



**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
November 24, 2020
Virtual Conference
Palo Alto, California**

Commissioners Present: Chair Jeff Greenfield, Anne Cribbs, Jeff LaMere, David Moss, Jackie Olson, Keith Reckdahl

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Council Member Kou

Staff Present: Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Lam Do

I. ROLL CALL

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETION

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Lam Do: First up, we have one speaker, Monica Williams. Ms. Monica Williams: Thank you. Good evening, Commissioners and Chair Greenfield. I am Monica Engel Williams, President of the Palo Alto Pickleball Club. On behalf of our club members, I'd like to give you an update on the pickleball courts that were opened at Mitchell Park just a year ago. Thank you all for the support that you provided. The pickleball courts are massively popular and have become a daily destination and an amazing gathering place for the whole community. We're proud to have been accepted into the City of Palo Alto Co-Sponsorship Program for Nonprofit Organizations. To date, our total membership is 559, and 51 percent are Palo Alto residents. We reach out to teach youth and seniors through the City Recreation Department, the latest being a youth winter class starting in December, and our volunteers have offered team building sessions to City executives and staff. Our membership fees have enabled us to fund the installation of LED lights on the new pickleball courts and to also install a new gate to enable a safer flow of people during the COVID pandemic. We funded these upgrades by donating \$10,000 to the Adopt-A-Park program, and since 2019, our club has provided balls, paddles and portable nets for the community to use at a cost of over \$9,000. We're very grateful for the pickleball courts, because they are bringing much joy to so many people, but we do want to report three



1 problems that would be easy to fix. Current pickleball lines on the multi-purpose courts are
2 very hard to see and are confusing for beginning players or seniors with vision problems.
3 Painting the lines with a brighter color would solve this problem. Two, the current signs
4 on the courts are out of date and are very confusing to players, because they state that one-
5 and-a-quarter hours is allowed, when a pickleball game takes only 15 to 20 minutes. The
6 Board would like to offer suggestions for more appropriate signs for the pickleball courts,
7 ones that have been used successfully in other cities. The third problem is that evening
8 pickleball has become extremely popular, especially by young players, but we only have
9 the use of six courts after 3:00 p.m., because tennis players have priority use of the
10 multipurpose courts from 3:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. daily. We are in the process of collecting
11 data of evening activity, and on average we have about 40 pickleballers wanting to play,
12 but the six courts can only accommodate 24 people. The Board requests that pickleball be
13 given priority for all the courts on at least four nights a week. These three suggestions will
14 help improve pickleball play at Mitchell Park for the whole community. Please come out
15 and play with us soon. Thank you very much for your time.

16 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Monica. No more speakers, Lam?

17 Mr. Lam Do: That is correct.

18 **IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

19 Mr. Anderson: Good evening, Commissioners. In one of my previous department reports,
20 I had mentioned that Jazmin Leblanc had left the City. She moved on to a different job in
21 Santa Barbara, and I wanted to left you know that we have submitted a request to fill her
22 position. It's a vacant Senior Analyst position within Community Services, and that goes
23 to a Hiring Freeze Committee to review all positions right now, so I'm not certain it will
24 be approved, but I'll keep you in the loop as that one moves forward. I mentioned also
25 before, in passing, that the City is in the process of updating our websites. Community
26 Services is working on our pages. We don't have a date yet for beta testing or a go-live
27 date. It's taking a little longer than originally anticipated. Probably the first couple months
28 of the new year before we are ready to go live. We are starting to work on our Capital Plan
29 reviews and submittals. I'll be setting up a meeting with the CIP Ad Hoc to discuss next
30 steps and get Commissioner input in December. A little update on the limited stay-at-home
31 order that the State implemented, from 10:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m., and the ways it's impacted
32 the Parks Department. Rinconada and Mitchell Park tennis courts will close at 9:30 p.m.
33 They normally close at 10:00 p.m. This is to allow enough time for folks to get home, so
34 the lights will shut off early. The same with the field rentals at Stanford Palo Alto Playing
35 Fields and El Camino Park. They will close at 9:30 p.m. and lights will shut off at that time.
36 A JMZ update – John had shared some information I'd like to convey to you. That is, the
37 construction is nearly complete with the punch list items underway. The facility was turned
38 over to the City in August, with the majority of the operations having moved from

1 Cubberley to the new facility. There are 179 new animals that have been acquired since
2 July, including 27 birds, 2 mammals, 150 fish, with more scheduled through next spring,
3 and all animals undergo veterinary health screenings at the new site and then are
4 conditioned to their home and routine. Interactive exhibits are being installed in Exhibit
5 Hall, and work is expected to be completed in January. Studios have been installed in the
6 science labs in classrooms and are being used for in-school and at-home virtual science
7 lessons. Regarding the opening date, we're evaluating the appropriate time to open the
8 facility and take into the account COVID-19. We'll update you as we know more on that
9 one. I've got a couple updates on Foothills Park, the name change. On November 2nd,
10 Council had directed staff to pursue changing the name of Foothills Park to Foothills
11 Nature Preserve and to follow the City's naming policy. The process is to submit the name
12 change to the Palo Alto Historical Association and receive comment and evaluation, which
13 I have done, and 13 of the 18 members have voted, so they should be wrapping up that
14 process soon. They send an evaluation to me, and I will put a staff report together. It will
15 come to the Parks and Recreation Commission for your evaluation, and then you'll make
16 a recommendation to Council. Regarding Foothills Park and opening to the general public,
17 we understand there may be a referendum effort underway to nullify the City Council
18 approval to open the preserve to the general public, so it is possible that the opening won't
19 occur on December 17th as originally planned. However, we're continuing with our efforts
20 to prepare for the opening, to be ready, to make sure it's successful. During the Council
21 discussion on this topic, staff had mentioned several steps that we would take prior to
22 opening. One of them was to install a real time vehicle counter, which gives the Rangers a
23 little better technique to estimate how many people are in the park at any one time, as
24 opposed to the total count for the day, which is how we have it right now. That would
25 increase waste collection and that we would do improvements to the parking. Those efforts
26 are underway now. For opening day, we mentioned that we would have some support from
27 Community Services Recreation Special Event staff. It looks like we'll have two hourly
28 naturalists that have a little extra time, and we'll be using them in the beginning, that first
29 couple days and the first few weekends, as they're available, to help fill in and give some
30 extra support to the Rangers, and the Community Services Officers from the Police
31 Department would be able to help us, too, to help support the Rangers. Additionally, the
32 City Manager has pulled together a group of partnership groups, including Grassroots
33 Ecology, Friends of Foothills Park, the Environmental Volunteers, a Professor representing
34 Stanford University, and both our Chair and Vice Chair from this Commission, to discuss
35 ways of making the opening of Foothills Park a positive and welcoming experience. Some
36 of the ideas developed so far were suggestions from each group. For example, Grassroots
37 Ecology is willing to help with environmental monitoring. In fact, they have already some
38 of the monitoring with the help of their college interns, which was really great. They've
39 monitored the first 200 feet of trails to get baseline information on invasive species that
40 exist, and see if it changes over time with increased visitation. They mentioned that they've
41 got college and high school internship programs, where a small group of approximately ten
42 learn about the restoration process, and they are thinking of adding a middle school



1 program in the near future. This might be an opportunity for some of our newer park
2 visitors to join and get involved and learn about restoration. They're also planning a virtual
3 naturalist talk on Foothills Park sometime in January, another great way for people to learn
4 more about the natural environment within Foothills Park. It will be offered both in English
5 and Spanish. The Friends of Foothills Park, a long-tenured environmental group that
6 focuses on habitat restoration, are putting together a brochure on their stewardship
7 program, which staff will promote, put in our kiosk and help distribute to make sure people
8 can see it. They'll be continuing their regular Sunday, 9:00 a.m., meetings at Orchard Glen
9 Picnic Area, where they meet and discuss restoration plans, and they will welcome new
10 visitors to learn and participate and join the Friends if they would like to learn more about
11 their habitat restoration programs. The Environmental Volunteers will provide a mobile
12 interpretive tool, called a Wonder Cart that will help allow people to learn more about the
13 natural environment while being outside and socially distanced. They are going to do a
14 month – or quarterly, yet to be determined – nature program on some interesting feature of
15 Foothills Park, and they will create a site guide, which will be an online tool for people to
16 learn more about the preserve and how to prepare themselves to come and enjoy it. Lastly,
17 they've got a graphic designer who's working with City staff on a welcome banner for the
18 entrance to the preserve. I think one of the bigger outcomes that I really like for our last
19 discussion with this group was looking at the opening of Foothills Park as something spread
20 out over 2021, as opposed to just on December 17th, which is a thoughtful way of looking
21 at it. I should also note that the Ad Hoc and I have met to discuss items that the Council
22 had asked the Commission to work on. That includes the possible entry fee, visitor limit
23 capacity and other management and environmental studies. I need to meet again soon with
24 the Ad Hoc, but we make some good progress in discussing some of those issues, and I
25 think that would be coming to the full Commission sometime soon. A little update on the
26 Magical Bridge Playground. I'm just going to quickly recap the rules of the playground,
27 just so any people from the public hear the consistent message. The playground is open
28 Tuesday through Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., so it is closed Mondays and holidays, and
29 it will be closed this Thursday and Friday, both City holidays. The maximum capacity is
30 55 visitors with a limit to 30 minutes. Everyone two years and older who can wear mask
31 needs to wear one and maintain the six feet social distance between people from other
32 households. This is another important one – we don't allow food, beverage, toys or
33 cardboard boxes. We still have a lot of folks bringing cardboard boxes, which is a fun way
34 to slide down the synthetic turf and one of the slide areas inside the playground. Just a little
35 bit on the stats so far. We opened on November 17th, and we had 41 people for the day. By
36 Thursday, November 19th, we had 153 people. On Saturday we had 336, and on Sunday
37 413, so increasing in popularity, which is no surprise. We'll continue to monitor as the
38 word gets out perhaps the visitation increases, but we have other things that may affect
39 visitation. Of course, the weather being one, but I understand Redwood City would be
40 opening their Magical Bridge sometime soon, which may share the load a little bit of people
41 seeking a really inclusive playground like these. I should note that on the weekends, the
42 busier times, we did reach capacity a few times. That is, we had a line of people waiting to



1 get in, about 10 to 12 people. It didn't take long. They were cycling through fairly quickly,
2 but it is important to note we reached capacity, and there is the potential of folks having to
3 wait a little bit to get in. We talked a little bit earlier with an Ad Hoc about volunteers. So
4 far we haven't had volunteers yet, but we've got a list of folks who have completed the
5 necessary fingerprinting, and we'll be scheduling them soon, most likely on weekends, to
6 assist. Even without the volunteers, though, between staff and our contractors, we've
7 managed the crowds well, and people self-manage once inside the playground fairly well.
8 That concludes the Department report.

9 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Any questions from Commissioners regarding the
10 Department report? Okay, then we will move on to the business. Before we start, taking
11 into consideration where we are in the year, just a couple quick comments. It's been a
12 difficult year for everyone, just to state the obvious, but we have a lot to be thankful for,
13 that we are here where we are. I want to start by extending a big thank you to staff for all
14 they have done through this difficult time. Your dedication is something we always knew
15 was there, but it's really shown through in the past eight or nine months. We thank you. I
16 want to thank all the Commissioners, as well, and Council Members and our partners. The
17 community is very appreciative of all these efforts that help give us some extra outlets and
18 some things to do that have a few extra bright shining lights during these difficult times.
19 Certainly, our parks have been more well thought of than perhaps ever, and the
20 understanding of the importance of the parks has really been emphasized and brought to
21 the forefront. So I just wanted to thank you to everyone. We have a lot to be thankful for.

22 V. BUSINESS

23 1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the October 27, 2020 Parks and Recreation 24 Commission meeting

25 Approval of the draft Minutes was moved by Commissioner Moss and seconded by
26 Commissioner LaMere. Passed 6-0.

27 2. Rinconada Park Interpretive Solar System Update

28 Chair Greenfield: The next item of business is the Rinconada Park Interpretive Solar
29 System Update, something we're interested in hearing. Daren, could you please introduce
30 our speaker?

31 Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. My pleasure to introduce John Aikin. He's the Director
32 of the Junior Museum and Zoo. Thanks so much for being here tonight, John. Greatly
33 appreciate it. Mr. John Aikin: Good evening, Commissioners. It's an honor to be here. I'm
34 here to speak about the solar system model that's planned as an interpretive element in
35 Rinconada Park. The installation is part of the Rinconada long range plan, which calls for

1 exhibits and public art throughout the park. We called this exhibit Voyage, because we're
2 actually looking at purchasing an exhibit, an already-made exhibit. I'll tell you a little bit
3 more about it. It's called Voyage, in part because it was launched originally at the National
4 Mall in Washington, D.C. when the Voyager spacecraft was collecting information and
5 sending it back to the U.S. It's a one- to ten-billionth model of our solar system, spanning
6 about 2,000 feet. It was first installed at the National Air and Space Museum in
7 Washington, D.C., in the mall adjacent to the museum, and its production was managed by
8 the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education and the Arthur C. Clark
9 Institute for Space Education. I've got to say, those are great credentials. These people have
10 got contacts to make sure that their facts are absolutely correct and that the model is
11 accurate. There were prior installations, not just the one in Washington, D.C., but in Corpus
12 Christi, Texas; Houston, Texas; and Kansas City. In terms of budget, it's about a \$60,000
13 investment. That's because it's very well made. We are paying for it with a mix of funds
14 from Friends of the Junior Museum and Zoo, which have come up with \$20,000 for it, and
15 \$40,000 from our exhibits budget, because we are trying to coincide this installation with
16 the re-opening of the Junior Museum. Voyage is an amazing model because of its sense of
17 scale. It really shows you how small we are, and it celebrates what we know about earth
18 and space and our ability to know it. It reveals the true nature of human existence, six
19 billion souls occupying a tiny, fragile, beautiful world in vast space. It's an exhibition that
20 speaks to all humanity, and like all models, it develops a deep connection and
21 understanding to our world in the context of the greater universe. This one, anyway. As I
22 was saying earlier, the elements are really well-crafted, durable and beautiful. It's made
23 out of anodized aluminum so things don't rust. Very durable, graphic interface, and
24 essentially, most of the models of the planets and various elements are 3D models that are
25 a hologram inside crystals, so it has phenomenal details within it. It is a series of stanchions
26 that run a linear line, so we had to figure out exactly how we were going to install this, plus
27 the producer is very picky about its accuracy. They will not let you install it unless you are
28 absolutely accurate. They provided this overlay for us to look at maps of Rinconada Park
29 and find out within the orbits of each of the planets where they would coincide with
30 pathways so we could create this linear line. Just to kind of show you how particular they
31 are about accuracy, here is a table they've provided that lists the model objects – the sun
32 through Neptune on the left. Really, the focus of our conversation here is the last column,
33 the average distance in feet for the model, plus or minus. This is the error rate that you have
34 to be, say for earth, within 0.82 feet. In other words, like ten inches of the distance from
35 the sun. They're really trying for accuracy here. It's pretty amazing. We've laid out,
36 preliminarily, the inner solar system model here in this slide, in Rinconada Park. Let me
37 tell you what you're looking at, because this is kind of an odd view right now. You're
38 looking at the construction site for the Junior Museum a year ago. There aren't any updated
39 satellite images that I could find that were any earlier than a year. The Museum roof is this
40 gray roof here. This is the area where the Zoo is located and this is the wall that separates
41 the Zoo from Rinconada Park. This area is the entrance to Rinconada Park that will have a
42 circular plaza. The Girl Scout House is right here. In fact, you can see its brown roof right



1 there. Right next to the Girl Scout House, our promenade in front of the Junior Museum
2 intersects with the entrance to the park, and we're planning on putting the sun right there
3 and then clustering the planets nearby. This layout shows them in a sequence as you walk
4 into the park, with the inner solar system all, really, within that playground area to the park
5 entrance. As you get to the outer solar system, you add quite a bit more distance to it. Here
6 is our inner solar system, coming along here, and then you eventually get to Uranus, which
7 is right outside the pool. Then Neptune, which would be right outside the Rinconada
8 Library and across from the Arts Center. Pluto – we're debating whether or not to include
9 Pluto. Pluto is a subject of debate. It's no longer considered a planet. It's now a dwarf
10 planet, but if we include Pluto, it will be way out here by the composting area of the
11 Community Garden, right at the parking lot. What are our next steps? We will complete
12 the layout, hopefully by December of 2020, as Peter is finalizing and bringing it in to the
13 Park Improvement drawings for the contractor that they are about to go out and rebid that
14 project with us. The contractor for fabrication that we need to work with, or through, is the
15 National Center for Earth and Space Science. They manage all of the fabrication, and we
16 need to get into contract with them in January of 2021. The footings will be installed by
17 the Improvement Contractor, under Peter's watchful eyes, likely in March of 2021. Exhibit
18 installation will be done by the Junior Museum and Zoo's Exhibit Team, likely in July of
19 2021. That's all I really have to present, but I'd love to entertain questions that anybody
20 has.

21 Chair Greenfield: Thank you very much. That was a really interesting presentation. It
22 sounds like a really interesting project and sounds like it must have been a blast to work
23 on. Any Commissioners have some questions? Raise your hand, or I can call on you and
24 give everyone an opportunity to speak. Anyone want to speak first? Commissioner
25 Reckdahl.

26 Commissioner Reckdahl: I'm really excited about this. This looks like a very educational
27 and also a piece of art. A piece of art that teaches something is always the best combination.
28 You said these are very well-made. What is the lifespan that we expect out of them?

29 Mr. Aikin: These are typical exterior installations that are made out of these kinds of
30 materials can last decades. I would expect 30 years, is usually what we look at for this level
31 of quality.

32 Commissioner Reckdahl: And of that \$60,000 of the cost, how much of that is installation
33 and how much is actually buying it?

34 Mr. Aikin: Actually, \$35,000 is actually all of the pieces, and then there is shipping, and
35 we are doing some upgrades. I really should say, \$35,000 is the base price. You can buy
36 this for a little bit less expensive with a little bit less quality materials. We've chosen some
37 of the upgrades to make sure that the quality is there, so it's really the mix of the upgrades,

1 shipping and handling, and our Exhibits crew is doing the installation, so that's no cost.
2 The hardware is in the main budget, then the footings are part of the Park Improvement
3 budget that Peter is managing, because those will go in with the contractor and the pathway
4 installations.

5 Mr. Reckdahl: And will each planet have a full explanation, so if you stumble on one, you
6 know what it is?

7 Mr. Aikin: At the entrance, over here by the sun, there will be actually, and introduction
8 telling you that you are entering an exhibit, and then on the far side of Neptune, there will
9 be another introductory sign. I believe the graphics do also have a line that shows you
10 where you are in the sequence.

11 Mr. Reckdahl: Okay. It would be good, especially if you're sitting at Neptune, it may not
12 be obvious where Uranus and Saturn and Jupiter would be. There's a lot of different ways
13 to go between there and the Sun. I'm looking forward to this. Very good.

14 Mr. Aikin: Great. Thank you.

15 Chair Greenfield: Other Commissioners like to have an opportunity for questions or
16 comments? Commissioner Moss?

17 Commissioner Moss: This is pretty amazing. I didn't believe it would fit, but it looks like
18 you have shoehorned it in. When I drove by there over the weekend, I couldn't see where
19 the entrance to the Park was going to be, near the Junior Museum and Zoo, and now I can
20 see, there's a little path, very small path, between the parking lot and the Park, so that's
21 helpful. It looks good, it looks good. Thank you.

22 Mr. Aikin: Thank you.

23 Chair Greenfield: Commissioner Olson?

24 Commissioner Olson: I don't have any questions, but I am very much looking forward to
25 this as well. My kids are at the age where they just love the planets and exploring, so we
26 would love to participate as soon as it's open. Thank you.

27 Mr. Aikin: That's great. I might also mention that the original concept for a solar system
28 model in the Park came from the teaching staff at the Junior Museum and Zoo, because
29 they wanted to be able to take classes out and show them in full scale – excuse me, ten
30 billionth scale – a scale model of the solar system.

31 Chair Greenfield: Great. Commissioner LaMere?

1 Commissioner LaMere: I think this is a very cool project. Thank you so much for
2 spearheading this. With the installation – first of all, I’m assuming this is a permanent
3 exhibition? Is that correct?

4 Mr. Aikin: Correct.

5 Commissioner LaMere: Okay, and does it fall under any of the art covenants or anything
6 that we’ve looked at with our Parks planning in the past, where we’ve had to move
7 something, but it couldn’t be moved because it was an art installation? Is there anything
8 with that with this installation?

9 Mr. Aikin: My understanding is that it’s not public art. It’s just an exhibit installation, and
10 in the way we treat exhibits in the open space preserves and in the Junior Museum is that
11 they all have a life and eventually wear out and are replaced.

12 Commissioner LaMere: Okay. The porcelain enamel for the displays, I’m assuming that’s
13 long-lasting? I sometimes see signage that fades quickly or fades away before the
14 installation, so I imagine that has the same lifespan as what we expect with the other parts
15 of the installation?

16 Mr. Aikin: It does. One of the big issues with outdoor graphics is fading over time. We can
17 replace them if they do, but these have the same durability as freeway signs. It’s the same
18 process.

19 Commissioner LaMere: Do we anticipate any of the placements of, perhaps, Jupiter or any
20 of the other planets that would impact any of the usage of the grass field?

21 Mr. Aikin: I don’t think so. I think it’s likely that, depending on where Peter has got this
22 path laid out, I think what we would like to do is have the sequence in line with each other
23 enough that you can see to the next stanchion. I’ve drawn it here, but it may just curve in
24 further and be tucked in over this way. It just needs to be within the orbit.

25 Commissioner LaMere: Great. Thank you so much. This is going to be great when this gets
26 installed.

27 Mr. Aikin: Thank you.

28 Chair Greenfield: Vice Chair Cribbs?

29 Vice Chair Cribbs: Nothing to say. Thank you very much. I think it’s really exciting, as do
30 the rest of the Commissioners, and only leads to all the anticipation for the Junior Museum
31 to be opening as well, so very fun. Thank you so much.

32 Mr. Aikin: Thank you.

1 Chair Greenfield: I agree. This is very exciting and very interesting. Commissioner LaMere
2 touched on most of my question areas. I was kind of curious if Public Art funds can be
3 used for this, and I understand there's a good reason not to use Public Art funds so that we
4 have more control on the lifetime and replacement of the installation. Last question I have
5 is how will the fate of Pluto be decided?

6 Mr. Aikin: I think we'll be talking with Peter and the Museum staff about it. It was on our
7 original plans, and I noticed lately a draft that I saw, it was gone, so I didn't know how to
8 deal with it for this presentation. I thought, "I'll just say it's in question." We'll go back
9 and take it to the committee, and we'll figure it out. I'd like to put it there, because I think
10 controversy is good. We just have to make sure the graphics talk about it as an issue.

11 Chair Greenfield: I agree. I think older generations tend to have a fond place in their hearts
12 for Pluto, and it seems worthwhile for that discussion to continue with younger generations,
13 rather than allowing the concept to die out. Excellent stuff. It's really hard to visualize
14 exactly what this project was when we're just hearing a short description. This really puts
15 it into color and gives it life, and can't wait to see it open up for the public to enjoy. Thank
16 you very much.

17 Commissioner Moss: A I look at this picture, are you going to be able to see? If you stand
18 near Uranus, will you be able to see Neptune, and if you're standing near Neptune, will
19 you be able to see Uranus?

20 Mr. Aikin: That's a good question. When I've walked the site I've looked through there
21 and it depends on kind of where you're standing where they're located, so it's kind of iffy.
22 One of our options was to look at putting Neptune way out here. The downside with that
23 is it encourages people to do what is a not very safe crossing on the street here. Where this
24 sidewalk is used much more, I think people will engage with it over here by the library and
25 know that the rest of the exhibit is there. We're going to challenge ourselves to try and
26 figure out a way to make this a visual connection if we can.

27 Commissioner Moss: Yeah, maybe you make Neptune a little bit higher, or Uranus a little
28 bit higher, so you can see over some obstacles, or at least point to where it is the next step
29 in the path.

30 Mr. Aikin: We'll do that. We'll probably have a little map, too, to show you how to get
31 there.

32 Chair Greenfield: There's a lot of signage in the park already, and there's signage in terms
33 of bike paths and where they go. It seems like we should be able to piggyback on that
34 branch, but certainly want to be able to make it easy for people to connect the dots, or the
35 planets. Thank you very much, John. Does anyone else have any comments? [None]

1 **3. Aquatics Program Annual Report**

2 Chair Greenfield: I see that Tim Sheeper is here, and Daren, would you like to introduce
3 our speakers, please?

4 Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. Yes, my pleasure to introduce Sharon Eva, Manager with
5 Community Services Department, overseeing Aquatics and several other programs. Our
6 contractor, Tim Sheeper, Founder and owner of Palo Alto Swim and Sport. Thank you both
7 so much for being here.

8 Ms. Sharon Eva: I am here, joined with Tim Sheeper of Team Sheeper. I'm sure you
9 already know that Tim manages the Aquatics program at Rinconada Pool. I'll begin with
10 introducing a few performance updates from the past year and share Team Sheeper's '20-
11 '21 goals. Tim will then follow with a presentation that describes these updates and goals
12 in more detail. It was just three months into this year that we were hit with this pandemic,
13 and unfortunately, we're still living through it now. However, with the attentiveness of Tim
14 and his staff, they were able to reactivate Rinconada Pool immediately upon receiving
15 clearance from the County. Since then, there have been 25,000 lap swim visits at the pool,
16 of which 72 percent of those visits are Palo Alto residents, and 10,000 of those are seniors;
17 3,700 family swim visits, 210 summer campers that were registered in three-week-long
18 summer camp sessions, and also the Palo Alto Masters has grown to 41 swimmers. This
19 all occurred within this past calendar year, 2020. Some of their 2021 goals are to improve
20 their reservation system. Another thing is to remain nimble, and the third is to endure. I'll
21 now turn this presentation to Tim, who will go over the updates and goals I just mentioned
22 in further detail.

23 Mr. Tim Sheeper: Thank you, Sharon. Good evening, Commissioners. I just have a few
24 slides; I think there's five or six. In the report I put together, I went extensively into the
25 community, the annual survey, and focused on what we really needed to work on and
26 improve from the feedback that we received. I just wanted to go through, with this slide,
27 and really paint a picture of how the community is feeling about swimming at the pool and
28 being a part of the Aquatic Center. This is the people who are satisfied and/or extremely
29 satisfied with these programmings, and it was nice to see that 92 percent of the Masters
30 swimmers are really enjoying what's going on in their first year in the transition from
31 Rinconada Masters to Palo Alto Masters. It's due in part to just this great leadership that
32 we have from the wonderful new coach that we have. Then, 89 percent are feeling safe at
33 the facility with the entry and exit procedures and just the way our staff is handling and the
34 other people are using the pool. Eighty-eight percent of the people are satisfied or
35 extremely satisfied with the full lap swim; 85 percent with the way they are being
36 lifeguarded and the whole lifeguarding situation at the pool; 82 percent are very pleased

1 with the family swim experience that we were able to hold this summer, opening the play
2 pool and cordoning off a little bit of each leaf of the pool, so we can put a family of five in
3 the pool; 81 percent are very pleased with the level of communications that we have, either
4 on our website or our constant email broadcasts. As Sharon mentioned, and as Jeff
5 mentioned, it is a collaboration, and there was a lot of communication, near constant
6 communication right prior to the shutdown and during the shutdown and prior to
7 reactivation, and a lot of planning went on with City staff. A lot of pieces were put together
8 quickly, so that we could transition smoothly, so that the community could benefit right
9 away without and stalls or hurdles or hiccups. I put so much information about the lap
10 swimming in the report, so I just wanted to give you a little snapshot of what I think is
11 important about the lap swimming. Ninety-one percent of the lanes are filled all the time;
12 72 percent of the people swimming at lap swim are residents; 34 percent are seniors. There
13 are 290 people who are monthly members. The cost breakdown – because we limit people
14 to four swims per week – it breaks out to a regular adult swim would be \$4.31 a swim, or
15 \$3.68 for a senior swim., just to give you an idea of the volume and what’s going in and
16 out of the pool on a daily average. This is just average numbers. Of course, there’s going
17 to be some days that are bigger. This is a combination of lap swimmers and open swimmers,
18 Master swimmers and the youth swim teams. It’s about 255 swimmers on a daily basis
19 coming in and out. You have to remember, that’s just one person per lane, so the pool is
20 being heavily utilized, as far as from 6:00 a.m. to well into the night. Looking forward to
21 2021, we struggled as a company, as a provider, with our registration system. It’s basically
22 our reservation system. We’ve had this registration system where we’ve never used the
23 reservation part of it. Even the provider, the platform, it wasn’t using this heavily before,
24 so we had to modify it quickly to make it happen. There were just some hurdles along the
25 way, so we are really pleased that we are quite a ways down the road of just replacing the
26 whole business system, which includes the reservation system, so we’ll be able to change
27 the release times of when people can make their reservations. Currently it opens up at
28 midnight every night, and we can’t change that. The target date is by February 1st just to
29 install a whole new program. It’s been a massive undertaking. It takes several months to
30 switch systems. We just hope to pretty much continue operating as we’re operating right
31 now and just having that nimble part, so whatever changes with our community and our
32 country, just being able to scale up, scale back or stay in place as quickly and as safely as
33 we can. I’m happy to field any and all questions at this point.

34 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Sharon and thank you, Tim. Appreciate the update, and thank
35 you again for your perseverance through these very challenging times and reinventing
36 some wheels, it sounds like. Ann is our Aquatics liaison and our swim champion. Would
37 you like to start?

38 Vice Chair Cribbs: I would love to. I just have a couple notes that I made, but first of all I
39 want to say congratulations, Tim, to you and your team, and Sharon as well. What I hear
40 from people who just happen to say something to me about swimming is that your staff has

1 been incredible in this time of COVID, incredibly welcoming and responsive and very
2 respectful of the community and patrons, in telling people what they have to do and what
3 they couldn't do and where they could go, and all of that. That's not easy, so really kudos
4 to you and the management. I just hear a lot about good customer service. I think the people
5 are going to be delighted to hear about the reservation system and not having to set your
6 alarm at 12:00 in the nighttime to get a lap in the pool the next day, so I think that's going
7 to be great. In terms of water usage, it looks to me like you're using as much of the water
8 as you can, as many times of the day as you can, and everything is really being utilized in
9 terms of the protocol that the County is putting on you, and that kind of thing. Do you feel
10 like that as well?

11 Mr. Sheeper: Absolutely. Yes.

12 Vice Chair Cribbs: So, if somebody said, "Tim, could you use a bigger pool or more pools,
13 or another pool in South Palo Alto?" you'd probably say what?

14 Mr. Sheeper: Right now, at this time, we wouldn't have the staff. We're so lean on our
15 staff.

16 Vice Chair Cribbs: That was going to be my next question. How are you doing with the
17 staff? Is it getting hard to find people?

18 Mr. Sheeper: We are right at the exact level that we need to be at, so there's so wiggle
19 room.

20 Vice Chair Cribbs: I'm sorry there's no wiggle room, but that's good news that you're right
21 where you want to go.

22 Mr. Sheeper: Yes.

23 Vice Chair Cribbs: In the past, there's been comments about the locker rooms, and I know
24 that we've all tried to upgrade those a little bit, but how are the locker rooms with all of the
25 people and the protocols and all of that? How's that going?

26 Mr. Sheeper: They're not being used. They're not in use.

27 Vice Chair Cribbs: Oh, that's right. You can't go to the locker room, right? You're not
28 using the showers, either, correct?

29 Mr. Sheeper: Right.

30 Vice Chair Cribbs: So, maybe if we could take just one minute. Tim, can you go through
31 the protocol, so people can understand kind of the challenges? I'm so sure all of the

1 Commissioners who don't have, maybe, a swimming background. I'm a community
2 member coming to the pool, and what do I have to do?

3 Mr. Sheeper: First of all, you have to make a reservation to come to the pool. You can't
4 just walk up. You can make a reservation on a drop-in basis, or you can sign up as a monthly
5 member to get more of a discounted entry, and then you have to sign up seven days in
6 advance. It opens up seven days in advance, and you pick you day and your time. You
7 arrive at the pool at your day and your time a few minutes right before, then you line up in
8 a queue that's six feet apart, and there's four team spots. You pass by the lifeguard and he
9 checks your name and asks you, "Are you experiencing any illness," so he does a quick
10 verbal check, and then you walk into the pool, seven people on one side of the pool; seven
11 people on the other side of the pool, so everything is staggered. There's only one person
12 per lane. These are 45-minute cycles, so if the cycle before you gets out quickly, you can
13 swim anywhere from 35 to 40 minutes, but in that 45-minute cycle, there's a few minutes
14 to get into the pool and a few minutes to get out of the pool, so you're assured 35 minutes
15 swim, but possibly a little bit more. You come in one gate and you exit the pool at a
16 different gate. Once the whistle is blown, or most people are watching the clock and they
17 know when their cycle is over. Then you just keep repeating that process. There's 13 or 14
18 cycles a day, just one person per lane, and it just continues day after day.

19 Vice Chair Cribbs: Yeah, so it is a really big deal and a lot more than just providing
20 lifeguarding, right?

21 Mr. Sheeper: Yes, yes.

22 Vice Chair Cribbs: Then, the other thing that I do remember now is that there's no standing
23 around on the deck and enjoying the sunshine. It's just in and out, come to the pool in your
24 swimsuit and be ready to go. Correct?

25 Mr. Sheeper: You have to have your mask on. Anytime you're on the pool deck, except
26 when you're in the water.

27 Vice Chair Cribbs: One other question about entering the pool. For people who can't dive
28 into the pool, like in the deep end and that kind of thing, can they enter the pool and then
29 go under the lane lines to get to their lane?

30 Mr. Sheeper: They're entering just from the edge of the pool, and if they are challenged
31 getting into the pool, they let the lifeguard know at the time of entry when they're checking
32 in, and the lifeguard either assists or switches lanes with another person so that they can
33 use the ladder to get in.

34 Vice Chair Cribbs: I got it. Okay. Thank you. Are you having swimming meets right now?

1 Mr. Sheeper: No.

2 Vice Chair Cribbs: Not at all.

3 Mr. Sheeper: No, there's no swim meets.

4 Vice Chair Cribbs: But Palo Alto Swim Club, PASA, is still swimming, right? Doing
5 workouts?

6 Mr. Sheeper: They are swimming the same way lap swimmers are swimmers. It's still just
7 one person lane, and they have to do reservations, because we have to keep record for any
8 contact tracing, so we have to know exactly who is in the pool at what time.

9 Vice Chair Cribbs: So, we're all worried about kids not getting exercise in this time, so I
10 just wanted to make sure that Palo Alto was swimming. The last compliment I have is about
11 the family swim. I think it's great that we've been able to figure out letting families come
12 in five at a time, or four at a time, and have them swim in kind of pods together, or however
13 you do it. That's great.

14 Mr. Sheeper: Yeah, thank you. Yeah, we were pleased to do that.

15 Vice Chair Cribbs: Thanks for letting me take so much time, everybody, but I think this is
16 really important, and I really appreciate the reports, so thank you, Sharon, and thank you,
17 Tim.

18 Mr. Sheeper: You're welcome.

19 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Anne. Appreciate your deep dive there. Would other
20 Commissioners like to speak? Any hands up? Anybody like to speak first? Jeff.

21 Commissioner LaMere: Tim, thank you so much. I think any of the facilities that we can
22 have open and used by our city for recreation is outstanding. Does anything change for
23 you, depending on what tier we are in for our County? Like, if we're in orange tier, does
24 that impact how many people we have in the pool or anything like that?

25 Mr. Sheeper: Not really, because when we moved up to the orange tier, the mandate that
26 we're still following is that the swimmers have to be six feet apart in and out of the water,
27 so there's been a lot of debate and a lot of clubs and private clubs are really skirting the
28 rules by putting two or more people per lane, but we just haven't been able to figure out
29 how to keep people six feet apart if there's two in a lane. That's going to disturb people
30 who want to be six feet apart, but they can't, so we're just staying – no matter what tier –
31 just one person per lane until things majorly change.

1 Commissioner LaMere: Okay. I saw that there's 41 Masters swimmers. Is that correct?
2 How do those numbers compare historically to what Masters swimming had been in the
3 previous four or five years? I don't know if you know those numbers, but how has
4 [crosstalk] Masters swimming?

5 Mr. Sheeper: Those numbers weren't available to us. They were not shared with us, so I
6 don't know how to compare them, but I do know the numbers when they were... Rinconada
7 Masters at its height was close to 200 swimmers in its heyday. I don't know what it was
8 last year or in previous years. It's growing, and it's nice to see that it's growing when we
9 only have a very few workouts, and 35-minute workouts at that.

10 Commissioner LaMere: I also saw that PASA was using 26 ½ hours per week, and the
11 Masters were using 9 ½ this summer. Why such a big difference when the previous year,
12 the Masters were at 17, and also PASA was at 17?

13 Mr. Sheeper: It comes down to numbers. There's 41 Master swimmers. PASA was
14 optimizing lane space at a maximum. Their team is close to 200 members, and they would
15 normally have five to eight swimmers per lane, so it just has a lot of swimmers to run
16 through the pool, so since we can't condense them, we just had to extend the amount of
17 time. So, he just went later into the evening. He used to finish at like 7:00, so now he's
18 finishing at 8:15. That cut into the lap swim time that we're able to put in at night, but we
19 ended up putting Master swimming from 8:15 to 9:15, because now people are willing to
20 do that, just to be able to get into the pool.

21 Commissioner LaMere: I saw that there was an uptick in nonresident use – 30 percent
22 nonresident use, 70 percent resident use, which was a drop from residents. You had some
23 notes in there about perhaps it being that our pool is available to use and maybe some other
24 neighborhoods or communities were not. Were there any other thoughts? Could it be the
25 fact of the pricing or anything like that? Was there any other thoughts besides that for the
26 difference in use?

27 Mr. Sheeper: It's all theory, but one of the big things is that Stanford was a highly-used
28 pool for lap swimming and Masters swimming. They had big programs, and that was just
29 a few miles – I don't even know if it's a few miles – it's just down the road, and they
30 haven't opened to the public yet, so it's just for students and varsity swimmers. I'm sure
31 we're getting a lot of those swimmers coming down to Rinconada to use the pool. I don't
32 think it really has anything to do with price, because looking at the prices in the market,
33 before we did our price and we looked at what other people are charging, and it's in the
34 range.

1 Commissioner LaMere: I guess I would look forward to, I saw in the notes, that when your
2 new reservation system comes online, you'll be able to tier the pricing. I think it's important
3 that residents have a little bit of a cheaper price than nonresidents. I think that's an
4 important feature for a community pool.

5 Mr. Sheeper: Oh, agreed, and we've always had that, but the way this system is, it can only
6 take one price. We could put resident and nonresident, but who's going to pay the
7 nonresident? We have no way of checking.

8 Commissioner LaMere: Right. So yeah, I would look forward to that. Your Beyond
9 Barriers swimming program that you helped out underprivileged swimmers – how is that
10 advertised, or how are you able to access swimmers or even increase the number of
11 swimmers that you would be serving in that program?

12 Mr. Sheeper: We put the information on the website. I think this year it would have grown
13 a lot from last year, because the program has been around for five, six, seven years, and
14 we're doing dozens and dozens – more than dozens. We're doing hundreds and hundreds
15 of lessons in Menlo Park, both at Belle Haven and Burgess pool. It just hasn't been adopted
16 in Palo Alto. I think it will take off, but we need to be able to do group lessons. We need
17 to have a more robust and vibrant swim lesson program. I think it will take hold, because
18 it really has taken off by word of mouth in Menlo Park, and especially Belle Haven. The
19 advertising for it is almost nonexistent. Beyond Barriers doesn't do any advertising for it,
20 and it's all about our swim instructors and our swim staff letting people know that it's
21 available.

22 Commissioner LaMere: Great. Thank you so much for what you do with the pool. It's such
23 a great community resource. I appreciate your efforts, especially during this uncertain time.

24 Mr. Sheeper: Thank you.

25 Chair Greenfield: Commissioner Moss?

26 Commissioner Moss: This is really amazing. Your goal of being nimble. It's unbelievable
27 how you've had to adjust, and the fact that you are using the pool to the max – well, 91
28 percent - is fantastic, considering all that you have to go through. Going back to
29 Commissioner LaMere's question about the 200 members in the past versus the 41
30 members now, I could see that, a) there's a lot of people who may not want to be in the
31 pool during COVID at all because of fears of safety. It sounds like you're doing a fantastic
32 job as far as keeping people safe, but also the fact that you can only have one person per
33 lane is really, really limiting, and I would think that a lot of people would not want to go
34 through all the effort of signing up seven days in advance for a 30-minute workout. So, I
35 assume that you're going to get more people back into the Masters swim once things settle

1 down. Tell me about the new coach. It sounds like the new coach...They had a fantastic,
2 dynamic coach before for 50 years or 40 years. Tell me about the new coach.

3 Mr. Sheeper: Yes. The new coach is Steve Hurko. He is a triplet, and all three of them are
4 swimmers. They grew up swimming, and they ended up swimming at a high level for Santa
5 Clara Swim Club. He went on to swim on the Cal Poly San Luis Obispo team. Then he
6 graduated and went into finance, and then decided that that was not what he wanted to do,
7 that wasn't where his passion was, so he came back to aquatics. He worked at YMCAs,
8 and he worked at another private club. We just recruited him. He's been with us now for
9 nearly a year.

10 Commissioner Moss: What I really wanted to know is, how is his rapport with the people?

11 Mr. Sheeper: He lives, eats and breaths swimming, and he loves people. He's very
12 personable. He's young and energetic. He's under 30 years old.

13 Commissioner Moss: All right. One other thing I noticed is that you've had to significantly
14 reduce the number of employees in order to endure. That was your other goal. I'm
15 wondering what happened to them, and is it mainly because there's no group lessons and
16 things like that?

17 Mr. Sheeper: Yes, yes. You could see that we, without group lessons and without open
18 swim where we would have a lot of lifeguards...We would need, on a weekend, about ten
19 lifeguards just to guard the play pool and everything, so now we could do it on a skeleton
20 staff and be very safe on a skeleton staff. It's that high level employees or high level
21 managers are doing a lot of basic work, too, just to keep their positions and keep our
22 company going.

23 Commissioner Moss: Yeah. That's all I had. It's just amazing what you've had to go
24 through, and I hope we can see a light at the end of the tunnel middle of next year.

25 Mr. Sheeper: Yeah, thank you.

26 Chair Greenfield: Keith?

27 Commissioner Reckdahl: I was glad to see the satisfaction ratings were high, especially
28 from the Masters. That was, in the past, been a sore point, so I'm glad to see things are
29 improving. Looking through, there are a lot of complaints about the reservation system, so
30 it looks like we, hopefully, will address that with the new reservation system. There were
31 also some complaints about price, like the swim lesson prices. Only about 40 percent of
32 the people were satisfied with swim lesson prices. Can you talk about that?

33 Mr. Sheeper: Yes, the swim lesson prices. There are three types of swim lessons. There's
34 a group swim lesson, which is three or four per instructor. There's semi-private, which is

1 two people per instructor, and then there's a private lesson, which is only one person per
2 instructor. When it's a group lesson, the lessons are about \$20 per 30-minute lesson, so the
3 end user is paying \$20. Now, all we can do to stay within the mandates, within the
4 guidelines, is do private lessons, so the only way you can get a swim lesson is if you pay
5 the private lesson price, so the private lesson price is out of a lot of peoples' range, so they
6 weren't able to take swim lessons unless they went through BBAF, and even then they
7 would have to be under a certain income range to even qualify for BBAF, so it's really
8 taken a lot of kids out of the water and learning how to swim this summer.

9 Commissioner Reckdahl: So you think the people in the survey that were unhappy were
10 people who were used to group lessons and now they're doing individual lessons?

11 Mr. Sheeper: Correct. That's the only option they have. That's the only option we have.
12 Even these private lessons, now we have to keep the instructor on the pool deck behind a
13 mask, so you cannot be a learn-to-swimmer. You have to be somebody whose safe in the
14 water, even, to be able to take a swim lesson.

15 Commissioner Reckdahl: That's hard, yes. You said it's \$20 for 30 minutes. Was that the
16 same price as last year for the private lesson?

17 Mr. Sheeper: That's a group lesson.

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: What is a private lesson right now?

19 Mr. Sheeper: It's \$76 for a half hour, for a private lesson for a half-hour.

20 Commissioner Reckdahl: Oh, wow.

21 Mr. Sheeper: Yeah, and that's what it's been for years and years.

22 Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. That's unfortunate.

23 Mr. Sheeper: Definitely.

24 Commissioner Reckdahl: How does that compare to other cities, like Sunnyvale and
25 Mountain View, their lessons? Are they in the same price as ours?

26 Mr. Sheeper: They're probably not even giving swim lessons. There's a lot of pools who
27 just didn't have swim lessons through this pandemic, just pretty much took that right off
28 the table. It's kind of a rarity that we're even able to do it.

29 Vice Chair Cribbs: Tim and Keith, if I could jump in here for a second. I think this is all
30 just, the swim lesson situation right now, is just a result of the pandemic, and availability
31 of water time. The fact that you really cannot teach a child who is unsafe in the water

1 without being in the water with him or her. You have to be in the water to teach a little kid,
2 or even an adult, how to swim who doesn't know how to swim and who has any kind of a
3 fear at all. Maybe we shouldn't worry too much about all of this until we get back full field
4 with a vaccine and everything. Then I would like to suggest that the Commission really
5 think about how to make up the time that kids lost because they've been out of the water,
6 and make sure that we can offer as many swimming lessons as possible through group
7 swimming and all of that, to make sure that kids are not missing the opportunity to learn to
8 swim. I do think, from what I know about the pricing, this private lesson business can be
9 much more than that in private clubs. I think it's just a COVID thing right now. I don't
10 know, Tim, whether you have anything else about that to say.

11 Mr. Sheeper: I think you summed it up pretty well. It's not optimum for the entire
12 community, but we are proud just to be able to do that and to get an instructor who is
13 willing to teach from the pool deck behind a mask. It's very, very difficult. It's hard to
14 connect to a student and really make a difference.

15 Vice Chair Cribbs: I would say that it's really hard, as an instructor, to connect with a child
16 or an adult to help them if you can't be with them in the water, and it's incredibly
17 frustrating, because you so want the child to do well. It hardly ever works.

18 Mr. Sheeper: Unless you're a verbal learner, yeah.

19 Mr. Reckdahl: I'm not beating up Tim because the price is too high. We've lost the group
20 lessons, and that's certainly a change in the situation. But in general, we always want to
21 see, what are we charging people and how do our rates compare. It's the same thing if
22 you're talking about golf, you're talking about aquatics, you're talking about children's
23 theater. We want to say, "Are we charging the right amount?" A good way to look at that
24 is to say, "What are other people charging?" When we talked about this last Jazmin she
25 had promised to put in the report a comparison chart of both swim lessons and also for lap
26 swimming, and that's not in the report this year. We'd like to see that next chair, just a
27 comparison of costs and just to say, "Where do we rank compared...?" Sharon, can you
28 take an action to include that in next year's report? Just a generic piece of information we
29 really need to have.

30 Ms. Eva: Definitely.

31 Mr. Reckdahl: Finally, the other thing that stood out to me was, when I looked through the
32 survey on page 24, they talked about, "How did you hear about us?" and it was almost all
33 word-of-mouth or other. What outreach do we do, Sharon, so people know how to get
34 swimming lessons and how to get lap swim?

35 Ms. Eva: We do have a webpage as well as our catalog – well, it's a virtual catalog now –
36 that promotes our aquatics programming, and then also, I know that Team Sheeper and

1 their staff also promote it through email blasts and their own marketing. Tim, do you have
2 any more detail on how you guys also promote this?

3 Mr. Sheeper: There was no information on the “other.” It just said, “other.” We didn’t have
4 a field that filled that in.

5 Mr. Reckdahl: In the survey it says, “Other, please specify,” but we have no data for that?

6 Mr. Sheeper: We have no data for that.

7 Mr. Reckdahl: Okay, so that’s a little misleading in the fact that it says, “Please specify,”
8 then.

9 Mr. Sheeper: I have don’t have that. There’s nothing.

10 Mr. Reckdahl: Okay. That would have been good to know, because that was half the people
11 right there had “other,” and that wasn’t word-of-mouth, so they’re learning about it
12 somehow. So how does the outreach – this is a question for Sharon – how does the outreach
13 for the pool use compare to other recreation programs?

14 Ms. Eva: Basically, for other programs like within Community Services Department, we
15 actually try to utilize as much as what we have for marketing with those to also promote
16 the Aquatics program. Like I said, when we have our catalogs or we have our social media,
17 anything that Team Sheeper offers, we will try to promote that as well. We really just want
18 to make sure that the programs, their camps, their swim lessons, even when it’s time for
19 family open swim, if they are having that, then we’ll make sure to try to promote that as
20 well.

21 Mr. Reckdahl: Okay. Right now it’s kind of a moot point, because our lanes are full, but
22 going forward there’s going to be a time when the lanes aren’t full, and we really need to
23 make sure that we’re doing, especially the low cost methods through *Enjoy!* and other
24 places like that, make sure that we’re fully using all of the...

25 Ms. Eva: And also, we have banner spaces, even stuff like that, where we can create
26 banners for them, so we can say, “The pool’s going to be opening,” or “Summer camps are
27 going to be starting for Aquatics,” but we really make sure that we include their programs
28 within our marketing as well. It will get the word out to the community.

29 Mr. Reckdahl: Okay. That’s it. Thank you.

30 Mr. Sheeper: Keith, if I could just make a comment on that. You’re talking about filling
31 the lanes. Well, if we’re talking the performance pool with lap swim, Masters and PASA
32 using the pool, the pool is highly utilized, whether it’s pre-pandemic, pre-COVID or even
33 now, it’s highly utilized, and if we’re talking the play pool, it’s heavily utilized during the

1 summertime with family swim, open swim and camps. You brought up lessons, so
2 historically, there has not been a big push of lessons in Palo Alto, at least in the past 20
3 years that I've been watching Palo Alto. We are transitioning to introducing more in-depth
4 and more year-round lessons, so we are in the infancy, if you will, of putting in a full lesson
5 program there. What stands in our way is it is very difficult to run lessons in that play pool,
6 because there's not a lot of space to run a good, proper swim school, and using the
7 performance pool, or the big pool, it's really tough on that pool, because it's already heavily
8 utilized from lap, Masters and PASA. It is a puzzle. It's still trying to work all these
9 programming pieces together, so I don't think it's a matter of bringing more people in or
10 people not knowing about our lesson program. It's just making things work. I don't know
11 if that cleared up anything.

12 Mr. Reckdahl: Yeah, part of it is, you want the lanes full, but also we're doing a community
13 service, and you want to make sure people in the community know about the services that
14 we're offering. Even if the lanes are fairly full, you want, still, to do the outreach.

15 Mr. Sheeper: Oh, agreed. That's the name of the game, the outreach, yes.

16 Mr. Reckdahl: Okay, thanks.

17 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Commissioner Olson?

18 Commissioner Olson: Tim and Sharon, thank you so much for all of your efforts. I'm really
19 glad the Commissioner Moss referred back to your goals, because I think I could adopt
20 your last two goals and see if I can continue to be nimble and endure through this. It's
21 really impressive the amount of ability you've had to sort of pivot and do different things.
22 I will say, I'm only one data point, but I have taken my boys to lessons at Rinconada pool
23 in your programs and to a private place as well, and when the pandemic hit, of the two, you
24 all opened much sooner than the other pool, so I do know that I only have a very limited
25 amount of data that I'm looking at, but I was very impressed with how quickly you were
26 able to get people outside and active again. I think its so important for, not just our children
27 – I know their access is more limited right now – but seniors in particular, it's such a great
28 outlet, and if that's something that you've been doing a lot of years, and that's the thing
29 that you do to get exercise, it's so important to make that available. I do appreciate those
30 efforts and your report, and I hope you keep on keeping on and endure, and we'll all get
31 through it together. Thanks so much.

32 Mr. Sheeper: Thank you, Jackie.

33 Chair Greenfield: Tim and Sharon, again, thank you for all of your efforts on this. Other
34 Commissioners have said things very eloquently how much we appreciate what you've
35 been able to do for our community during these challenging times. I do have a couple
36 questions. You were previously talking about the Beyond Borders program at Belle Haven

1 and Menlo Park. Did I understand correctly that the enrollment numbers, in terms of the
2 number of lessons that you provided at those two pools through Beyond Borders is a lot
3 more than we've had in Palo Alto, [inaudible] that we're only five unique swimmers that
4 we had, so it's much more popular and people are signing up for the lessons more through
5 word-of-mouth at the other pools?

6 Mr. Sheeper: Yes, they are. It's been around at the other pools for a lot longer. We have a
7 five-year head start on where we were. The numbers that we're at with the Menlo Park
8 sites are extremely low as compared to what they've previously been as well. It's almost
9 like families have just really stopped thinking about putting their kids into swim lessons.
10 It's just not on their radar. I imagine it will go up in the next year or when we're able to do
11 a full group of full service lessons.

12 Chair Greenfield: I appreciate that. It makes a lot of sense. It also ties into the data question,
13 your survey question regarding feeling safe at the pools. It's kind of a self-selecting group
14 – the people that feel safe at the pools are the people who are going to show up, not people
15 who don't feel safe at the pools aren't going to be there. That totally makes sense. Is there
16 any provision for family members to share a lane? Or, for family members to share a
17 lesson?

18 Mr. Sheeper: That gets back to the one person per lane. You have to keep people six feet
19 apart, so there is... We've struggled with this one, and we've debated it so many different
20 times. Yes, we can put two family members in a single lane, but then that puts the people
21 on either side of the lanes at risk, because then they can't be six feet apart, so it affects
22 other people. The same was for the lessons.

23 Chair Greenfield: Can you explain that? The conflict of six feet? I'm not quite getting it,
24 not quite visualizing it.

25 Mr. Sheeper: Okay, so lanes are eight feet wide, and then people swim down the middle of
26 the pool on the black line. It's more than six feet from black line to black line, but if you
27 put two people in, they split the pool, so they're swimming really close to the lane line, so
28 each person is swimming close to the lane line, which is then a mere three or four feet from
29 the other person, so it just condenses the space between swimmers.

30 Chair Greenfield: And all of the lessons are using the lanes as well? Are there any lessons
31 using the small pool?

32 Mr. Sheeper: They were using some lanes, but it was in the... They were using the play
33 pool as well, but what ends up happening is the play pool is mainly used for learn-to-swim
34 people, kids who don't know how to swim, so they could touch the bottom. Since our
35 instructors could only be on the deck, we only could have people who could swim to take
36 lessons. We could only do one, because if we put two kids in or if they were siblings, that

1 would affect the person next to them in the lane, because there would be two swimmers in
2 a lane. We were getting feedback from swimmers, because we initially started that and put
3 siblings together for lessons, and there was a lot of fear. We got feedback from lap
4 swimmers, so we just re-evaluated and then we halted that within the first two weeks.

5 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. That makes sense. I appreciate the clarification. I do echo
6 Keith's request for cost comparison data to help provide better perspective, to help us
7 understand...

8 Mr. Sheeper: I have all that. It wasn't in the list in the... Yeah, we'll get it.

9 Chair Greenfield: Not that your report didn't have enough pages in it..

10 Mr. Sheeper: There always seems to be something. I thought, "Okay,"...it'll be 120 pages
11 then.

12 Chair Greenfield: But again, I appreciate... This has not been an easy path for you to come
13 into our community and achieve the success in terms of the satisfaction of our community.
14 There are some high bars here to hit. I think you're swimming through the hoops. How's
15 that? We appreciate the effort and look for to the continuing relationship. Thank you for
16 what you're providing our community.

17 Mr. Sheeper: Thank you.

18 Chair Greenfield: Does anyone have any follow-up questions, final comments? Council
19 Member Kou, do you have any comments?

20 Council Member Kou: No, except just thank you so much to Mr. Sheeper as well as to
21 Sharon for all of the work that you are doing here. I was going to ask a question with
22 regards to what Chair Greenfield had asked about family members sharing a lane,
23 especially for people with disabilities, so I'm thinking that perhaps, since you cannot share
24 a lane even between family members, so that question kind of got answered, so thank you.

25 Chair Greenfield: Actually, that raises another question related to the family sharing a
26 lesson. Would it be possible to have any kind of parent and child group lesson together?
27 Or the parent assisting the younger student who is learning to swim, or is that a safety issue
28 since the instructors can't be in the pool with them. I'm talking about having a lesson done
29 in the small pool.

30 Mr. Sheeper: I believe there was some of that done in the play pool when there was a
31 parent. There was a little bit of that going on. That was a small portion of what happened
32 this summer in the play pool. That was allowed, and that did happen, but at a very small
33 level.

1 Commissioner Moss: If the COVID issue is getting worse, not better, and I hope it's going
2 to start ramping back down, but have you had any COVID incidences that you've had to
3 do that contact tracing so far? What does the County require you to do if someone tested
4 positive or something?

5 Mr. Sheeper: We haven't had any incidents right now, so we would just have to, if
6 somebody was traced back to the pool, we would have to submit all of our records of time
7 and place and who was around them. That's why we keep our daily records. We get them
8 from PASA. We have them in our reservation system, and we can turn them over right
9 away.

10 Commissioner Moss: Wow, okay, thanks.

11 Chair Greenfield: Interesting. Thank you. Any other Commissioners? Thank you again,
12 Sharon and Tim. We look forward to hearing back from you a year from now and hopefully
13 get to work between then and hopefully we have a much different story to hear next year.

14 Mr. Sheeper: Great, thank you very much. Thanks, Sharon.

15 **4. Golf Course Annual Report**

16 Chair Greenfield: We'll now move on to our next item of business, which is the annual
17 report on our golf course. Daren, if you'd like to introduce our speaker.

18 Mr. Anderson: Thanks, Chair. Lam Do is the Superintendent of Open Space Parks and
19 Golf. Thank you so much, Lam, for being here and sharing the information about the update
20 on the golf course.

21 Mr. Lam Do: Good evening, Chair Greenfield, and members of the Commission. Thank
22 you for this opportunity to once again speak with you and share the golf course's
23 performance. To begin with, this brief presentation is intended to supplement the staff
24 report, not replace the staff report. It is kept brief in anticipation of a more extensive Q&A
25 session with the Commission. With that, I'll begin. A little bit of background on how our
26 golf course came to be and what led up to our course design. In looking back at some
27 historical information, our original municipal golf course was actually petitioned by the
28 community going back to 1939 when the initial thought of having a golf course offered by
29 the City was planted. Then sometime in the 1940s a Palo Alto General Recreation Advisory
30 Board proposed, too, what I believe are your predecessors, the Palo Alto Recreation
31 Commission at the time, that a course be built in the Baylands. From there, it took some
32 time, some various locations in the Baylands were considered. Some land surveys had to
33 be done, an initial site was felt to be not suitable, and eventually the current location was
34 determined to be the appropriate location to build a course. From there, our course was
35 built and eventually opened up in May of 1956. The course that was built in 1956, the

1 course layout remained fairly the same, and there were some minor upgrades and minor
2 changes over the years. Some of them had to do with irrigation in the late 90's as well.
3 Ultimately, there was deterioration of the course, deterioration of the turf. The irrigation
4 system had aged out, and other improvements needed to be done, so the City decided to
5 consider a full course redesign. This coincided with a need of the adjacent San Francisquito
6 Creek JPA, which wanted to expand flood control, which meant that as the creek's girth
7 expanded it would expand into the footprint of the existing golf course. That also triggered
8 a need to redesign the golf course. At the time, in 2012, the City engaged with a golf course
9 architect, Forrest Richardson and Associates, at the time, to provide several course designs.
10 What culminated in 2013 was the selection of a links style course. A link style course being
11 one that is not flat, has contours, has elevation, has more rough areas. The term link style
12 course originated in Europe, where courses there tended to be built around pre-existing
13 contours of land. In our case, we artificially created a links style course between 2013 and
14 2016, while the City was securing environmental permits to build the course, we were also
15 importing soil and stockpiling soil so that we could create a contoured course with
16 elevation and with some rolling hills and such. After we secured enough soil to build the
17 course and also secure all of our environmental permits, in 2016 we closed the course for
18 construction, and then from there, we were able to open the course in May of 2018. A
19 change when we reopened the course from how we previously operated was the City went
20 out to seek a single operator to provide all elements of service, from managing course play
21 to managing the practice facilities, to maintaining the course itself, to handling
22 merchandise sales on behalf of the City and to also provide food and beverage service.
23 Previous to that, the City for over 30 years or so had operated with multiple operators
24 managing different perspectives. For a while, the City was also maintaining the course
25 itself until we sought a maintenance contractor, so that was one of the big changes, not just
26 that we debuted a new course, a new style, but we also went with a single operator model,
27 which I believe has provided a much richer golf experience, more cohesive experience as
28 well, and maintenance of the course is essential to how the course plays, and because it's
29 the same company managing the course play, managing customers, that's also the same
30 company that's maintaining the course, I think there's cohesiveness that benefits us all.
31 Since the course opened, I think a lot of people when we think of how is a golf course
32 performing, there are thoughts of [inaudible] golf rounds. However, that's just part of the
33 story. There's also customer satisfaction involved, but I think it's hard to overlook what
34 are the key indicators that people look for? So, when you look at our first fiscal year
35 operating in 2019, we came close, but we did not achieve our targeted revenue. We had
36 revenue of \$3.4 million when our expenses were about \$3.7 million. This was our first year
37 of operating under the new course. We did not know fully what to anticipate, other than
38 what we had based on performers, of which we had hired the National Golf Foundation to
39 provide us with some estimates. We had also worked with a golf consultant to take a second
40 look at the National Golf Foundation's performers, and I think they were both in
41 concurrence. However, we did not reach our target. We were a little bit above, six or nine
42 percent. I forget that figure. I apologize. Under our expected revenue line. We then moved



1 into our second full year of operating, which ended in fiscal year 2020. You can see, there's
2 a much lower revenue number of \$2.8 million where expenses were \$3.5 million. That's
3 attributed to the current pandemic that we're in, which started earlier this year, which
4 closed the course in March, which was the spring season. That is essentially, other than
5 summer, the peak season for golf play. We took a big financial hit in regard to revenue
6 loss, and then when the course reopened, per allowance by the State and the County, we
7 weren't able to open full bore. We followed the guidelines of the State and County, and we
8 opened with singles play only. That further hampered our opportunity to bring in revenue,
9 which resulted in much fewer rounds of golf played and a large gap in revenue loss.
10 Surprisingly, in the current fiscal year, which started in July, we are doing well. Both the
11 County and the State changed the guidelines and provisions and allowed us to have
12 foursome play, not only foursome play, but foursome amongst different households, so that
13 gave us an opportunity to have more rounds of golf played, book more tee times. Right
14 now we're on pace to exceed our revenue target by year-end, should everything go well.
15 It's hard to tell. We're only four months, almost five months, into the fiscal year, but we're
16 also heading into the winter season. Since July we've been doing well and strong.
17 Hopefully, depending on the weather, if we don't have a strong winter rain season, typically
18 we do get some revenue from there, and then it picks up in the spring and hopefully we
19 have a good spring season, which would leave us on target to hit our revenue goals. That's
20 part of the indicators of how the golf course is doing. The other indicators would be how
21 customers view our course. The other indicators would be how they complain about our
22 course as well. From a perspective of how people, when they've played the course, it's
23 been very well received, from the conditions of the course to specifically our greens are
24 very well appreciated, even among superintendents of other local courses who have played
25 our course. All feel that we have probably one of the best greens on course in the entire
26 region. That's where things are positive. Where things are not so good, we have had some
27 issues in regards to our pricing. We did go with a dynamic pricing model, so our prices
28 fluctuate based on time of the day, day of the week, and also how far in advance one books
29 their tee time. There have been unwanted reception to the dynamic pricing. I can talk to
30 you more about that in the Q&A session as well. I think that's a fair way to describe, but
31 there's two sides of it all. In regard to that, to look at the revenue expenses and rounds of
32 golf played as well. How all this plays out, I think, is how well the golf course is received
33 overall, I think. When we look at that, we take a look at who's playing our course. Where
34 are they coming from to play our course? In last fiscal year 2020, 89percent of our golfers
35 came from our county and San Mateo County. In particular, 27 percent of players were
36 Palo Alto residents. This is an increase from our prior course. Our prior course we hovered
37 right around 20 percent of our players were Palo Alto residents, so we've improved on that
38 figure with our new course. This fiscal year that figure is actually increased to 29 percent
39 of players are Palo Alto residents. There's another 44 percent of county players coming
40 from other parts of the county, not including Palo Alto. In general, we are drawing a good
41 number of local players. However, we do want to be not just attracting local players, but
42 we also want to attract regional players. It's hard to tell right now in the current pandemic



1 whether or not people are current percentage is increasing, because we are drawing more
2 players locally who don't want to travel, or whether there are other factors involved, but I
3 think right now we're doing pretty well in regard to reaching our own Palo Alto players.
4 Then, to wrap up and summarize where our golf course has done and what type of profile
5 and how people rate us, I think in regards to people who actually play the course, I think
6 in general much of it is positive. The service is good, from being welcomed, from the
7 booking, from having a marshal on course to ensure pace of play is continuous. Our current
8 operator does offer a higher level service commensurate with what we think is a better
9 course, both from before and a better course compared to most of the courses we generally
10 hear that are public courses. In regards to what type of recognitions the industry has given
11 us, we have received several recognitions since we've opened. Soon after we opened we
12 received the "Renovation of the Year," placing third for public courses from *Golf, Inc.*
13 magazine. That was a very prestigious award for us to receive. Every year there are
14 numerous courses throughout the country, public courses, that get renovated, but for us to
15 place third was a very nice recognition. Within the state, the California Parks and
16 Recreation Society awarded us an "Award of Excellence" for facility design and
17 environmental sustainability, which was one of the goals of the design, not just to have a
18 links style design, but also the selection of the type of turf that have, being salt tolerant to
19 allow us to recycled water going toward environmental sustainability and design overall.
20 That was a good award to have. Perhaps one of the best recognitions that we received is
21 from *Golf Week* magazine, which placed us 13th among golf courses open to the public in
22 California. This list includes several of the Monterey Bay courses, so for us to place 13th, I
23 think, shows all the work that we've put into this has been acknowledged and has been
24 received. With that, I'll conclude my brief presentation, and I'll turn it over to you. I think
25 you're going to probably have quite a few questions for me to answer.

26 Chair Greenfield: Thank you for the presentation and for all of your work overseeing the
27 golf course and the operations. Again, there's certainly been challenges that we've been
28 faced with, so thank you for persevering. Looking for hands from Commissioners who
29 might like to speak first. David?

30 Commissioner Moss: This has been a tough year under the circumstances, your second
31 year, and actually your first big year. I'm a little surprised that your 1:52:10 expenses for
32 this year - \$3.5 million – were so high considering that you were shut down for a while and
33 even when you came back up, it was very slow. What goes into those expenses that required
34 it to be so high, considering?

35 Mr. Do: The lion's share of the expenses is the course maintenance. Whether the course is
36 open or the course is closed, that cost is incurred. We're not able to let the course grow and
37 be unkept, even though we were closed. Much of it, especially the putting greens. Putting
38 greens, if we don't attend to them two or three times a day to keep the turf low, you risk
39 disease growing, fungus growing in the turf on the putting green. In addition to that you

1 also risk when you cut them back that they will not be sustainable after you've let it grow
2 so tall, so it's sort of like you have to train the grass to constantly be alive and well at a
3 short cut. We're talking short cuts of a quarter inch and less. So, that's the lion's share of
4 the maintenance. The other big share is staffing. You're right. The staffing was reduced
5 temporarily; however, we were not able to go to fully zero staff. We still needed to have
6 some staff onsite as well, so that's where, unfortunately even with the golf course closing,
7 we could not avoid those costs.

8 Commissioner Moss: Yeah, and you know, with Team Sheep, they've had to do so much
9 to get around COVID – the six feet limit and things like that – I'm noticing that you're
10 pretty much back to complete normal. Is that right? Or, do people have to take special
11 precautions, still? I'm thinking of four people in a golf cart, or things like that, or just
12 foursomes in general?

13 Mr. Do: We are not at full normal. The biggest thing is that we are operating at less than
14 capacity, so when we reopened, we reopened with twelve-minute intervals between tee
15 times. Right now we're operating with ten-minute intervals between tee times, when at
16 other times we could operate at between seven- to eight-minute intervals between tee times,
17 so we are not at optimum capacity to start with. Secondly, in regards to going back to
18 normal, the tee time reservation system is solely online at this present. In regards to sharing
19 of a golf cart, it's members of the same household. So there are a few things in which we're
20 not at full capacity at present. We would like to be; however, being cognizant of the current
21 pandemic and being that we want to adhere to guidelines of both the County and the State
22 we're in the current state that we are where we're less than capacity.

23 Commissioner Moss: Okay. You said that we have so many incredible awards, and we
24 have one of the best maintained courses. Do we have to have one of the best maintained
25 courses in the state? Or, can we reduce expenses and be okay? I know you have to maintain
26 your base, your fan base, but how low can we go and still do that?

27 Mr. Do: It's a difficult balance. It goes back to, I think, when this design was selected. The
28 design was selected along with the dynamic pricing was selected, so Forrest Richardson
29 provided the City five and maybe six. They call them by different letters. They weren't
30 numbered, but the designs were lettered, of different types of layouts and different types of
31 course designs, and this was the premium one that was selected, so as the premium that
32 was selected, of course it cost more, not just to build but also cost more to maintain, so
33 we're up against a large expense that we need to recoup through revenues. Do we have to
34 be the best course in the area? I think the intended customer profile that we're looking for
35 is different from what other courses in the region are catering to. We're catering to both
36 the mid range and the high range. We have other courses regional here in other
37 municipalities catering to low to mid range. So, I think if we were to maintain our course
38 to a lower standard, it's commensurate with what... We'd be competing with our other local

1 jurisdictions, which then puts us sort of in a tough spot, which is what happened in Golf,
2 right? Golf had too many golf courses at one point. They were often pitting against each
3 other, and a lot of them didn't survive, so I think we're at a threshold that we can be a
4 player in and do well in, I think. Hopefully, we can break even. I can't promise that we'll
5 break even, or maybe we'll even operate in the black instead of operating in the red, but
6 that's how the golfing issue is. It's difficult to break even and operate in the black. Most
7 golf courses operate in the red, so I'm not sure we want to go to the point where we're not
8 competing with our neighboring courses.

9 Commissioner Moss: All right, I get it. Good luck, and I hope that you can make that
10 revenue to expense ratio for next year, starting July, so we'll see what happens. Thank you.

11 Mr. Do: Thank you.

12 Chair Greenfield: Jackie?

13 Commissioner Olson: Hi, thank you for this. I don't have any comments to follow up on
14 that. I appreciate it.

15 Chair Greenfield: Thanks, and probably should have started with Jeff LaMere, who is our
16 golf liaison, to see if he had anything specific in terms of [crosstalk] and how to direct.

17 Commissioner LaMere: Thanks, Jeff. Lam, thanks so much for the presentation and
18 everything you do with the golf course. It's certainly a beautiful space. In regards to the
19 tiers and how we're doing with the rounds and the spacing of rounds, now that we've
20 started with the certain minutes between rounds, are we affected at all by the tier that we're
21 in? Has there been any new guidance issued for outdoor spaces or for golf courses?

22 Mr. Do: For outdoor gatherings there has been. This is not considered an outdoor gathering.
23 This is more of an activity where we haven't seen the type of restrictions that would impact
24 golf in particular. At the course, however, we have ceased all types of gatherings. We only
25 allow online bookings. When you come and check in you checking in outdoors, and you're
26 going straight to your round. We ask that you come early to practice a few balls at the
27 driving range that people only arrive 15 minutes early. We also ask that, upon completion
28 of your round that you depart within 15 minutes, so several practical things to discourage
29 any type of gatherings. In regards to tournaments and banquets, banquets have not been
30 held since COVID. Tournaments initially were not held2:01:24 for the first several months.
31 Tournaments have come back in the last month or so, but they're not coming back in the
32 shotgun tournament, where there would be a gathering, or where everyone would tee off at
33 the same time. The tournaments are now done in flights, as if it were players coming
34 individually, just like the members of the public will come for every interval of ten minute
35 tee times. The tournaments are held the same, too. There are no meals with the tournaments

1 at present. Also, no gathering, there's no award ceremony after the tournament as well, so
2 tournaments are held as if they are just a regular ten-minute flight as well.

3 Commissioner LaMere: Can you discuss the impact on this in terms of the use of the
4 restaurant as well as the pro shop?

5 Mr. Do: I can discuss half of it. The reason I say that is because the restaurant is operated
6 by the same operator, but they operate based on a lease from the City. They are struggling.
7 I don't have details and numbers to show you, but their channels of business before this
8 came from banquets and events. That has shuttered. Their lunchtime business channel has
9 also shuttered, because all of the local businesses across the street do not have employees
10 there, and then the golfers. We discourage golfers if staying around to enjoy a meal or to
11 enjoy a drink. So, most of their business channels have been shuttered. I don't know what
12 the financial hit is to them. Your other question in regards to how this has impacted the
13 golf shop. The golf shop is operated by the same operator, OB Sports, on behalf of the City.
14 So, the City is taking the financial loss in regards to lost sales. Even before COVID, we
15 struggled in competing with other retail channels, whether it be online or big box retailers
16 selling golf merchandise, and then now we essentially do not have sales other than essential
17 needs that every golfer needs when they arrive, so we still sell some balls, we can still sell
18 some gloves, but most of shoes, clothes, golf club sales, those pretty much are nonexistent
19 at this point.

20 Commissioner LaMere: Can you discuss, it looks like the golf course lost a million dollars
21 the last two years. Does the City incur all of those losses, and then, if you can talk about if
22 there is revenue that's a profit, how much of that does the City get, versus OB Sports?

23 Mr. Do: Yes. When the golf course operates in the red, the City takes the loss. The course
24 is a general fund program. I think the million dollars you referred to, the bulk of that,
25 \$700,000 of that, was in last fiscal year, and that was revenue loss from March through
26 June. That's part of a citywide revenue loss due to COVID pandemic. When the golf course
27 does operate in the black, our agreement with the operator is a revenue share. The revenue
28 share is a little bit complicated. They would need to reach a certain threshold in regards to
29 them receiving a revenue share, and they don't reach a threshold above the target, there is
30 no revenue share.

31 Commissioner LaMere: So, in the case of, if there was \$300,000 in revenue, in profit, this
32 next year, how much would the City potentially get of that?

33 Mr. Do: Let me talk in sort of round numbers instead of exact numbers. There is a certain
34 threshold above the target number which the City would set aside for future use. Anything
35 above that threshold is a 20/80 share between the City and the operator, where the City
36 would receive 20 percent and the operator would receive 80 percent. It's sort of an incentive
37 program for the operator to over excel, over exceed.

1 Commissioner LaMere: Can you please discuss the status of the contract with OB Sports
2 currently and going forward?

3 Mr. Do: Yes. Our contract with OB Sports is for them to provide a full service, so going
4 back to course play, course practice, course maintenance, merchandise sales and also then
5 to provide food and beverage. Going to the back to the food and beverage service, is the
6 same operator, but they lease the restaurant facility from the City. All other services that
7 they provide is through a master contract with the City. We established with them a three-
8 year contract, of which we are in the third year of the contract, fiscal year 2019 and fiscal
9 year 2020 being the first two years, and fiscal year 2021 being the third year. There are
10 mutual renewals established in the contract, which upon both parties mutually agreeing to
11 renew, the contract would be renewed for an additional three years, for a total of six. At
12 the end of six years, should both parties also want to mutually renew, there is an option for
13 a second renewal with another three years. So, in total, the contract could have a lifespan
14 of nine years.

15 Commissioner LaMere: Thank you for your time, Lam.

16 Mr. Do: Yes, thank you.

17 Chair Greenfield: Commissioner Reckdahl?

18 Commissioner Reckdahl: You mentioned in your presentation about dynamic pricing. Can
19 you talk more about that? How has that been working in COVID-land? Have our prices
20 been going down? In the past we've been able to squeeze out revenue. If you have good
21 demand you can squeeze out revenue, but if you don't have demand, you may not be able
22 to squeeze that revenue out. So can you talk about that?

23 Mr. Do: What we feared did not happen. Naturally, the opposite happened. Let me speak
24 to dynamic pricing in general. I think the hotel business, sports, ticketing, sports attendance
25 ticketing has also gone to similar models, where the pricing – and same with airlines –
26 where the pricing fluctuates depending on when you buy. We are one of the few courses
27 that have adopted dynamic pricing. The reason why when we opened this course we
28 adopted dynamic pricing was a lot of the struggles that the golf course industry had resulted
29 from a boon in the business. Some people call that the Tiger Woods effect, where as golf
30 gained popularity, so did construction of golf courses to the point where there were too
31 many golf courses throughout the country competing for a set, a number, of golfers, which
32 resulted in players shopping around for the best golf prices, or players waiting until the last
33 minute to book a tee time, because they knew that golf courses were competing against
34 each other and were willing to discount at the last two days in advance, or even the day of.
35 So, a lot of players would wait until the last minute to book, to get a rock bottom rate. In
36 essence, golfers had sort of trained themselves to do that. The [inaudible] on courses that
37 changed that paradigm, changed that dynamic, [inaudible] understand that this shouldn't

1 be how it is. Nationwide, that's going to be an issue further down, and we as a golf course
2 did not want to be operating in a competition model of who's going to be the lowest green
3 fee. So, we adopted a pricing dynamic pricing. Sorry for the long answer to your question.
4 How has COVID affected it? Have we been able to squeeze more bang for the buck, or the
5 opposite – to squeeze as much as we can out of the golf course? We feared that golf play
6 would be diminished due to COVID, but we've experienced the opposite. During the
7 closure, we took...going back to the numbers, the \$700,000 loss. That was during March,
8 April and May of last fiscal year, and even in June. In June, we reopened, but we reopened
9 for singles play only, so essentially that really limited our revenue stream. Once the COVID
10 guidelines from the State and the County were relaxed to allow us to have foursome play
11 across households, demand for the course was there, so we've been able to essentially,
12 almost sell out every day. As the weather has gotten colder, we're not selling out every day
13 any more, but during the July, August, September months, we were pretty much, I'd say
14 90 to 95 percent booked, if not 100 percent booked. Based on the dynamic pricing model
15 also allowed for a good revenue stream, but I think I mentioned earlier, that's also led to
16 some complaints about our golf course and it's pricing being high. I would say it's higher
17 than what we would have typically thought it could be, but even at the highest point, we're
18 not drawing plays that are paying that highest price point. Our golf course has sort of a rack
19 rate. We then have a regional discounted rate. We then have a resident discounted rate, and
20 then we also have a membership rate. As you could see earlier, 80-something percent of
21 our players are local players, so very few people are actually paying the highest rate that
22 we can get out of dynamic pricing. Most players are paying the discounted rates.

23 Commissioner Reckdahl: But still, if I look at the...like Saturday mornings, we're still
24 selling out the prime tee times, so even with dynamic pricing raising the prices on those
25 high demand tee times, those high demand tee times are still going first.

26 Mr. Do: You are correct. The player demand is there, which was a surprise. We anticipated
27 that perhaps the impact of the economy, loss of jobs, reduced leisure income, but with a
28 resounding affinity to golf, I guess I would say, people have come and played.

29 Commissioner Reckdahl: But to talk to David's point about do we have to be the best
30 course? This was an intentional decision when we remodeled this. We have Moffett has
31 opened up now, and Moffett is really cheap and Shoreline is cheap, and they're a totally
32 different experience, so for a lot of people, paying an extra thirty bucks and going to one
33 of the best public courses on the West Coast is a deal. It really depends on how much
34 disposable income you have and how much you care about golf. The people I know who've
35 played Palo Alto just love it. They think it is the best. You have Half Moon Bay, which is
36 pretty good, but in the Bay area this side of Skyline, it's probably the best public course.
37 It's there. We've built it already, so we've kind of made our bed, and we have to sleep in
38 it. But I think –

1 Mr. Do: [crosstalk] collectively the City, the Council made, and right, so we invested in it,
2 so we need to recoup our investment. Building a golf course was a financial hit for a 30-
3 year payment schedule to pay back the cost to build the course. I think going back to, you
4 hit it exactly and rephrased it how I was phrasing it earlier. What we chose to be we could
5 not go to a lower level to place us in competition with the other local courses. We would
6 not survive.

7 Commissioner Reckdahl: And I don't know if we knew that Moffett was going go open up
8 when we made this decision, but when we remodeled, Moffett was not open to the public.
9 The fact that it's open now and is charging thirty bucks a round, that would have been
10 really hard to compete against, so I think we're lucky that we went a higher scale. But very
11 good. The challenging times, I think we're doing as best we can. Keep the faith. Thank
12 you.

13 Chair Greenfield: Anne?

14 Vice Chair Cribbs: I think this is a really good report in challenging times and just say
15 congratulations to everybody who's doing the work and that kind of thing. I was interested
16 in one of the slides. It's 29 percent of the people who play are Palo Alto residents. Did I
17 read that right, or 27?

18 Mr. Do: You have that correct, Vice Chair Cribbs – 29 percent, and that's this current fiscal
19 year to date. Last fiscal year we ended up 27 percent Palo Alto residents.

20 Vice Chair Cribbs: It seemed a little bit low to me. Don't we have any more people in Palo
21 Alto that play golf? And then I was wondering about exactly if you could talk a little bit
22 about the kind of marketing that our vendor is doing and the City is doing, because what
23 I'm hearing from the golf officials that I work with and people who are pretty in the know
24 about golf is exactly what Keith was just saying about this is a great golf course and it kind
25 of has been a secret, but now that people are coming to play on it, they're really, really
26 loving it and the word is out on the street that it's a really great place to play. If you could
27 talk a little about marketing, and then talk a little bit about, is it COVID that's pushing the
28 fact that we have so many from just Santa Clara and San Mateo County where people are
29 just not driving and not traveling, or is it going to continue like that? I guess the last
30 question is, do we have any figures, back when we were doing 110 rounds at the old Palo
31 Alto Muni in the 80's, about what the percentage was from people in Palo Alto, or were
32 they traveling people?

33 Mr. Do: Going back to the late 80's, early 90's, even the late 90's, the information we
34 received during that time was the same golf course, the management [crosstalk]

1 Vice Chair Cribbs: Of course.

2 Mr. Do: It was a different management for us. It was Brad Lozares who we contracted
3 with, and Brad did not have the exact numbers for us. Part of that is also on us. I don't
4 think we tracked it to that depth at the time, so in general we hovered about 20 percent
5 golfers from Palo Altoians. It was hard for us to get more Palo Altoians to play our course,
6 but we also have to recognize that our course had deteriorated at that point. It's hard to
7 draw, your local crowd, when your product has deteriorated. Going from the 20 percent to
8 the 29 percent now, I think is an improvement. Is it COVID-related? I could say last year
9 was 27 percent before COVID, so the improvement is [inaudible] COVID-related, but at
10 present the peak at 29 percent, I suspect that some of that is COVID, because even the
11 numbers in Santa Clara County went up, not just local Palo Alto residents playing, but also
12 in the county, more county residents are playing. So, it could be that people don't want to
13 travel out of the region as much to play golf. They may travel out of region for other needs
14 – family needs, travel needs, business needs, things like that, but to play golf, perhaps they
15 don't want to travel out of the region. Your other question was is it sustainable how we're
16 performing and what are we doing to market? I would venture to say that after COVID that
17 perhaps our Palo Alto resident numbers and our county numbers will decline, but it will be
18 replaced with San Mateo players coming, San Francisco County players coming and other
19 across the Bay players coming here to keep up the play. It's because the word is out,
20 absolutely. We been recognized by national magazines as a great course to play and
21 amongst golfers. They invite their friends and then they pull their friends to play in a
22 foursome with them. The numbers will fluctuate, but right now I will venture to say that it
23 is probably likely that our higher local play is due to people not wanting to travel.

24 Vice Chair Cribbs: Lam, is there a number that you all have in mind for two years or three
25 years from now what you'd like the number of rounds to be that the course can comfortably
26 sustain?

27 Mr. Do: We do, but I don't have those numbers off the top of my mind. You can see that
28 our goal for this fiscal year is to hit 57,000 rounds, which is higher than our prior years. In
29 our golf course performance it is an acceleration of rounds every year, and the National
30 Golf Foundation did tell us it would take us about four to five years to reach a peak, so
31 we're not at that point yet. This is not even two-and-a-half years in. I apologize. I don't
32 have the figure with me, but it is somewhere in the 60,000-63,000. Please don't quote me.

33 Vice Chair Cribbs: I won't, I promise. Thank you very much. Are the men's clubs, the golf
34 club, and the women's clubs happy?

35 Mr. Do: Well, happiness is a different definition. I would say dynamic pricing did not make
36 them happy. Course play makes them happy.

1 Vice Chair Cribbs: That's fair. Thank you.

2 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, Lam, for the presentation. I really appreciated the historical
3 information that you presented to us. It was interesting to learn and help put things in
4 perspective. I think it's amazing that we're on target for hitting our numbers for fiscal '20-
5 '21, given the pandemic. I think overall expectations are very low for just about anything
6 right now. So to be hitting the target numbers, that's great. Based on some of the previous
7 discussion in terms of the booking rates that you're hitting, I think what we have working
8 in our favor is the lack of options for recreation, particularly outdoor recreation
9 opportunities are going to be much more popular right now, since indoor isn't an option,
10 so that certainly must be working in our favor.

11 Mr. Do: I'm going to knock on wood that we sustain this pace. I know that, unfortunately,
12 they're right. It's also fortunate that our community will have other options soon, I hope,
13 but there's a lot more going on, I think, than just what we're looking at. I can say that the
14 golf course is on target, and I hope it stays on target, but there are other factors that could
15 easily make it change and go either way where we could accelerate and do so well, or we
16 could not accelerate so well. Unfortunately, the past two years we also had a fire season
17 that, in fact, impacted air quality, which has a direct impact on golf course play as well. I
18 think there are many factors that can impact this. We're all crossing our fingers, knocking
19 on wood that we can sustain this.

20 Chair Greenfield: Sure. Thanks for helping set expectations, but we'll take good news when
21 we hear it. How does our partner agreement for the golf course differ or compare with the
22 Aquatics contract? Part of my question is based on I know for the Aquatics discussions
23 we've had, Tim Sheeper has always been involved, and that has been a part of the reports
24 and the presentations and discussions. I'm wondering, is there something fundamentally
25 different, whereas we don't have anybody from the golf course operator involved in these
26 presentations and reports?

27 Mr. Do: I think maybe one fundamental difference is, from what I understand – and I don't
28 oversee, nor am I involved in the Parks budget – but from what I've seen is it's a
29 requirement in the Aquatics contract that the operator present their figures. We do not have
30 that requirement in our contract. Certainly, I think if I were to ask them to be a part of these
31 presentations, they would be willing. Is that what you're asking? Am I reaching your point?

32 Chair Greenfield: That's very helpful to understand, that it is required in the Aquatics
33 contract. That makes sense, and I'm not saying that we're not getting the information we
34 need from you. I'm just considering the contrast between the two and trying to understand
35 what the difference is. That makes sense. Thanks. As far as changes required because of
36 COVID and the reopening of the course, what are the rules for people out on the golf
37 course? How are these communicated, and how are these enforced?

1 Mr. Do: We have several changes in course play. Several things that we changed. Initially,
2 we opened without any cart rentals, and that was per State and County guidelines. When
3 we allowed cart rentals, we initially allowed them as singles only, and then we evolved into
4 the same household. On the course, the biggest COVID precaution is putting. Where one
5 putts, you're putting towards the hole, but your ball is not far into the hole. We've put sort
6 of a lift on the putting green holes, so that your ball reaches the lift and then it bounces
7 back, and that's considered a putt. This is so that players are not reaching into the hole, one
8 after the other, to retrieve their putts. On the course, we also have a course marshal for two
9 purposes. Generally, the course marshal is to ensure fair play, but now the course marshal
10 is also to ensure that people social distance and that, sometimes when we have a short hole
11 followed by a long hole, or two short holes follow each other, players may have to wait on
12 the course for the group ahead to be far enough that they would not be hit by a golf ball
13 who teed off, so the marshal is also on the course to remind people to distance while they're
14 waiting.

15 Chair Greenfield: Masks are required for everyone?

16 Mr. Do: Masks are not required. This once again is per State and County, and the City's
17 mask ordinance which, when you are participating in an activity, you are not required to
18 wear a mask. One other precaution that I forgot to mention previously was that the golf
19 balls on the driving range are sanitized before they are distributed. We sanitize them
20 through a ball wash machine, a ball wash process.

21 Chair Greenfield: So masks are not required, even if there's people that aren't from the
22 same household that are playing within the same group?

23 Mr. Do: That's correct. They're in the same foursome, but they're not in the same cart, and
24 they're not teeing off together. They're teeing off one after the other, so the social distance
25 perspective different from what I think we heard a lot in the Aquatics presentation, is not a
26 challenge. I can see why being in a lane, it's difficult to have more participants swim, but
27 at the golf course, it's wide open enough, even while you're waiting for the tee, you
28 probably have at least – a foursome at each tee – I'm going to say the area has at least 500
29 to 800 square feet of space for four people.

30 Chair Greenfield: So everyone has to stay at least six feet apart, but they don't have to have
31 a mask on?

32 Mr. Do: Unless you're in the same household.

33 Chair Greenfield: All right, thanks. You mentioned the driving range, and I was going to
34 ask about that. Could you explain how the operations have changed there? I think maybe
35 every other stall is now open?

1 Mr. Do: That's correct. We have reduced the number of stalls available to play. This is to
2 create more distance in between those that are practicing golf. In addition to that, we have
3 shut down our ball vending machines. Now, in order to...that way, no one is distributing
4 tokens, no one is retrieving tokens. Now you are, when you arrive to practice, you are
5 distributed a basket of balls that have been sanitized. You're handed a basket. It's all been
6 outdoors. There's no indoor sales, and from there you go to your practice area. We do have
7 a time limit on how long you can practice as well. It has resulted with fewer stalls and some
8 people having to wait until a stall becomes available. I'm trying to think what other
9 measures are in place. I think that's about it.

10 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I haven't heard anything about youth programming and use
11 by high schools or youth clubs. What is the status of youth programming?

12 Mr. Do: Our high schools are using the golf course on a regular basis. We also continue to
13 golf programming through the First Tee Silicon Valley at the course. We also, this past
14 summer, had a few summer camps that were offered as well, so even as we reopened with
15 COVID, we still continued to have our youth programing. One thing that we did not
16 continue to have, we suspended temporarily and have reinstited now is the Youth On
17 Course program. The Youth On Course is separate from a teaching program. It's a program
18 that allows you to go on course and play. That program we suspended temporarily, but we
19 brought that back earlier this month.

20 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I would appreciate seeing more year-to-year comparison data
21 and would encourage you to start accumulating this data to present a year from now. It's
22 good to see the revenue, expense and rounds data coming up. I'd be interested in seeing
23 the percentage of open tee times, so our booking percentage, average booking fees, youth
24 camp participation and perhaps other youth data as applicable. I think this would be very
25 helpful for us to see on a year-to-year basis, so that we can chart our progress, and there
26 may be other applicable similar data that you could include.

27 Mr. Do: Okay.

28 Chair Greenfield: Otherwise, thank you very much for the presentation and all of your
29 efforts in managing this gem for our community.

30 Mr. Do: Yes, and I thank you for this opportunity. Daren asked me if I could present to
31 you, the Commission, I said, "Yes, absolutely." I've had this opportunity, so once again,
32 I'm glad to do this.

33 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Council Member Kou, do you have any comments?

34 Council Member Kou: No, but thank you for the presentation, Lam.

1 Mr. Do: Yes, you're welcome. Thank you very much.

2 Chair Greenfield: Any follow-up comments from other Commissioners?

3 Mr. Do: If I could just say in closing, thank you for the appreciation of my work, but I also
4 want to share, my work is also the work of other colleagues as well. In our division, Parks
5 and Open Space every now and then we rely on each other for help here and there. I do
6 rely on the Parks staff occasionally for irrigation support. I do rely on the Open Space staff
7 for monitoring, so it's a collective effort, so if I could extend the thank you to my colleagues
8 as well.

9 Chair Greenfield: Absolutely, well noted. You are the face of the program, but there are
10 many people involved. It takes a village.

11 Mr. Do: With that, I'll conclude.

12 **5. Other Commission Ad Hoc and Liaison Updates**

13 Chair Greenfield: We'll now move on to the next item, which is the Commission Ad Hoc
14 and Liaison updates. There has been a report submitted, probably most enthusiastically and
15 consistently by Commissioner Moss. Thank you. There's probably other information that
16 isn't getting submitted, so does anyone have any questions or information you'd like to
17 share? This is an opportunity to add in what may not be in our monthly report here.

18 Vice Chair Cribbs: I'd like to add something to our fund development report, if I might.

19 Chair Greenfield: Yes, please.

20 Vice Chair Cribbs: I just wanted to mention that we talked to everybody last time, I believe,
21 and did a fund development report, talking about identifying small, medium and large
22 projects that might be good projects to be looked at in terms of possible funding and to so
23 see also which ones were in alignment with the Master Plan. One of the ones that we've
24 been working on is the gym, because as everybody knows, the city of Palo Alto doesn't
25 have their own gym. Right now we're just doing some research and collecting information
26 on three things. First of all, possible locations. Second of all, the footprint, the acreage and
27 the square footage and also what that gym might look like, because there are a lot of
28 variations on the kinds of gyms that reflect the needs of the community. The third thing is
29 what the price tag would be on each one of those gyms. So, it's pretty exciting to think
30 about all of this and have a vision of having our own gym for Palo Alto. I'm pretty excited
31 to look at the way the Junior Museum did their great work by creating a vision at the
32 beginning and capturing the imagination of the community, so I just wanted to mention
33 that about the gym project in particular.

1 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Did you want to say anything about the discussions you've
2 had with Palo Alto Recreation Foundation?

3 Vice Chair Cribbs: Yes. Since our last report – and that is in the November update – we
4 had a great meeting with the Recreation Foundation. I was invited to come and talk with
5 them about the projects that they want to fund, their process for funding, how they work
6 with the City. They are very excited that Adam Howard is now going to be their new staff
7 liaison. So, they are anxious to hear what our thoughts are for the future, and I will look
8 forward to attending some more of their meetings. I also had a good meeting with Friends
9 of the Park, and they, too, are excited about the opportunity to help the city. They did talk
10 about the dog contributions for potential dog parks, for amenities for dog parks. Then, as
11 we said, we had Daren put together a great meeting with the staff of Recreation and Parks
12 to help us understand their role in future fundraising to help Community Services.

13 Chair Greenfield: Thank you, and I understand that you impressed the Recreation
14 Foundation so much they'd like you to attend the monthly meeting. Given that, I think it
15 would be appropriate for us to officially give you a liaison role from the Commission to
16 the Palo Alto Recreation Foundation. Unless any Commissioners have a reason not to move
17 forward with that, we'll move forward with you being our liaison. I can't think of a better
18 person for it.

19 Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Jeff.

20 Commissioner Reckdahl: I think that would be a very good idea.

21 Chair Greenfield: Great. We'll add you to the list there, and Catherine, if you can please
22 add to the liaisons listing. We'll look forward to more good reports from you on that end.
23 Thank you. Any other comments or questions?

24 Commissioner Moss: I have one about the Magical Bridge and one about the off-leash dog
25 presentation. Dog area in Ramos Park, just wanted to mention that staff has done a
26 tremendous amount of work to try to bring the Magical Bridge Playground into compliance
27 with County rules and regulations about opening a playground. This is no small feat, and
28 they had not very much time to do it in. They did officially open up last week. I've been
29 over there three or four times. It's getting popular, and the issues are real. Staff, they have
30 two staff members there all the time that they're open during the week, and then they have
31 security consultants there on the weekend. I understand that they're moving forward with
32 some volunteers, but it's a tremendous effort, so I want to thank staff for doing that, and I
33 just want to make sure that everybody knows how much work is going into that.

1 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Daren did touch on that, certainly, in his Department Report.

2 Commissioner Moss: Yeah, but it just touched the surface.

3 Chair Greenfield: We appreciate the effort here. It's a challenge.

4 Commissioner Moss: And then the second thing is that we've been talking about the Ramos
5 Park renovation, but it seems that one of the biggest remaining issues that staff has spent a
6 lot of time on is the concept of an off-leash dog area instead of an official dog park. I just
7 wanted to thank staff for all of the effort, specifically Peter Jensen, all the work that they've
8 had to do. I am personally dubious about how well it's going to do, but we're going to
9 watch and see how this goes and see what happens. Anyway, it's a lot of work. That's it.

10 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Anyone else? I have a quick update regarding the Cubberley
11 lights, as the field liaison, the temporary lights that Palo Alto Soccer Club has up. They
12 seem to be happily working with just the four lighting units, which is good, so there's none
13 on the sidelines. It's good for everyone. It's less expensive for the club and less
14 encumbering for the community. They have got the units taped off and coned off properly,
15 which wasn't initially done. I also have a question. I don't know if the Rec Opportunities
16 Ad Hoc has done anything for communication with the skate park folks? I just wanted to
17 know if there was any update on that that anyone had to share.

18 Commissioner LaMere: I do not have an update in regards to that, but I will reach out to
19 Sam again next week. Sam Kaplinsky, who is the young man who spoke with us a few
20 meetings ago.

21 Chair Greenfield: Thanks, Jeff. This is an opportunity for anyone else to ask if there are
22 updates on any of the projects or liaison roles that you would be curious about. [none]
23 Okay, Council Member Kou, do you have anything you would like to add? Thank you for
24 joining us, as always.

25 **VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR December 15, 2020**

26
27 Chair Greenfield: Let's move on to discuss our tentative agenda for the final meeting of
28 the year, December 15th, an early meeting based on the holiday season coming up. Daren?

29 Mr. Anderson: Thank you, Chair. Three, I think, likely candidates, although I'm going to
30 put tentative in there, just because there are a few, as always, outliers that need approval
31 from other departments, and sometimes those take time. The Ramos Park Park
32 Improvement Ordinance we could bring to Commission. The dog off-leash area, as a
33 discussion. This would be before the public outreach meeting that we do for the
34 community, and we had sort of switched positions on this. The Ad Hoc had discussed
35 which should come first, and after more discussion, we settled on bringing it to the

1 Commission first. Lastly, potential Foothills Park name change. I hope to have that on the
2 agenda on December 15th.

3 Chair Greenfield: Great. Does anyone else have any requests or suggestions either for this
4 coming month, or to work into the queue for future meetings?

5 Commissioner Moss: I think the Magical Bridge, there should be an update from staff in
6 the next couple months, somewhere around January, just to see how we're doing, or just
7 an update. I don't want to wait six months.

8 Chair Greenfield: I think you're asking for an update, as opposed to an agendized
9 presentation on Magical Bridge. Is that correct?

10 Commissioner Moss: Right.

11 Chair Greenfield: I suspect we'll be getting a monthly update for a while. One question I
12 didn't bring up in the previous golf item is, given that the annual contract is expiring at the
13 end of the fiscal year, is there a role that the Parks and Rec will play in reviewing whether
14 or not we decide to opt to renew?

15 Mr. Anderson: Not necessarily, although we can certainly consult the liaison and discuss
16 it a little bit more with Commissioner LaMere and see if there are any elements that sort of
17 bear a discussion like that, but typically it's an operations point of view, and staff moves
18 forward on that, but I'm certainly open to further questions and comments on that.

19 Chair Greenfield: Okay, thank you.

20 Vice Chair Cribbs: Jeff, since we're talking about golf again, at the last session we talked
21 about the First Tee and a possible timeline or understanding on the Commission's part
22 about what had to be done to make the First Tee move forward in terms of an MOU, other
23 departments in the City, check-off times and all of that, so that we could understand the
24 timeline. Is that possible in your staff report? I don't think it has a big agenda item, but just
25 to learn more about that?

26 Mr. Anderson: Yeah, probably not in this coming staff report, but soon. We're working
27 over a hurdle on City contribution to this project and how to manage that, which is sort of
28 an antecedent to moving on to those other elements. So, we're going to keep working on
29 that piece and see if we can find a way to make that work, and then move on. As soon as I
30 have that, I'm glad to incorporate that into a Department Report.

31 Vice Chair Cribbs: That's great. Thank you.

32 Commissioner Moss: Last time we talked about getting John Aikin back in about the
33 Baylands Trail. Just, if you can schedule that in.

1 Mr. Anderson: Will do.

2 Chair Greenfield: It's been some time since we discussed the idea, but I think there was a
3 goal at some point to get an overview of all the trails in Palo Alto Open Spaces.

4 Vice Chair Cribbs: That's like a New Year's Resolution, isn't it?

5 Chair Greenfield: I suppose. I guess we'd have to say that it's going to be one of the more
6 popular checkbox items on New Year's Resolutions, at least for the first half of the new
7 year.

8 Vice Chair Cribbs: Yeah.

9 Chair Greenfield: Given the limited access at gyms.

10 **VII. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

11 Chair Greenfield: Does anyone have anything they'd like to share?

12 Vice Chair Cribbs: Only Happy Thanksgiving to everybody.

13 Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I realize this would be a more appropriate time to make those
14 wishes known, but I decided to speak earlier while we had our participants on the meeting.

15 Vice Chair Cribbs: No, that was very nice that you do that. That was very well done.

16 Commissioner Reckdahl: We had the joint meeting with North Ventura, and today North
17 Ventura did send out a notice saying that one of the property owners is looking to redevelop
18 soon, so that pushes up the timeline for re-evaluating the parks in that neighborhood.

19 Chair Greenfield: Which property owner was that, do you know?

20 Commissioner Reckdahl: They're looking at re-developing part of the Fry's parcel. It
21 would be the part of the parcel that's near Park. They just gave some big picture ideas of
22 what's going on. More details will follow, but it will be –

23 Chair Greenfield: Thanks for the update.

24 Commissioner Moss: Is this near where they wanted to widen the creek, or is this a potential
25 gym site?

26 Commissioner Reckdahl: They're going to go, starting at the creek and going north from
27 there, so this would be right up against the creek, which would reduce some of our options
28 if we wanted to widen it. But the most practical way of widening it would just be using the
29 existing right-of-way and not adding any extra parkland. There's still some naturalization

1 you can do without having to require additional land. But if we really do want that
2 additional land, then we have to get into the planning process, too.

3 Commissioner Moss: So Daren, like we did with the AT&T property, can we put a bug in
4 the ear of Real Estate and Legal and try to get ahead of that?

5 Mr. Anderson: I can certainly try.

6 Commissioner Moss: I think just a bug would be good and see where it goes, because it
7 doesn't happen very often.

8 Vice Chair Cribbs: No.

9 Commissioner Reckdahl: The other thing to realize is this is going to be...There's a new
10 housing law that was passed last year, S.B. 330, which really compresses the timelines, so
11 this won't be as leisurely as the normal planning sessions. All the timelines will be
12 compressed, so if we do want the park, if we want land for the creek, we have to decide
13 very quickly and get it into the queue. Otherwise, you snooze, you lose.

14 Commissioner Moss: All in favor say aye.

15 Commissioner Reckdahl: Well, it ain't gonna be cheap.

16 Chair Greenfield: I think Council Member Kou is listening. This is information that's
17 obviously going to need to go to Council to get further. It's a difficult time and a unique
18 opportunity, and something to consider. Thank you. Any other comments?

19 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

20 Meeting adjourned by motion by Commissioner Vice Chair Cribbs and second by
21 Commissioner Moss at 9:53 p.m.