we will be able to adjust. There have been a lot of objections voiced  
5 about increased visitation and the fear of the park being overrun. If that is the fear, that  
6 too many people are coming, based on the numbers that we've looked at for the past few  
7 years, our visitation has not approached the cap of 1,000. Adding these additional passes  
8 is not going to push us much closer to that cap based on our visitation. If there is that  
9 concern, then perhaps revisiting the policy of allowing 1,000 people in or the signs of that  
10 is more prudent as opposed to limiting who we let in. I think that's something perhaps to  
11 consider. There will be a \$6 fee for nonresidents. This fee is inline with what other area  
12 parks charge, that do charge a fee. There's a fixed cost already for managing the gate.  
13 We are not proposing to increase those hours of managing the gate. Hopefully, this \$6  
14 fee will serve to offset some of those costs that are fixed and already exist. With that, I'll  
15 turn it over to Ryan, and he'll go into a little more detail with what we're doing.

16 Commissioner McCauley: Thanks, Jeff. As we've spoken about before, the park has  
17 seen very consistent visitation of about 150,000 visitors per year for the past decade.  
18 Again, as we've mentioned before, 2011 was an outlier in the past decade when you had a  
19 little bit of an uptick to 202,000. Staff's observation from that period of time is that it  
20 was manageable. It was a little bit busier summer particularly, but it was certainly  
21 manageable. The historic high visitation back in the late 1960s and through the 1970s  
22 was more than 300,000 people on a pretty regular basis. Year over year, there was a  
23 significantly larger population of people visiting the park. At the same time, we've seen a  
24 growing number of nonresidents who have been turned away. In the past year, the  
25 average is 2,800 people per year. In the last year that we have complete data for, the  
26 number is all the way up to almost 3,800 people. That's a significant number of people  
27 who Rangers are having to turn around and say they can't enter the park. The Foothills  
28 Park committee began discussion on this particular topic in a more formalized way back  
29 in October 2018. David was a member of the committee at the time. We've gone  
30 through a number of permutations of what a pilot program might look like, but we arrived  
31 tonight with the proposal before you after lots of thought and input over that past year.  
32 As Jeff mentioned, the process has included consultation over the past year with many  
33 people in the Community Services Department, our Ranger staff. We had three excellent  
34 retired Supervising Rangers who provided a bunch of input in addition to Kathleen Jones,  
35 our current Supervising Ranger. We also had input from Greg Betts, who's the former  
36 Community Services Director. We had great interactions with JMZ staff, Junior Museum  
37 staff, who will be helping to coordinate the field trip aspect. We also had outreach with  
38 some of our volunteer organizations that the City partners with. Of course, we had PRC  
39 meetings on the topic in July and September of this year. A few updates for the  
40 Commission from the last time we met in September. As Jeff mentioned and as I'm sure  
41 you saw, the current proposal is for a fee of \$6. Again, as Jeff mentioned, the idea there

1 is that it would be in line with what Santa Clara County and San Mateo County parks  
2 charge. Again, anticipating that we would have waivers for students and volunteers with  
3 key City partners that focus those volunteers for us and help us with projects within the  
4 City. As everyone knows as well, we already have a program in place to help defray  
5 costs for people who might be low income. One of the beauties of this is that the new  
6 CivicRec online portal will allow that information to be distributed across the system  
7 such that, if someone qualifies for a scholarship in one program, they could also qualify  
8 for a scholarship or a reduced fee here. We received feedback from the City Attorney's  
9 Office. That was attached to the report that you have before you, Enclosure A, and you  
10 can see the proposed language changes. I want to be very clear that the City Attorney's  
11 Office is not advocating for this particular language. What we did was run by them  
12 conceptually what we're trying to do. They took a look at the language for us and helped  
13 us with crafting that language. That's what's before you in Enclosure A to the report. It's  
14 a fairly simple or elegant edit in my mind to the City Code provision. Presently the City  
15 Code only allows residents of the City and regular City employees, members of their  
16 household to access the park. This would add in addition to that list of people such other  
17 persons as are authorized by a specific pilot program approved by resolution of the City  
18 Council. It would require Council approval before anyone would be able to enter as part  
19 of a pilot program. As we mentioned, we've had follow-up and further discussions with  
20 the JMZ staff, who have been very helpful, John Aiken and Alex Hamilton. We had  
21 outreach with the Ravenswood District. It's going to be one of the key constituencies that  
22 we want to work with. Currently, the JMZ does field trip programs with the Ravenswood  
23 District for the Baylands. They are very interested in being able to take those students up  
24 to Foothills Park in the future. With many thanks to Natalie, she provided a preview of  
25 the new CivicRec recreation system's capabilities. I have to tell you that I'm excited not  
26 just for this program but across the board. It's going to really expand our capacity as a  
27 City to help serve our populace. Logistically I think it's going to be very beneficial. It's  
28 going to be easy for staff to use from my perspective. I don't mean to suggest by any  
29 means that I'm an expert in the CivicRec system, but I was wowed as I was going through  
30 this demonstration with Natalie. It will allow staff to plan ahead and make passes  
31 available automatically at an interval that they might determine. One of the questions  
32 that Keith had previously is how far in advance would these passes be available. Daren  
33 or the Ranger staff could determine a month out that they're going to have however many  
34 passes on a particular weekend and then just set it so that automatically they would be  
35 available to the public two weeks in advance or whatever interval they wanted to set.

36 Commissioner Reckdahl: Daren will have the freedom to adjust that if he doesn't think  
37 it's working out?

38 Commissioner McCauley: Right. The flexibility here is one of the key aspects from my  
39 perspective. This is something that can be adjusted. It makes a lot of sense to give staff  
40 that discretion at some level to appropriately experiment within the bounds of the pilot

1 program. In terms of ease of use for users, the CivicRec system will be hosted through  
2 the City's main web portal and can be linked from other CSD pages. It's not as if you  
3 have to go to a different website, which is the current system. It'll all be essentially  
4 seamless. It allows you to sign on through several different single sign-on systems. For  
5 example, if you have a Gmail account, you can sign in through Gmail. You can sign in  
6 through Facebook. You can also sign on and complete a transaction as a guest without  
7 providing some of the background information you might otherwise have to provide. The  
8 last thing I think is going to be great for us is it has a number of different customizable  
9 fields and questions that we can obtain feedback on the front end as people go in and  
10 obtain these passes. It also has survey functions so that we can automatically contact  
11 people who have provided us with their contact information and ask them how the  
12 process worked.

13 Commissioner Reckdahl: Will we know where they're coming from? One question  
14 would be is where are these new visitors coming from.

15 Commissioner McCauley: I absolutely expect that will be one of the questions we ask.  
16 On the point of fees, I want to be very careful. We know that staffing the entry gate is a  
17 fairly expensive enterprise from my perspective. It costs us \$89,000 per year, which is  
18 the estimate from our Ranger staff. I want to be very careful about projections.  
19 Everyone can start to do the math and think about how this would add up. I think it's  
20 probably going to generate somewhere between \$40,000 to \$50,000 per year potentially.  
21 We could at least put a significant dent in the overall number. I want to put a lot of  
22 caveats around that projection. We're recommending that the reservations for picnic  
23 areas and campgrounds remain as they are today. They'd only be available to Palo Alto  
24 residents during the pilot program. What we're looking at now is an example of the  
25 visitation to the park in 2017. Commission members who were here in September will  
26 recall that we saw this previously. If you look at the second blue column, you'll see the  
27 total number of visitors for the year at 151,000, broken down by month. You can also see  
28 the number of people turned away from the park each month. It peaks at 500 people in  
29 one month with a total of 3,765 in 2017. You can also see the distribution of individuals  
30 by day of the week, by holiday, etc. That's on the right-hand side where you see the  
31 percentages. No surprise that Saturday and Sunday by far bear the brunt of visitation. As  
32 expected, May, June, July, August are by far our peak months. We have a couple of  
33 shoulder months, and we have low months over the winter. This slide is an attempt to  
34 give folks a sense for where we've been and where we are currently, where we might be  
35 with the pilot program. The blue curve reflects the actual 2017 numbers. The orange  
36 curve reflects what I would say is the outer bound of the pilot. I've tried to be very  
37 conservative in drawing this, to overcount how many people might be accessing the park  
38 with respect to the pilot. That's what the orange line reflects, that outer bound. The red  
39 line is the curve at the level of 1,000 visitors per day, which was the approximate historic  
40 peak level visitation going back to the 1970s. The red curve is adjusted to reflect the





1 same month-by-month distribution as 2017, as if you took the 370,000 people who were  
2 visiting in the 1970s and distributed it on the same baseline as in 2017. This goes along  
3 with what I just said about the orange curve being fairly conservative from my  
4 perspective. With the implementation of this pilot, it's possible that weekday visitation  
5 will actually decrease because individuals will now be encouraged and required even to  
6 obtain passes, who are presently potentially accessing the park without paying a \$6  
7 nonresident fee. That's one aspect of a way in which this pilot could see effects across  
8 the board. We might see weekday visitation go down. We could see weekend visitation  
9 potentially go up. The purpose of the pilot, from my perspective, is to track that and  
10 learn what we can over the course of a year. One last example. We have the red line  
11 reflecting an average of 1,000 people per day, again that historic high point. You have  
12 the blue bars, which reflect actual visits in these three months. The orange is the outer  
13 bound for the pilot. January 2017 is the first month. January is typically a low month for  
14 us. June 2010 a higher month. November 2014 again a higher month. With that, it  
15 probably makes sense, Don, to take any clarifying questions from the Commission and  
16 then any public comment.

17 Chair McDougall: I think I'd like to go with public comment first, and then we can have  
18 a full and open discussion. I'd like to start with Geoff Paulsen. I don't have an awful lot  
19 of speakers here, but I will limit all the speakers to 3 minutes.

20 Mr. Paulsen: Mr. Chair, members of the Commission, and Daren, thank you for all your  
21 work on this, especially the ad hoc committee. My name is Geoff Paulsen. I grew up in  
22 Palo Alto. Actually, my name is Geoffrey Lee Paulsen. I'm a grandson of the Lees who  
23 negotiated the sale of Foothills Park. I have seven items, all starting with "P." I'll try to  
24 be short. I want to talk a little bit about the purchase. My grandparents bought 2,400  
25 acres in the Palo Alto Foothills off the courthouse steps during World War II for \$42,000.  
26 That calculates to \$18 an acre, if we can believe that. Anyway, my grandfather wanted to  
27 develop it as an intensive development, a horse-oriented housing development. He built  
28 the barn, which was the first phase. That's now the interpretive center. My grandmother  
29 was friends with Josephine Duveneck and needed a plant nursery. She put her foot down  
30 and said, "I own every other acre, and I will not sell." My grandfather was stubborn, but  
31 she was more so. Thanks to her, we have Foothills Park. She didn't want the park named  
32 after her, but residents only did not enter into the equation. What did enter into the  
33 equation was an enemy of my grandfather. A personal enemy—I don't know the exact  
34 origin of the animosity—objected to the City Council's decision to purchase the land and  
35 said, "You can't spend this much money without a vote of the people." That was the  
36 issue that brought it to a vote. That was told to me by my uncle. The purchase really  
37 didn't have anything to do with the residents only. The payment issue about the City  
38 going to other cities and asking for money, the neighboring cities, especially Portola  
39 Valley and Los Altos Hills, Woodside, are wealthy communities with a minimal city  
40 government. They really don't want to spend much money on city government. Their

1 governments couldn't afford to contribute. Palo Alto, having the foresight to develop its  
2 Utility Department with its income, was able to do so. For that, I'm very thankful. There  
3 are issues about protection. People say if you allow nonresidents, it's going to hurt the  
4 park's ecology. I was a Ranger at the park for seven years. The real impact is a 12-acre  
5 mowed turf, an artificial lake, and great big areas that were developed as road cuts for  
6 what was going to be an intensive visitor plan with a hilltop restaurant, lakeside boat  
7 rental, elephant trains, very intensive use. There was a lot of damage done to the park  
8 before the first Superintendent put a stop to that. That's where the real ecological damage  
9 is. A few more footsteps are not going to damage the ecology. I have a degree in natural  
10 resources planning, so I understand about these issues. There's also the issue of  
11 prejudice. Mr. Sujimoto [phonetic] in his excellent paper really dwells more on that. The  
12 issue of redlining does enter in. The issue of justice enters into this decision as does Palo  
13 Alto's public image. I read through the comments over the years. One of the comments  
14 was "it's okay to be selfish once in a while, isn't it?" It really isn't, but that's the  
15 perception that a lot of people have of Palo Alto. Palo Alto is a great city, but there's this  
16 perception of selfishness. This would be a great move to help Palo Alto's public image.  
17 The sixth thing is process. Having a master's in public administration and having spent  
18 my career in government, having chaired the Parks and Rec and the Planning  
19 Commissions in Cupertino, I understand about process. I applaud your efforts. I know  
20 that any change like this is a process. You can't do it all at once. I really appreciate your  
21 efforts and applaud the thoughtfulness and the steps that you've taken. The last item is  
22 patience. Leo Tolstoy said the greatest two warriors are these: time and patience. We've  
23 been kicking around this issue for 60 years, and it's on my bucket list to see something  
24 done. I don't have another 60 years obviously, but I really hope that we can move this  
25 issue forward with thoughtfulness but also with deliberation and with certainty. Thank  
26 you.

27 Chair McDougall: Thank you, thank you very much. The next speaker would be Cody  
28 Einfalt.

29 Cody Einfalt: Good evening, members of the Commission. My name is Cody Einfalt,  
30 and I'm here as both the Management Analyst for the Town of Los Altos Hills as well as  
31 a resident of Palo Alto in the College Terrace neighborhood. In both of these positions, I  
32 would like to show support for the pilot entrance program to Foothills Park and let the  
33 Commission know that the Town of Los Altos Hills is committed to working with the  
34 City of Palo Alto in this pilot program to allow a mutually beneficial partnership between  
35 our two municipalities. Allowed entrance to this park has been a goal for our City  
36 Council this year, and we're happy to see this process move forward. If the Commission  
37 should have any questions about Los Altos Hills' involvement with this pilot program, I  
38 could extend myself to be there for those questions. That point when you were talking  
39 about the online question about what city the people would be purchasing those tickets  
40 from, I think you had said something about that. I think it would be really interesting to



1 see how many Los Altos Hills residents are actually buying those tickets. For those  
2 residents near Page Mill and Buena Vista and Central Drive, it's right next door. I'd be  
3 curious to see how many buy those tickets. Thank you.

4 Chair McDougall: Thank you for being here. Thank you for your presentation. Shani  
5 Kleinhaus.

6 Ms. Kleinhaus: When a public agency takes a step that could have significant impacts to  
7 the environment, they have to do CEQA. I understand that you think that the pilot project  
8 will not have significant impacts, but I think this needs to be a public process. It needs to  
9 have a Mitigated Negative Declaration. It needs to have a clear and public mitigation and  
10 monitoring plan. I don't have distrust in our staff. Our staff in Palo Alto is excellent, and  
11 they do an excellent job there. However, this needs to go to a Mitigated Negative  
12 Declaration. Things happen again and again in this City when we do something and have  
13 to apologize later. This needs to have a Mitigated Negative Declaration, and it can show  
14 that every possible impact can be mitigated and how with a very, very public and clear  
15 process. I have suggested before and think still that the best way to go is people who  
16 want to visit, if it's a school group, they have a teacher with them, somebody's monitoring  
17 them. If it's a different kind of group, they have to have somebody who has some  
18 training or some permission from the City to lead the group into that park. When we  
19 have people just going to party or to do a barbecue, that is to me something that we don't  
20 need to provide. There are so many parks in Palo Alto where people can do that and  
21 elsewhere. Speaking as a Palo Alto resident, I don't think the \$6 will cover very much.  
22 When we look at comparables, the comparables are Mid-Pen or other organizations that  
23 have a lot of people visit. They get enough money with \$6 from a lot of people. Here are  
24 50 certificates a day, maybe eight people. It's max 400 people a day, but that's not going  
25 to cover any of the need for Rangers and for people to actually see what's going on there.  
26 We have two Rangers in the entire City, I think. This is the best opportunity to justify  
27 getting a little more eyes on our treasures. \$6 may make it very accessible, but it's not  
28 going to help the City. This was the chance that our park system can have, if we're going  
29 to do more for people, to actually try and recoup more or at least estimate what is it going  
30 to cost us and acknowledge \$6 a day per vehicle, 50 vehicles, is not going to make a  
31 difference. Education programs not just for children—I work for Audubon, and we have  
32 groups that go all over the place to watch birds. They would love to go there. I don't  
33 think that should not be allowed, but they should have a certain level of somebody in that  
34 group having some sort of certificate that it's okay for them to bring a group in. I can see  
35 teachers having that. That's usually pretty easy. Just having open access to all without a  
36 mitigation plan and a monitoring plan, even if it's a pilot project, you need that. For  
37 CEQA, the baseline is what is happening now, not the 1,000 people that are allowed to  
38 visit right now. The fewer people that are actually visiting is the baseline, and that's what  
39 we have now. When you look at how many more people you want to let in, you have to

1 do CEQA on that. It has to have a clear and publicly available mitigation and monitoring  
2 plan. Thank you.

3 Chair McDougall: Thank you. Uji Sujimoto [phonetic].

4 Uji Sujimoto: Hi. My name is Uji Sujimoto. I'm a senior at Stanford University, and I'm  
5 one of many people that have been turned away at the gates of Foothill Park. I've done  
6 significant historical research on the origins of this rule. You can read my paper. It's on  
7 the desk if you'd like. I believe that this rule perpetuates a legacy of exclusion that Palo  
8 Alto has been trying to move away from. It is a park after all. I can't list another park off  
9 the top of my head that has a rule like this. As a town that strives to be an open, inclusive  
10 environment and leader within the Bay Area, it seems backwards that we have a rule on a  
11 park that doesn't let anyone except the residents enter. I served as an outdoor associate at  
12 Stanford, so I understand the argument that could be made for environmental protections.  
13 Environmental protection doesn't have to go hand-in-hand with this exclusion. As was  
14 listed, someone has done the research that says 1,000 people a day is fine. We shouldn't  
15 be excluding that number to just the residents of Palo Alto. We should be opening it up  
16 to others. Also, in my time at Stanford, I volunteered for an organization called SOOP,  
17 the Stanford Outdoor Outreach Program. Within this program, we bring students from  
18 areas such as East Palo Alto to camping and hiking trips. For most of our camping  
19 endeavors, we go all the way to Henry Willard Coe State Park in Gilroy, which is pretty  
20 far. It's hard to get resources from Stanford to take students to these areas. Having the  
21 opportunity to use Foothills Park would expand our ability to bring more students for  
22 these kinds of programs. In the end, this proposal is a really great way of opening this  
23 park to more people.

24 Chair McDougall: Thank you. Our final speaker, Leland Levy.

25 Leland Levy: Thank you. A previous speaker mentioned that this problem has been  
26 bedeviling Palo Alto for some 60 years. I came here 52 years ago, and it's certainly been  
27 around since then. Over that time, I've taken a great deal of pride in all the services that  
28 Palo Alto offers, particularly the recreation and park facilities that we have. I've used  
29 them intently over that time. I've also used the facilities in San Mateo County and  
30 adjacent counties and communities. They've been open to me, and it's been a great  
31 source of pride that this greater area offers all of this to members of our community. The  
32 one source of embarrassment has been the fact that Foothill Park was exclusive. I  
33 justified that on the basis that we needed to watch the environmental development of the  
34 area. We didn't want it to be overcrowded and overused. I'm delighted with the work  
35 that the committee and the Recreation Department has done over the past year with this  
36 issue to look at the actual usage of the park and to see what, in fact, we can do to open the  
37 park without seeing its deterioration. The park usage, as the data showed, is now about  
38 half of what it was in the early years when I first came to Palo Alto. That means there's

1 ample room, if we manage it properly, to allow many others including residents of Palo  
2 Alto. The pilot program that is in front of you seems to do that very well. It manages  
3 overuse. It watches overcrowding. It allows reasonable nonresident use. More  
4 importantly, I think it's going to keep an eye on what we do up there to make sure that the  
5 area does not deteriorate environmentally. I hope that you approve the pilot program and  
6 that over the next year or two or three we all watch very carefully what is going on in  
7 Foothill Park to make sure it continues to be one of the bright lights of Palo Alto and of  
8 this area. Thanks very much.

9 Chair McDougall: Thank you. Thank you for being here. With that, the first thing I'd  
10 like to do is give—if there are any clarification points, not so much selling points but  
11 clarification points on any of the public comments that were made that Ryan or Jeff  
12 would like to respond to.

13 Commissioner McCauley: With respect to the comment about CEQA, as it concerns any  
14 proposal that goes to the Council, it goes through a review process that includes a review  
15 by Planning, by Legal, and other teams in addition to the Community Services  
16 Department. As it goes through that process, they make decisions about what they think  
17 is necessary for Council consideration before implementation of a program. That's the  
18 point at which CEQA would be considered. It would go through the ordinary process as  
19 anything else would on its way to the Council. I wanted to emphasize the number of  
20 people that are expected. The idea is that for operational efficiency we would have one  
21 pass per vehicle. When we look at the historic trends from 60 years essentially, we've got  
22 really good numbers on how many people come in each vehicle. It's 1.5 people on  
23 average on a weekday per vehicle and 2.7 on average on a weekend. That's how we came  
24 up with these numbers. While it is possible that a passenger vehicle might carry as many  
25 as eight people in a minivan, it's not that likely given what we've seen over this many  
26 years.

27 Chair McDougall: I'm going to open it up to the Commission for comment. Since we've  
28 discussed this before, I'm going to suggest that everybody turn to page 5 of the document  
29 that we have. There's a recommendation there. The expectation is we would turn that  
30 recommendation into a motion. The recommendation is that the PRC recommends the  
31 City Council direct the manager and staff, etc., to move forward with the pilot project and  
32 amend Municipal Code as attached in Enclosure A. What I'd really like is to have the  
33 comments directed to are you prepared to accept this or something similar to this as we  
34 modify it or are there major things that would cause you not to accept this as opposed to  
35 rattling through all the things that we've talked about before. We've heard from Ryan.  
36 I'll ask Jeff if he has anything else to say. He says no. I know that Jeff Greenfield was on  
37 the ad hoc as well. I'll give him the opportunity to comment.

1 Vice Chair Greenfield: I did first want to clarify that I have been part of the Foothills  
2 Park ad hoc that's worked on this project for quite some time on the pilot proposal.  
3 Based on some more recent changes to the proposal, I wasn't completely comfortable  
4 recommending this project to the full Commission, and I expressed this cordially to Jeff  
5 and Ryan at our last meeting and split off from the group after it. I believe the project has  
6 many significant merits. Opening Foothills Park to nonresidents is a worthy goal for the  
7 inclusivity aspects among many others. Changing the violations from a misdemeanor to  
8 an infraction is a very important action. We should be recommending to make this a  
9 permanent action independent of what we act on as far as the pilot program. I appreciate  
10 that accommodations have been made to try to limit user experience and environmental  
11 impacts of the pilot program. The project and the concept continue to evolve. More  
12 recently, the field trip enhancements are a positive. I do feel like a primary focus of the  
13 project has changed, diluting the prioritized access for PAUSD and neighboring students  
14 and their families, environmental volunteers, and underserved communities. I know  
15 there's aspects within the program to try and give priority, but I think it's complicated in  
16 terms of how this works out. I also have concerns about charging a modest entrance fee  
17 for nonresidents only. I recognize that cost recovery is important; yet, we're propagating  
18 a tiered structure as part of a plan to reduce barriers. It seems like we're going in opposite  
19 directions on that. I have concerns with that. That's exemplary of my overall opinion of  
20 the project. There's a lot of positive goals we're striving to achieve. I don't feel like  
21 we've hit the right balance of how to move forward to achieve some modest goals. The  
22 scope of this pilot is very modest. Maybe that's a problem in itself, but there is a lot of  
23 push and pull. I've been struggling to balance these back and forth. I'm struggling with  
24 the balance. The plan is a step in the right direction and offers many positives, starting  
25 with the community dialog, which has been initiated. This has been very beneficial, and  
26 I've learned a lot in the process. As I mentioned before, we should permanently change  
27 the entry violation to an infraction. That's the least controversial aspect of this entire  
28 project, and that should be done permanently. This is a complex issue for our community  
29 with many paradoxes as I'm articulating. Many support opening Foothills Park; yet, this  
30 is a divisive issue within the community, which many don't support. On the other hand,  
31 many who don't support the overall opening of Foothills Park could live with this pilot  
32 program, if you go along with it. As much as we've tried, the plan remains too  
33 complicated rather than simple. It's not easy to communicate or understand all the  
34 variances, and it continues to grow in different directions. Not to suggest it's an easy  
35 task, it's not. I've been alongside these guys for many months, and I applaud their efforts.  
36 I've solicited a range of community feedback and heard a variety of opinions from a lot of  
37 people I respect and a lot of people I haven't known and new opinions and new people to  
38 me. For me, it's not clear that there's a plan proposal, which I'm comfortable in  
39 promoting to City Council, at this point. I believe the plan underestimates the cost to the  
40 City, both the costs incurred and moving forward, in terms of staff time. Certainly, there  
41 will be incremental costs regarding staff time, and suggesting that costs may be incurred  
42 just doesn't wash right with me. It's going to happen, and this is at the expense of



1 prioritizing the use of staff resources on other projects. In its current state, the plan will  
2 entail significant Council and staff time to review and implement. The CEQA MND  
3 issue is just one possible example. Looking at the 1,000-person limit to the park, I think  
4 we're going to be well under that, which is important. That's a concurrent visitor number.  
5 I think we don't want to approach that number often, if at all. It's a positive that this  
6 project is going to be well under that. Overall, given that this project is a Parks and Rec  
7 initiative rather than a Council directive or a staff proposal, I think it's particularly  
8 important to have something very solid and complete to give to Council. Broad  
9 community support is important. There is a lot of community support, but there's also  
10 varying opinions on that. Having a straightforward plan to communicate and understand  
11 the why and how of what we're doing is important. I'm struggling with that. At the same  
12 time, I'm torn because there's a lot of good reasons to do this. That's basically my mixed  
13 feelings on this that I'd like to share.

14 Chair McDougall: Thank you. I'm going to allow other Commission members to  
15 comment. I'll start with Keith.

16 Commissioner Reckdahl: I have some questions for Daren. If this is passed by the  
17 Council, you're planning to staff seven days a week at the front gate?

18 Mr. Anderson: No. We wouldn't be able to do that with our existing staff. It would  
19 remain as-is, periodic staffing Monday through Friday, but staffed on weekends and  
20 holidays.

21 Commissioner Reckdahl: The Council would have to make that determination. If they  
22 wanted to staff it, they'd have to give you some extra money for that.

23 Mr. Anderson: Yeah, we'd need more staff.

24 Commissioner Reckdahl: It's not just a money issue; it's also a manpower issue.

25 Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

26 Commissioner Reckdahl: That's a good point. The entry fee, the \$6 per car, where  
27 would that go? Would that go to the General Fund?

28 Mr. Anderson: It would.

29 Commissioner Reckdahl: We don't get that rebated next year? It just goes into the ...

30 Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

31 Commissioner Reckdahl: If we do have cost recovery, it really is very indirect.

1 Mr. Anderson: I think that's correct.

2 Commissioner Reckdahl: What about CEQA? Do you think something like this,  
3 opening the park to nonresidents, would require CEQA?

4 Mr. Anderson: I think it's possible. The next step is to go to Planning and ask them to  
5 present the pilot. As Commissioner McCauley has mentioned, that's built into our CMR  
6 process, City Manager Report. Before it gets to Council, it has a series of reviews, and  
7 Legal and Planning are some of them.

8 Commissioner Reckdahl: Our Planning staff will make the determination whether we  
9 need CEQA or not.

10 Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

11 Commissioner Reckdahl: You think it's a coin flip?

12 Mr. Anderson: I'm not qualified to say. I get different answers to different projects from  
13 Planning, and it seems to change. I don't think I could guess.

14 Commissioner Reckdahl: I do share some of Jeff's concerns. This is not without risk.  
15 Overall, it's worth the risk. I will be supporting this. Foothills Park is a special place,  
16 and I have faith that staff will monitor its conditions and keep it a special place. I'm  
17 concerned both about nature but also about we have allocated right now ten spots for  
18 school children. If those are routinely used up, I want to make sure that we extend that to  
19 maximize the chance that the school children get in. That was one of the focuses for our  
20 opening this up.

21 Commissioner Moss: I too feel Commissioner Greenfield's concerns. This is not any old  
22 City park. We have open space, and we have urban parks. Even the open space, if you  
23 look at all of the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space preserves, none of them have  
24 picnic tables or lakes where you can rent a canoe. This is a special place that's  
25 somewhere in-between. Going back to one of the speakers, 60 years we've never had  
26 1,000 people in a day. Over that 60 years, the park has become more of a respite for  
27 wildlife and for peace and quiet compared to other open spaces and other urban parks. I  
28 never want it to be like Rancho San Antonio, which is overrun by people. I'm torn. How  
29 do you preserve that, and how do you be more inclusive and how do you let more people  
30 in? The other thing that's really important goes back to what Commissioner LaMere said.  
31 There's an educational component. If you want future environmentalists, future people  
32 who are going to help us preserve the environment, you have to get them into the parks.  
33 You just can't do it in an urban park. You have to do it in a quiet place. How do you  
34 preserve it, yet share it and have this educational component? That's why even though  
35 there are many flaws or many issues that have to be worked through with this pilot



1 program, I feel that something has to be done. You want to get more kids in. You want  
2 to get more groups in. You want to get more volunteers, more docents, more trained  
3 student volunteers who can lead groups and share this gem. How do you do all that? I do  
4 feel that there are many people who want to picnic. They want to picnic in nature. They  
5 want to be near that lake. I don't think the lake can handle 100 people around it at any  
6 point in time. If you have picnic tables everywhere and there's people there all the time,  
7 the environment needs rest time. The animals need to be able to come back there. If you  
8 have 100 people around that lake, you're not going to get many ducks in that lake. If you  
9 look at Shoreline Lake, there are many ducks and many people. We have room to grow.  
10 I want to see this pilot program move forward despite its flaws, despite its issues but  
11 work through them. I'd like to first see staff do a bio blitz. They've done a number of  
12 them. I would like to see a CEQA, something to have a baseline as to what this park is  
13 now. Not what it was 60 years ago or 100 years ago, but what it's become over the last  
14 50 years. I'd like a baseline, and then I'd like to see what impact we do have from this  
15 pilot. We love to see the data with the numbers of people. I would like to see some data  
16 that has more to do with species as well. I have many more things, but that's enough for  
17 now.

18 Commissioner Cribbs: Thank you very much. I'd really like to again acknowledge the  
19 people who have worked so hard on this, the ad hoc committee, and the community and  
20 certainly the staff from the Recreation Department and also from the other groups in the  
21 City. I've been here since 1960, and I know this has been a topic, as former Mayor Levy  
22 said, that has been up and down and up and down. We've had a lot of discussions about  
23 it. I'm very proud that we're sitting here tonight talking about moving this on to the  
24 Council with our recommendation. I think it's a really important thing to do. We live in  
25 a region, not a tiny city. We're not a stan; we are part of the Greater Bay Area. Former  
26 Mayor Levy said it very well when he said this has been an embarrassment to say, "I'm a  
27 Palo Alto resident, and by the way we have a park that we won't let you come into." I'd  
28 really like to see us move this along. I understand that it's complicated. I really share,  
29 Jeff, your thoughts about it. I really appreciate your talking about it the way that you did  
30 because clearly there are a lot of conflicts. Working together, we can resolve this. It's  
31 really important to let our Commission voice be known and say, "We believe this is the  
32 right thing to do. It's the right time in the community. Let's see if we can work together  
33 to make it work."

34 Chair McDougall: I think everybody's had a chance to talk. I appreciate the candidness  
35 of giving an indication of what direction you're thinking and the completeness of all of  
36 the thoughts. We have to remember we have an action here. The action item is going to  
37 require us to (inaudible). We need to go back to looking at this statement and see if we  
38 can create a motion that would address some of the concerns I've heard. I would like to  
39 suggest that we have a motion that says something like, "the PRC asks" and put in a  
40 specific date, by December 15, so that we're not just agreeing to do this and then we don't

1 do it until some date or it just doesn't happen, and that we ask City Council to propose to  
2 City Manager and staff—maybe Council Member Cormack can help with that a little  
3 bit—that we commit to a process to implement the pilot process. What I'm hearing is we  
4 need to accept the fact that there is a process. The process will involve staff work. The  
5 process will involve CEQA or whatever. We can't simply ignore the fact that we just tell  
6 them to do it, and they run out and do it. We need to have a commitment to a process  
7 that would implement a pilot project. If we're going to commit to a process, we should  
8 say that it's including the timeframe for the pilot so that a process to commit to a pilot  
9 within the next six months or something. That may be impossible, but we'd define a  
10 timeframe and commit to both baseline and follow-up reporting. We don't need to define  
11 what that reporting is. We may all be sitting here with ideas of what the reporting needs  
12 to be, but we've got some evidence, and public and Commission have confidence that  
13 staff can figure out what the baseline and measurements are. We should say that we want  
14 to have a baseline and qualitative and quantitative measurements. The motion should on  
15 top of that be basically as defined in the key parameters of the November 12 report that  
16 we have in front of us. I would further suggest that there should be a statement in there  
17 that in parallel the City should be encouraging volunteer organizations to participate with  
18 them in the pilot. If we said all those things, we'd be doing a pretty good job of defining  
19 the parameters, making it clear that we would like to see the park open, and we'd like to  
20 do it responsibly, but we'd like to do it. We're having a pilot, and we're having  
21 measurement, and we're having reporting, and we're dealing with the fact that there's  
22 process. I'd really like a motion that's consistent with what I've just said, or we sit here  
23 and work out the exact wording of that. That's where I'm at. I have notes, and I can talk  
24 about why I think we should do this and why it's good for the City and why it's good for  
25 the park, and why it's good for the people. At some early point when I was on the  
26 Commission, I was involved in a thing where it was ask a bunch of people what they like  
27 about Palo Alto. Was it the trees, the park, the libraries? One wise person said, "Palo  
28 Alto is a good place because of the people." The people are good, and the people deserve  
29 and need parks and park policies that are worthy of the good people. That's why I'd like  
30 to see us move ahead with that. I can wordsmith this, or we can get a motion. At this  
31 point, maybe I'll give Council Member Cormack a chance to say something while I try  
32 and recover from what I was saying.

33 Council Member Cormack: I want to be judicious in my comments. I'll repeat what I  
34 said a few months ago. I commend the subcommittee, the ad hoc, that's worked on this,  
35 the staff, the use of data, the ability to take what the Mayor and I both said, what is the  
36 problem we're trying to solve, and describe it beautifully. I honestly don't think this  
37 needs to be divisive. While it's a little complicated, I don't think it's complex. I mostly  
38 just want to commend the Commission for tackling something difficult in such a  
39 constructive manner.

1 Commissioner McCauley: I appreciate that it's part of the process, but the process has  
2 been a good one. It's led to a pretty decent consensus amongst the Commission members.  
3 I appreciate that it's not perfect by any means. It really does reflect the sense of the  
4 Commission, that we should do something here. This is a good approach because it's  
5 good policy. We're using the data, the information we have to try and structure the policy  
6 in a way that meets our goals. We have multiple goals, but the two big ones are  
7 ecological protection and providing people an opportunity to experience the ecology. I  
8 realize those could be in tension, but they don't have to be. We've done a decent job here.  
9 Don, I appreciate everything you said about what exactly the motion should be. I have  
10 one concern. The Commission has talked about this at some length now for more than  
11 half a year. We've had a committee that has talked about it for more than a year. It's  
12 probably time for us to send something to the Council. I totally appreciate that the  
13 Council can do whatever it wants with that, and they will. If that means they want to  
14 send it back to us, so be it. It probably makes sense to send something to the Council that  
15 could be acted upon if that's what their desire is. What I had in mind as the motion would  
16 be that we recommend to the Council that it direct the City Manager and staff to move  
17 forward with the pilot project, amend the Palo Alto Municipal Code to allow that, and  
18 with respect to the document that we have before us, this report and recommendation, we  
19 direct the ad hoc to take into the account the comments received tonight and clarify the  
20 document where needed or perhaps some minor revisions and present that to the Council.

21 Chair McDougall: I'm going to suggest that it would be really hard to have a motion that  
22 said let's go forward with the motion we have but allow the ad hoc to go further define it.  
23 I'd like to ask the Commission's forbearance for two minutes to see if I could draft  
24 something that would accommodate that.

25 Commissioner Reckdahl: In the redlined version, the pilot and the resolution are added  
26 later by Legal. Is that the history of that?

27 Commissioner McCauley: That's right.

28 Commissioner Reckdahl: The purple was your original markup, and they ...

29 Commissioner McCauley: That's right.

30 Commissioner Reckdahl: Did they explain why they wanted the word pilot in there?

31 Mr. Anderson: Commissioner McCauley had specifically asked to take that word out,  
32 giving us more flexibility in the future. I reached out to the City Attorney and asked what  
33 his thoughts were. He thought for now let it reflect what the true proposal is, which is a  
34 pilot. If Council chooses to make it go on in perpetuity, they have that right even though  
35 it says pilot. The discretion is the Council's to do what they want with the length of

1 whatever you want to implement. He thought it would be best to reflect pilot in the  
2 wording.

3 Commissioner Moss: Daren, can you clarify one more time the additional costs? You  
4 have a certain budget now. You'll need more staff in the future. The \$6 is going to cover  
5 a part of that. Can you be more specific about the additional costs because the Council  
6 will want that. If we propose this proposal, that's probably the second or maybe the third  
7 question they're going to ask us, what is the impact on you and how much is it going to  
8 cost.

9 Mr. Anderson: I think the wisdom of this proposal is that we can control how many  
10 people are coming in or at least do our best effort to do so. My understanding through  
11 our discussions is that would be framed in such a way that we would not be asking  
12 Council for additional staffing. If the proposal changed shape or proves unmanageable  
13 with what we've got, I would come back not at the end of the pilot but in the middle or  
14 whenever it becomes apparent to both the Commission and ultimately Council to say,  
15 "This is what we're experiencing. Staff doesn't seem adequate for this." From what I've  
16 heard and the way we'd manage this, it seems to me we'd manage it with existing  
17 resources. To your question about other costs, some of them will probably be more clear  
18 once we've begun. As I looked at those previous years, where our numbers were 50,000  
19 greater than what they are typically, that anomaly year where we had 200,000 compared  
20 to our 150 normal over the last decade, we didn't have an increase in funding during that  
21 year. There were 50,000 additional visitors, and we didn't have extra costs. Some of  
22 those things might not be readily visible or apparent right away. It might be over time.  
23 I'll be certainly thinking about that very closely and trying to, as I'm providing data back  
24 to the Commission and Council and community, have it be reflective of everything,  
25 including things that might come in the future in terms of increased costs, at least to the  
26 best of my ability.

27 Commissioner Moss: The costs are not just the Ranger at the front checking your access.  
28 Maybe the access should be electronic instead of a person, a card that you slap on the  
29 side. There's also the cost of fire management and trash and restrooms and that kind of  
30 stuff, which could go up or may not. I just want to make sure that you're going to be  
31 prepared for that. Volunteers, at least four of us have talked about the fact that we will  
32 need more volunteers, docents, or trained leaders, who can help introduce people to  
33 nature without overwhelming them on every trail. I don't know what part staff can play.  
34 Certainly, we need some kind of group that's going to manage volunteers. That's not  
35 insignificant.

36 Mr. Anderson: That's a fair point. The methodology we use now for that practice—not  
37 exclusively environmental education, but volunteerism and stewardship—is via  
38 partnerships with Grassroots Ecology. I think they'd be at the table as we brainstorm

1 ways to help new visitors learn more about the park and enjoy it in different ways. That'd  
2 be a great way, having Grassroots help to some degree. The amount that staff will be  
3 able to help with that is probably not great. We're already at our capacity in terms of  
4 what we do. There are things like bird walks and nature hikes, but it's not every day. It  
5 would be difficult to manage if we said every visitor is going to go to a Ranger-led  
6 program. I don't think that's practical.

7 Chair McDougall: I think I can speak for Environmental Volunteers in that we'd love to  
8 participate in something like that. I would like to suggest that we create a motion that  
9 says, "Move that the PRC submits a request to City Council to ask manager and staff to  
10 initiate the process including necessary environmental analysis for a pilot project as  
11 defined in the key parameters including base, ongoing, and final qualitative, quantitative  
12 measurements. PRC further recommends an amendment to the Municipal Code in  
13 Enclosure A and then the adoption pursuant thereto. PRC further recommends  
14 development of a robust volunteer program to support staff in Foothills during the pilot."

15 Mr. Anderson: Depending on the nature of that environmental analysis that you  
16 mentioned, that might be the kind of thing, especially if it's intended to meet certain  
17 CEQA requirements, that would not be staff-led. It would be a consultant that we hire.  
18 There would probably be a cost associated with that. Just to be transparent and let you  
19 know.

20 Chair McDougall: You don't disagree that there might or might not be that kind of  
21 requirement? I didn't even call out CEQA. I just said, "analysis as required." We can't  
22 define what happens at the next level. I'm going to ask for comments on my draft if you  
23 can remember what I said.

24 Vice Chair Greenfield: I'm wondering if there's a way to draft a proposal so that it could  
25 go straight to Council to approve the process of moving forward, thereby minimizing  
26 staff time prior to Council consideration. If I understand what Daren said previously, the  
27 process that we're looking at would go through the CMR, which sounds like it would  
28 incur a fair bit of additional staff time and perhaps go to the Planning Department. Is  
29 there a way to draft a recommendation that can go more directly to Council and minimize  
30 staff time in the process?

31 Mr. Anderson: My understanding in talking to the City Attorney—we had asked about  
32 the best methodology to convey the recommendation to Council and how we'd agendize  
33 it—is there would be a staff report, so it would go through that CMR process. The body  
34 of the report itself would be reflective of the memo that the ad hoc put together and their  
35 recommendation, but it would still go through that same process. Absent that  
36 recommendation, I don't have a methodology of how you'd do it otherwise. Perhaps a  
37 memo. The concern was a memo wouldn't be agendized for a discussion and run the risk  
38 of it not reaching the discussion level that the Commission wanted.

1 Chair McDougall: Are there any other comments or suggestions on my tentative draft?

2 Commissioner Reckdahl: On your wording, you said something about performing an  
3 environmental analysis. I would maybe say it "assess the need for an environmental  
4 analysis." We aren't saying you need it. We're not saying you don't need it. We think  
5 the Council should determine what's necessary.

6 Chair McDougall: To initiate the process including a discussion of?

7 Commissioner Reckdahl: Either the necessity for environmental analysis or an  
8 assessment of necessary analysis. Something like that.

9 Commissioner McCauley: If I might offer. One way to simplify it potentially would be  
10 to say "the PRC recommends that staff prepare the necessary materials for presentation of  
11 this issue to the Council, and that it be agendized by the Council with our  
12 recommendation that the pilot be implemented as laid out in this document." Baked into  
13 that would be everything that Daren has talked about as part of the City Manager review  
14 process, the determination of whether or not you need CEQA or whatever else. There are  
15 other hoops to be jumped through as well with the City Attorney's Office, etc., but that's  
16 all baked into the regular process, rather than calling out individual pieces.

17 Chair McDougall: I don't disagree with that. What are your words?

18 Commissioner McCauley: I would move that the PRC recommend to staff and the City  
19 Manager that they prepare a staff report to be presented and agendized for the City  
20 Council reflecting ...

21 Mr. Anderson: I'm typing it. I've got the Park and Recreation Commission recommends  
22 that staff and City Manager prepare a staff report. With the necessary materials?

23 Commissioner McCauley: Right. I think you could just say "prepare a staff report to be  
24 presented to the City Council and agendized"—feel free to clean up my poor verbiage  
25 there—"that reflects the Commission's recommendation that the pilot program be  
26 implemented including proposed amendments to the Municipal Code as set out in  
27 Enclosure A."

28 Vice Chair Greenfield: I want to make sure that we're careful that we're recommending  
29 and not directing staff. It's not the place of the Commission to be directing staff. While  
30 the goal of this body is to get this agendized at a Council meeting, we need to be careful  
31 that we're not directing staff to work to agendize this.

32 Chair McDougall: Does anybody else have comments on this?

1 Council Member Cormack: I wonder if the maker of the motion might consider having  
2 the words "Foothills Park" in it? I realize you're all spending a lot of time on this, but ...

3 Chair McDougall: Thank you.

4 Commissioner McCauley: Daren cleaned this up really well. If I could repeat it just for  
5 the benefit of the group.

6 Chair McDougall: In the request to staff, I still think the point that David and Keith and  
7 maybe others made as well that there be a specific measurement plan. Maybe you don't  
8 have to do what I said about measuring qualitative, quantitative, before and after. A pilot  
9 project including a measurement plan. I would like to say a pilot project including a  
10 measurement plan and a volunteer plan. That helps address specifically what the  
11 Commission members are asking about.

12 Mr. Anderson: Chair, may I ask for clarification on the volunteer program? Was this in  
13 the context of providing nature awareness opportunities or (crosstalk)?

14 Chair McDougall: Even if you said let's put a volunteer to staff the cabin 3 hours a day  
15 or 3 hours a week. It doesn't need to conclude a volunteer plan. It doesn't need to come  
16 up with—we need to have something that encourages partnership to address the issue of  
17 are we educating people or are we just letting them in and letting them run around and  
18 then leave and now they don't know anything more about nature than they did when they  
19 got there. Are we going to ask Kathleen to specifically talk to everybody there or are we  
20 going to see if we can get a volunteer? David's going to volunteer. I know that.

21 Commissioner Moss: One of the examples is young people picking wildflowers. There  
22 are some beautiful patches of wildflowers around in our mountain. Unless you educate  
23 people that you don't pick wildflowers, you won't have any wildflowers in the future. It's  
24 that stuff that we take for granted that you need to educate people.

25 Mr. Anderson: One of the best ways we can do that is the partnership with Grassroots  
26 and steering them towards volunteer programs. I led programs from Palo Alto as a  
27 Ranger for over a decade. By far, it was the best way to teach people and get them to  
28 care about nature.

29 Chair McDougall: It would just say volunteer program. We don't have to define is it  
30 Grassroots or Environmental Volunteers or McDougall and Moss in a nonprofit we just  
31 created to do that. It just needs to be in there. It is a concern, and it's easily covered.

32 Commissioner Reckdahl: If a school wants to go to the Baylands with a school trip, they  
33 call up the Rangers. Do you provide a Ranger for the school trips?

1 Mr. Anderson: No. Typically, it's done through John Aiken and the Junior Museum  
2 program where they have naturalists doing classes or tours. I guess it is a little more  
3 multifaceted because there are times that the Rangers will do that too, just to a lesser  
4 degree.

5 Commissioner Reckdahl: John coordinates some type of docent to go with the group?

6 Mr. Anderson: Yes.

7 Chair McDougall: Environmental Volunteers has three different programs, one of which  
8 is a snoop. You just go find stuff. You can do a snoop in your schoolyard, your  
9 backyard, or more interestingly in the Baylands. When you get to grade 5 level, they go  
10 out and take water samples at various locations and analyze the water that comes out of  
11 the purification plant versus the marsh versus the ocean. There are all these programs.  
12 There's no reason why you couldn't—we wouldn't go back and say to Environmental  
13 Volunteers, "Do the same thing. Let's walk these paths and figure out what we can  
14 interpret." It's all about interpretation and learning.

15 Commissioner Reckdahl: We'd anticipate that any school trips to Foothills Park would  
16 use the existing John Aikens or Environmental Volunteers or some existing program.

17 Mr. Anderson: As the ad hoc discussed it, we thought it would be best to filter through  
18 John Aiken. We could organize it and, if he partnered it out to different groups like the  
19 EVs, that would be fine too. John Aiken's group would be core.

20 Commissioner Moss: I would be okay with a science teacher from the school district or  
21 the Stanford students if they have a Biology 101 professor that goes along with a group of  
22 30 students. That's okay too.

23 Chair McDougall: Ryan, are you ready to read it back to us?

24 Commissioner McCauley: I've started to tweak it more significantly.

25 Council Member Cormack: May I make a suggestion? Sometimes on Council, we have  
26 it up on the board so everyone can see it. Not everyone is able to take in all the words by  
27 listening.

28 **MOTION**

29 Commissioner McCauley: My apologies. There's a lot of thought and consideration that  
30 has gone into the recommendation, but not enough into the language of the motion itself.  
31 Sorry for the hiccup. I would move that the Parks and Recreation Commission  
32 recommend that the City Council agendize the Commission's recommendation that the  
33 Foothills Park pilot program be implemented as set out in our November 12 report





1 including the proposed amendments to the Municipal Code that are set out in Enclosure  
2 A thereto and request that the City Manager and staff prepare their regular form of staff  
3 report and analysis to facilitate the Council's consideration of this recommendation.

4 Commissioner Moss: Can you add the word access between pilot and program? The  
5 Foothills Park pilot access program or access pilot program, whichever you prefer.

6 Commissioner McCauley: Absolutely okay.

7 Chair McDougall: Just to be clear. Ryan, you've read that as a motion?

8 Commissioner McCauley: Correct.

9 Chair McDougall: Do I have a second?

10 Commissioner LaMere: I will ...

11 Commissioner Moss: Second.

12 Commissioner LaMere: ... second it.

13 Chair McDougall: Jeff LaMere second. Do you want to speak to your motion, Ryan?

14 Commissioner McCauley: We've heard from ample supporters who have expressed this  
15 more eloquently than I can.

16 Chair McDougall: Would the seconder like to speak to the motion? Are there any other  
17 comments or questions about the motion?

18 Vice Chair Greenfield: I'd like to ask the Chair to have the motion considered in two  
19 parts, with each part voted on and recorded separately. Specifically, I'd like to request  
20 that the recommended revision that's referenced in the Muni Code section regarding the  
21 violation being changed to an infraction rather than a misdemeanor. It would make sense  
22 to have that voted on separately as a permanent change not associated with the pilot  
23 program. The other clarifications changing a person to a resident of the City and regular  
24 or part-time City employee, etc., that would make sense to leave it as well. I don't think  
25 this diminishes anything that's part of the pilot proposal, but it separates them since this  
26 should be done regardless of whether we move forward with a pilot proposal or not.  
27 Also, it should be considered separately by Council independently of what they think  
28 about moving forward with the pilot program.

29 Chair McDougall: What does the mover think about that?

1 Commissioner McCauley: I'm concerned that that introduces a level of complexity that  
2 we'd be suggesting two different sets of amendments to the Municipal Code. One would  
3 be that the pilot be allowed. The other would be that the violation of the subsection  
4 would be changed from a misdemeanor to an infraction. It makes more sense to have a  
5 single recommended revision to the Municipal Code.

6 Commissioner Moss: I agree.

7 Chair McDougall: I'm going to ask the seconder.

8 Commissioner LaMere: I agree with what Ryan just said.

9 Chair McDougall: Are there other comments or questions? We left out the measurement  
10 thing that seemed to make sense. If you're comfortable that that's covered in the regular  
11 form of staff report and analysis?

12 Commissioner McCauley: That's absolutely what's intended. It's also covered in this  
13 document as well.

14 Vice Chair Greenfield: Procedurally, I believe it's up to the Chair to decide whether or  
15 not the motion would be considered in two parts as opposed to the maker and second to  
16 the motion.

17 Chair McDougall: I appreciate that. The right steps would be to go ahead with the  
18 motion as we have it. Jeff, you spoke to simplicity. That was one of your major  
19 concerns. Ryan's response is that this makes it simple. I think we'll leave it simple by  
20 doing it all in this one thing. If that's the only comment at this point, I would say we vote  
21 on it all in one piece.

22 Commissioner Moss: What Commissioner Greenfield has said can certainly be a second  
23 motion. We could even bring it up next month.

24 Chair McDougall: Exactly. We could bring up a second motion.

25 Commissioner Moss: With discussion.

26 Chair McDougall: I would propose that we vote on the—Jeff, if you would like to do  
27 that, I would like you to make a motion with a seconder to amend this motion. That  
28 would be the proper procedure. It's not my decision. It's the Commission's decision.  
29 You should make a motion to amend it, and then we can vote on the amendment, and  
30 then we go back to the original.

31 Vice Chair Greenfield: I don't think I wish to make an amendment to the motion because  
32 that would effectively be splitting the motion into two separate motions. The appropriate

1 way to do this is to have this be a single motion considered in two parts as I  
2 recommended. It would be an appropriate message for unanimous support from the  
3 Commission regarding the section that I recommended splitting out. I'm not sure at this  
4 point if I can offer my vote for a unanimous record for the full proposal.

5 Chair McDougall: We're not making two separate motions. You would make a motion  
6 with a seconder to amend this motion. Then, we would go back to this motion. We're  
7 asking for the Commission to agree with you that we should change this motion, then  
8 we'll end up with two. If your motion passes, we'll end up with two. If your motion  
9 doesn't pass, we end up with this one. It's not my decision. It's a Commission decision.  
10 Would you like to make that motion?

11 Vice Chair Greenfield: No, I'm not going to make a motion to amend.

12 Chair McDougall: Then we need to vote on this motion. All in favor say aye. All  
13 opposed.

14 Vice Chair Greenfield: Nay.

15 Chair McDougall: The motion passes 6-1. I thank you all very much for your attention,  
16 your cooperation. I want to thank the people who have participated with us over the last  
17 several months as we've done this. I look forward to moving this forward. Thank you all  
18 very much. Now to on with the rest of our agenda.

19 **4. Other Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates**

20 Chair McDougall: Are there any further explanations or comments relative to the ad hoc  
21 report that we have here? Anything that anybody would like to add?

22 Commissioner McCauley: One quick note that I'll add for the park amenities. We are  
23 regularly hearing from our folks in support of dog parks. They were just in contact with  
24 Daren and me again this week. I'm going to try and catch up with Howard Hoffman and  
25 some of the folks who have been advocating for a dog park at Pardee Park and see what  
26 we can come up with in terms of finding some consensus on that issue too.

27 Chair McDougall: That brings up the point, the issue of green tags. Is that part of the  
28 conversation that you're looking into?

29 Commissioner McCauley: Yeah, absolutely.

30 Chair McDougall: That would be an important part of any kind of dog park discussion.  
31 If there are no other ad hoc comments, then ...

1 Commissioner Moss: I want to emphasize what Daren said earlier in his report that  
2 tomorrow at noon we're going to have the ribbon cutting for the pickleball courts.

3 **VI. TENTATIVE SPECIAL AGENDA FOR DECEMBER 10, 2019 MEETING**

4 Chair McDougall: Daren, I think we have at this point a pretty full agenda for the  
5 December 10 meeting. I don't know if you have that in front of you, if you want to  
6 mention what we think we have and see if Commission members have other things they'd  
7 like to add or subtract.

8 Mr. Anderson: We discussed having the aquatics and golf update at the December 10  
9 meeting. Most likely, depending on how the meeting goes on the 7.7 acres, that would be  
10 presented as well. The CIP update, where we're at, and potentially the GSI update from  
11 Public Works.

12 Chair McDougall: Anything else that people feel is a burning requirement for  
13 December? It's a very short time.

14 Vice Chair Greenfield: We should consider discussing Cubberley. The report has been  
15 released. There's a fairly short timeline for a response. We might need to consider that it  
16 takes priority over some of the items on the agenda. I agree that the meeting's getting  
17 very full.

18 Chair McDougall: That's a good suggestion. Maybe we can do something like have  
19 Kristen and the ad hoc report, so the energy goes into the ad hoc discussion. Maybe we  
20 can shorten a full Commission discussion on Cubberley. I would encourage everybody to  
21 read the report that's out right now. It looks like it's extremely well done. It's a point  
22 where there's enough meat to chew on.

23 **VII. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

24 Commissioner Cribbs: I understand we are going to maybe listen to that in December.  
25 In the meantime, at everybody's places I wanted you to see the information about Carole  
26 MacPherson, who will be retiring from the Rinconada Masters. The program is  
27 obviously near and dear to everybody's hearts, and a lot of people have been coached by  
28 Carole. She's made a tremendous statement in the community and had a tremendous  
29 effect on a lot of people, a lot of generations of people. She's being honored by the  
30 Pacific Masters Association in a couple of weeks at their meeting. All of the  
31 Commissioners, as I said before, are invited to her retirement party. She's been a real  
32 treasure to this community. I didn't want to have her go away—she's moving to  
33 Oregon—without commenting about how much she's given to everybody.

34 Commissioner Moss: When is that event?

1 Commissioner Cribbs: The party is at the Elks Club on Sunday, the 8th of December,  
2 from 1:00 to 4:00. I will make sure everybody gets an email invitation.

3 Chair McDougall: I don't know that the Commission can create a meaningful memo, but  
4 maybe we can encourage City Council to create something to recognize her.

5 Commissioner Cribbs: I think there's a Proclamation in the works that will recognize  
6 Carole.

7 Chair McDougall: Anything else that people would like to mention? I would like to  
8 mention one thing. I'm pretty sure that everybody is aware, but everybody should know  
9 that I've not applied for the Parks and Rec Commission for the next go-around partly and  
10 mostly because Mary and I will no longer be Palo Alto residents. Mary is moving to  
11 Burlingame to be with her grandchildren. I'm moving to Carmel to be with Point Lobos.  
12 Every once in a while, we'll probably visit one another. The time that I've spent with  
13 each and every one of you has been special. It's just been a great experience. The rapport  
14 from all of the staff and particularly Mr. Anderson has been outstanding. I want to thank  
15 you for that.

16 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

17 Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Reckdahl and second by Commissioner  
18 McCauley at 9:30 p.m. Motion passed 7-0