



**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
August 24, 2021
Virtual Conference
Palo Alto, California**

Commissioners Present: Chair Anne Cribbs, Keith Reckdahl, David Moss, Amanda Brown, Jeff LaMere, Vice Chair Greenfield

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Council Member Kou

Staff Present: Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Lam Do

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Cribbs noted that the Paralympic Games in Tokyo is tonight, opening ceremonies. The games will run until September 4th.

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Paul Goldstein, Palo Alto Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee member, addressed the Commission and commented that at their August meeting the Committee sent a note to their staff to please work with Parks and Recreation Commission staff to request a change in the signage at Gate D of Foothills Park. It is currently signed, “No Bicycles,” although bicycles are, in fact, allowed in Arastradero Preserve up to the gate and also up to the gate in Foothills Park where there is a paved road. He said the original justification for the closure was that the gate was opened when Foothills Park was open only to residents of Palo Alto, and the Bay-to-Ridge Trail ran through it. As a condition of funding the Coastal Conservancy and the County of Santa Clara requested that pedestrians be allowed through the gate. A bicycle could not get on the trail in Foothills Park because the trail runs along hiking trails where bicycles are prohibited. However, at this time there is no real reason to not permit bicycles to enter or exit the park. He said it creates a bad sense of government action, being a prohibition without a justification at this time. He said he believes a meeting has been or will be set up between Parks and Recreation Commission



1 staff and members of the Commission, and they look forward to discussing the issue.

2 Monica Williams, President, Palo Alto Pickle Ball Club, addressed the Commission and
3 said they now have a thriving pickle ball community, thanks to the Commission and the
4 City. She updated the Commission, stating they are on track to end the year with 700 club
5 members, of which over 50 percent are Palo Alto residents. With another 13 members the
6 club would include 0.5 percent of all Palo Alto residents. They are happy to report that
7 other cities, including Menlo Park, Mountain View, Portola Valley and Sunnyvale are also
8 providing pickle ball for their communities. Many more young people are now playing,
9 and families are finding pickle ball to be an easy sport to play together, greatly increasing
10 the number of players, many of whom can only play in the evenings. This is why they
11 request the Commission to consider extending the hours to allow more evening play.
12 Currently, from 3:00 to 10:00 p.m. two of the tennis courts are shared with pickle ball
13 players who put up seven temporary nets when tennis players are not there. The seven nets
14 can accommodate 28 pickle ball players, or seven families of four. At any given time, 16
15 pickle ball players can play on the same amount of space as one tennis court, which results
16 in efficient use of park facilities. She said that Joe Athon [phonetic], avid pickleball player
17 and retiree from the Palo Alto Fire Department, has created an excellent independent
18 survey of usage on all of the lighted Palo Alto tennis and pickleball courts, which they
19 hope will help staff understand the growing needs of the pickleball community and the
20 options available. She concluded with an invitation to anyone feeling down in the dumps,
21 to go over and visit them on the pickleball courts, and they will feel better in no time.

22 **IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

23 Mr. Anderson updated the Commission on the skatepark progress. The Ad Hoc and staff
24 had a productive meeting with Sam Kaplinsky and additional stakeholders. Feedback
25 included support for building a new skatepark around the existing skatepark. They will
26 likely need to hold a community meeting to discuss with the broader skateboard
27 community – neighbors, other park visitors – as a next step. He will meet with the
28 skatepark Ad Hoc later this week when they will discuss those next steps.

29 Regarding Recreation’s summer camps, they were very successful this year. Despite
30 continuing to offer smaller group camps, they had over 900 summer camp registrations.
31 There were 160 in-person camps and 37 virtual camps offered. A highlight the campers
32 shared with Mr. Anderson was having Mayor DuBois visit the last day of the second
33 Kidizens Camp. He made a special appearance on July 23rd at the camp, where campers
34 were building their own small-scale cities with Legos. The campers built their own
35 versions of the cities, including police stations, schools and grocery stores. They were
36 eager to show the Mayor where his house would be in their cities and enjoyed hearing
37 about the Mayor’s duties.

38 Mr. Anderson said the Fourth of July, Music in the Park was a great success. There was a



1 large crowd, similar in size to previous chili cookoff crowds. Food trucks, kids’ activities,
2 and live music led to a very successful event. Recreation staff is considering keeping the
3 same format for future Fourth of July events. He said there is a movie night on Friday,
4 September 10th. They will be showing *Zootopia* and incorporating the overall theme on
5 Emergency Responders Appreciation Night. They will be showing a “thank-you” slide
6 show before the movie, showing Palo Alto emergency responders in action, including Palo
7 Alto Police, Fire and Office of Emergency Services. They are working on the possibility
8 of having first responders present to interact with the public prior to the start of the movie.
9 He said there will be more information to come.

10 The fall programming for Community Services will begin registration for residents on
11 August 26th and non-residents on September 2nd, with a full range of class offerings. He
12 said the Cubberley facility has been open for indoor rentals since July 13th. There is an
13 indoor mask mandate for all individuals regardless of vaccination status. He also reported
14 that the Moonlight Run and Walk will be held on September 17th, both in-person and
15 virtually, which is a 5K walk and run, a 10K run and a half-marathon. He said Recreation
16 is adhering to the mask mandate ensuring that all indoor program participants are wearing
17 masks, including rentals, programs and in-person customer visits.

18 Mr. Anderson said that Public Works advised him that the Rinconada Park Improvement
19 project will start in a few weeks. He will send the Commission more information as
20 available. The Highway 101 bridge is expected to be completed this fall, tentatively the
21 end of October. There was a question at the last meeting if there was a ribbon-cutting
22 planned. The project manager advised that they would plan a ribbon-cutting to happen
23 shortly after the project is completed but are holding off on setting a date until closer to
24 the completion date.

25 He said there has been in issue of infill on the synthetic turf field at El Camino Park. This
26 happened back in 2019 and was due to the properties of the infill, later determined to be
27 non-compatible with local weather and heat, which resulted in the infills sticking together
28 and clumping. The vendor replaced the infill at El Camino Park in the fall of 2019.
29 Unfortunately, some of the old infill could not be removed as it was down low and matted
30 in. Over time, it worked its way up. There is not a lot, but it continues to clump and cause
31 problems. Mr. Anderson said staff is doing their best to remove the material as they find
32 it, but the bigger problem is that the infill at Stanford Palo Alto Playing Fields is now
33 exhibiting the same problem of sticking and clumping, because it is the same material that
34 was not appropriately rated for the climate. Staff has been working with the vendor to
35 resolve the problem. Unfortunately, almost all of the contractors that worked on the project
36 have either changed owners or gone out of business. However, the new owner of the
37 company that manufactured the infill has some remaining inventory of the appropriate
38 kind of infill for the Palo Alto area and will provide it at no cost. He said they are working
39 with the town’s attorneys on the issues and he will update the Commission when he has a

1 timeframe for when the infill will be replaced at Stanford Palo Alto.

2 On the Rinconada Park project, he said Peter Jensen advised him that construction will
3 begin on September 14th and is anticipated to be completed on December 21st. The entire
4 end of the park will be fenced off during construction and the larger main turf area will
5 not be available, nor will the group picnic area.

6 Recreation staff advised Mr. Anderson to give a heads-up to the Commission that the
7 Cubberley seasonal lighting is coming again. This is where lights are brought out to extend
8 practice. It will run from November 8th through December 23rd, and January 3rd through
9 March 11th from sunset to 8:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. This is for practice time
10 only They request that night times go through the Cubberley Community Center – no drop-
11 off or pick-up on Nelson. Adam Howard will send out informational reminder postcards
12 to the homes around Cubberley to let them know around mid-October.

13 Mr. Anderson said in a previous report he had discussed the drought and how staff is
14 conserving water by strategically reducing water in aesthetic turf areas while ensuring that
15 playing fields and areas with trees are appropriately watered. Irrigation staff are regularly
16 inspecting the irrigation systems around the city and promptly making repairs or
17 addressing issues to avoid water waste. There may be some non-playing-field turf areas
18 that are a bit less green than during non-drought periods due to this water conservation
19 effort.

20 Mr. Anderson said at the last meeting there was a question about Foothills annual passes
21 and how they are selling, and if they are selling them to local or out-of-town visitors. He
22 cited that to date there have been 469 annual passes sold, seven to low income, ten to active
23 duty or veterans, and 135 for seniors; and 311 of the 469 were passes sold to Palo Alto
24 residents, and 158 to non-Palo Alto residents. He said sales have tapered off and they are
25 now averaging about 10 to 15 a week. In the initial few weeks after opening when people
26 were rushing to get them sales were around 200.

27 Mr. Anderson reported that the hillside barbecues have been removed. The Commission
28 had made a recommendation to Council, and Council directed staff to take action to
29 remove them. There has been no negative feedback from park visitors. They were
30 seldomly used, and there have been no complaints.

31 Regarding the Supervising Ranger position, vacant for close to two years, they received
32 approval to fill the position, it is now posted for recruitment and they are actively working
33 on getting back to full staffing. The visitation at Foothills seems to be holding steady, with
34 still no closures since Easter. The Supervising Ranger had shared that for July there were
35 26,000 visitors. This is typically the busiest month of the year, and this is about 12,000
36 more visitors than typical in previous Julys.

1 Mr. Anderson shared that there is a Council study session on wildfire preparedness on
2 August 30th that may be of interest to Commissioners. The Vice Mayor had reached out
3 to the City Manager and asked if staff could look into the appropriateness of campfires
4 and barbecues in Foothills Nature Preserve, given the wildfire concerns. In response, and
5 in addition to some other needs, the Palo Alto Fire Department had a staff person join one
6 of the Open Space Rangers for a site visit, a field survey, in both Foothills Nature Preserve
7 and Pearson Arastradero on July 28th. They gave feedback on how the work is looking in
8 terms of what has been already achieved in wildfire protection efforts and other things that
9 can be improved upon. The general feedback was the status of this year's work and the
10 work that is still visible from prior years, is considerable and looking good. Staff didn't
11 find any significant issues but did point out a few areas that need attention and made some
12 recommendations. They were largely around pruning of trees in select areas, specifically
13 some eucalyptus trees needing either heavy pruning or possible removal, depending on the
14 situation. They also gave some guidance regarding trimming branches around the
15 Interpretive Center and keeping the gutters free of leaf litter. This has already been taken
16 care of with staff this year. Some continued weed whipping around the perimeter of the
17 maintenance shop was mentioned, and this was completed by staff shortly after the survey.
18 They will continue their regular practice of removing leaf litter around the barbecues in
19 Orchard Glen and Oak Grove, which is traditionally done with Rangers clearing out the
20 brush. They talked about the campfire circles, specifically looking at the two that are at
21 Towle Camp. Currently, they are not allowing campfires this camping season. However,
22 the fire fighter said the way they are being maintained, he didn't feel that barbecues or
23 campfire circles posed a significant risk if they continued to be adequately maintained as
24 they currently are.

25 Mr. Anderson shared that they did some analysis of what some neighboring communities
26 are doing in terms of campfires and barbecues. They spoke with San Mateo County Parks,
27 who allow only charcoal barbecues, the same as Palo Alto. During high-risk days they
28 may close select barbecues. During red flag days, Palo Alto closes them. They do not allow
29 any wood burning in their parks, but do allow charcoal barbecues in their campground.
30 State parks allow both wood fires and barbecues, and on red flag days they don't allow
31 either charcoal barbecues or wood fires. However, they do allow propane camp stoves.
32 Santa Clara County Parks allows wood fires and barbecues – charcoal only – but require
33 a ten-foot clearance around the barbecues, which Palo Alto meets or exceeds. On red flag
34 days they prohibit wood fires but allow charcoal barbecues.

35 Mr. Anderson attended a Hawthornes Area meeting plan, the Mid-Pen planning process
36 for their Hawthornes area, in proximity to both Pearson Arastradero and Foothills Nature
37 Preserve. The meeting was to comment and review the draft vision and goals for the
38 Hawthornes Area. Their next meeting will be in fall, 2021, and they will present the final
39 vision and goals for recommendation to the Board. They will also discuss the concept of
40 forming a working group for recommendation to the Board.

1 Mr. Anderson recognized Catherine Bourquin, who is retiring from the City in October.
2 This will be her final Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. He thanked her for her
3 dedication, hard work and tremendous contributions to the City over her 31 years of
4 service. Chair Cribbs echoed the tribute to Ms. Bourquin and said they will miss her
5 terribly. They appreciate all the dedication over the years and all the requests done with
6 cheerfulness and enthusiasm. The Commissioners wished her well and acknowledged her
7 past efforts on many projects.

8 Vice Chair Greenfield asked Mr. Anderson about the Fourth of July events and that staff
9 is considering doing something similar in the future. He wondered if the chili cookoffs
10 would be continuing. Mr. Anderson said these were just initial responses to the different
11 way of doing it. Part of the idea of considering moving away from the chili cookoff was
12 the challenge of securing teams, ticket sales and cash handling as well as dealing with long
13 lines and chili selling out, which created some negative experiences. These were avoided
14 with the recent event. He said it was just a thought and added that they would welcome
15 feedback from the Commission on the idea. Vice Chair Greenfield said if people hear that
16 the chili cookoff might go away it might be a way to spur new interest and getting people
17 to sign up.

18 Regarding the drought and strategic water irrigation reduction, Commissioner Moss asked
19 if community members see issues with the grass, what they should do or who they should
20 contact. Mr. Anderson said if it's routine, less than bright green grass, it's probably not a
21 problem. Residents are always welcome to call or email or report on 311. More often, the
22 concerns he gets have to do with a pooling of water, a broken irrigation head, a stuck valve
23 where its clear that one little area is not being irrigated and the rest of the area is. On these
24 types of things, the sooner they are notified the better. Vice Chair Greenfield asked if 311
25 is the best way to communicate such things. Mr. Anderson thought that was a good way
26 but didn't discourage from using any other techniques; all are welcomed. He said the turf
27 replacement is a difficult ongoing issue and he appreciated the effort staff is putting into
28 it.

29 Commissioner Reckdahl asked in regard to the turf replacement if the people who installed
30 it are going out of business but the manufacturer is not. Mr. Anderson said the
31 manufacturer also went out of business. Another company bought part of their profile, but
32 they are moving out of the infill area altogether. TPE was a company in Italy, and they
33 went out of business, but the manufacturer sold off a good portion of their supplies and
34 remainder of the facilities. They are willing to honor at least providing the remaining infill
35 inventory that they have, which is adequate to replace the infill at Stanford Palo Alto. He
36 said the turf itself is not the problem. It is the infill only. Commissioner Reckdahl asked if
37 there is anything that might damage the turf itself. Mr. Anderson said even when the infill
38 gums up badly, it is easy to separate from the turf, as it catches on the players' cleats. It's
39 seen a lot on the sidelines.

1 Commissioner Moss asked how many in-person camps there were. Mr. Anderson said 160.
2 Commissioner Moss thought this was incredible the number of camps. He said there was
3 a letter to the Commission about Los Trancos Trail degradation and he asked if this was
4 something that the Rangers could handle. Mr. Anderson said the Rangers did go out and
5 inspect it a few days after the email. There were no safety issues. It was the routine
6 sloughing. He explained that some of the Los Trancos area is on the edge of a steep hillside
7 and regularly there are little washouts, where anywhere from two to three, even six-foot-
8 wide soil that has sloughed off the edge and onto the trail and has to be cleared. This
9 happens periodically. It wasn't enough to require any heavy equipment. He said there is
10 also no easy and permanent fix for this type of thing. The only thing would be relocating
11 the trail to an area not on such a steep drop-off. The soil above it is unstable, and will
12 continue to this periodically, especially after storms. They will simply have to always keep
13 their eyes on, but it was not a safety issue.

14 Commissioner Moss asked when recruiting for Commissions occurs. Mr. Anderson said
15 he will check with the Clerk's office and get an update on next steps for that.
16 Commissioner Moss said he had asked about the triangle of the AT&T property not
17 acquired for park land. He wondered if this had been brought up with the attorneys. Mr.
18 Anderson said he did discuss that with the Assistant Director of Public Works Engineering.
19 The area is called the Measure E site. It is ten acres of land that were undedicated as park
20 land to use for future anaerobic digester area. Commissioner Moss clarified that he was
21 referring to the little triangle of property next to Boulware Park that didn't come across in
22 the purchase. Mr. Anderson said the real estate agent advised it is not for sale. He will
23 keep his eyes open if it comes up. Commissioner Moss asked regarding the ten acres for
24 the anaerobic digester. Mr. Anderson said he talked to Phil Noble about it. He is looking
25 into options for going forward. He will ask him or a colleague of his to come to a future
26 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to discuss this.

27 Commissioner Brown inquired about the tree pruning in Foothills, whether the magnitude
28 is clearing massive areas and a multi-year effort. She said it can expensive and time-
29 consuming, and she asked if it is something that can be accommodated in the current
30 budget or something that is going to need to be planned for. She asked if there is any work
31 with the City arborists to look at tree help in the future. Mr. Anderson did not feel they
32 would be able to fully cover the cost of pruning all of the trees with the existing Open
33 Space budget, but perhaps in combination with Public Works they can see what's feasible.
34 He thought between Foothills and Pearson-Arastradero there are approximately 75 to 90
35 eucalyptus trees. The big ones needing the pruning are probably not as numerous. He
36 agreed that pruning is not cheap, especially in remote areas where they need to get chippers
37 and heavier equipment in. It's also possible that some would be cited for removal rather
38 than pruning, but this is also expensive, and time-consuming to build support for the
39 removal of them. Regarding arborists doing analysis on tree health and safety, they do get
40 support from Public Works. They have the Urban Forest team who comes up to the Open

1 Space areas to do analysis in all parks in terms of whether a tree has failure points. They
2 predominantly look in areas close to activity sites, such as picnic, playground or a trail
3 areas. They do risk assessments and help them periodically.

4 Chair Cribbs asked if the half-marathon he mentioned with the Moonlight Run is new. If
5 so, what is the course? Mr. Anderson said he would have to email it to her, but it has been
6 part of the Moonlight Run for quite some time. Chair Cribbs said she didn't realize that.
7 And wondered if it was a double loop or if they are incorporating more than the 10K run.
8 Commissioner Brown thought it is a loop, multiple loops around the same area.

9 Chair Cribbs asked how the Rinconada Park closure for renovations will be communicated
10 to the public. Mr. Anderson said there will be large project signs posted in a couple areas
11 with a website link and some other methods that Public Works Engineering will utilize.
12 Chair Cribbs observed in regard to Rinconada and when driving on Embarcadero down on
13 the right hand side towards Stanford, there are now big swashes of color around about five
14 of the eucalyptus trees and she wondered what they are there for. Mr. Anderson did not
15 know. Chair Cribbs thanked him for his great report and said staff has been doing a great
16 job all summer long, especially during the pandemic.

17 **V. BUSINESS**

18 **1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the June 22, 2021 and July 27, 2021 Parks and**
19 **Recreation Meeting**

20 Chair Cribbs said she and Commissioner Moss weren't able to access the July 27th minutes
21 until a little bit ago and asked if the other commissioners had access. Commission LaMere
22 and Commissioner Reckdahl said they did not see them earlier today. It was decided to
23 delay approving them until next month. Ms. Bourquin said the link was broken, but is
24 fixed now.

25 **MOTION**

26 Approval of the draft Minutes from the June 22, 2021, Parks and Recreation meeting was
27 moved by Commissioner Moss and seconded by Commissioner Reckdahl. The motion
28 passed 4-0-1, by roll call vote, with Vice Chair Greenfield abstaining.

29 Approval of the minutes from the July 27, 2021, Parks and Recreation Commission
30 meeting was moved to the agenda for the next meeting.

31 Chair Cribbs said she appreciates the way the minutes are being done and wondered if the
32 transcribing cost is being impacted. She appreciates the history and background and hopes
33 it can continue. Commissioner Moss said if this delay is because it's too hard to do in
34 timely fashion, he did not mind the verbatim minutes. He said he likes the summary

1 minutes, but verbatim would be okay as well. Ms. Bourquin said it was a mix-up as far as
2 not knowing they were to start doing summary again. She added that keeping the meetings
3 to two hours definitely lowers the cost. Commissioner Reckdahl asked what the relative
4 cost for verbatim compared to summary is. Ms. Bourquin summary takes longer, but the
5 cost has gone down from over the last few months. Commissioner Reckdahl said verbatim
6 is easier to search, but for just getting the gist of the subject matter, summaries are easier
7 to read. Commissioner Moss said he has no trouble with either one. Chair Cribbs suggested
8 they revisit the subject in a couple months and see how they feel about it. Council Member
9 Kou asked if software is used for verbatim minutes. Ms. Bourquin was not sure about this.

10 **2. Ad Hoc and Liaison Updates**

11 Baylands Tide Gate – Vice Chair Greenfield said they met with Valley Water last week to
12 review the presentation and talk about some of the details and suggestions for how to focus
13 the discussion this evening.

14 CIP Review – Commissioner Moss said he had nothing to report, and it will be addressed
15 later in the year.

16 Dog Park and Restroom CY21 – Chair Cribbs said they are in the process of scheduling a
17 meeting with the dogs in the community and also getting information from Stanford. Mr.
18 Anderson said there are competing priorities with other projects, such as skatepark and
19 wildfire and other things. It is not being fast-tracked. The fast-tracked things are other
20 restrooms that are happening sooner and don't need further action, including Ramos, Roth,
21 and Rinconada. All of the community meetings for those have been done.

22 Foothills Nature Preserve – Vice Chair Greenfield said the Ad Hoc is working with staff
23 to schedule a meeting with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, and it looks
24 like they will talk about the concern of the fourth week of September. Commissioner Moss
25 said the fact that the number of visitors is remaining at a manageable level means there is
26 less of a crisis and more controlled discussions. That will continue until November or
27 December when they will look back over the year. They had thought they would have to
28 get back to the Commission at the end of summer, but it doesn't seem like that high a
29 priority right now.

30 Fund Development CY21 – Chair Cribbs said they will be meeting with the Ad Hoc to
31 outline what was in the minutes and present it to the Commission in a couple months, a
32 marketing plan talking about how to give money to the City and ways to promote the
33 opportunities to give money to support parks and community programs. Commissioner
34 Moss asked if it included some ads. Chair Cribbs said yes, and it was a good discussion
35 last month and they will put that into one page and have a meeting and bring it to the rest
36 of the Commission.

1 New Recreation Opportunities – Chair Cribbs said they are waiting for some feedback
2 from different people they have reached out to, so nothing definitive to report. They got
3 some information from Mr. Anderson about the electrical wires above the 10.5 acres, but
4 they have not really done anything with that yet. Commissioner Moss asked if the
5 skateboard park will go under New Recreation Opportunities. Chair Cribbs said for now
6 it is there. If it becomes a bigger project and needs its own Ad Hoc, they will create one to
7 take care of that.

8 Racquet Court Policy – Commissioner Reckdahl said Commissioner Brown and they had
9 a meeting with staff talking about pickleball and tennis and exchanged emails about
10 Universal Tennis. Right now USTA is the only people who can reserve courts and they
11 wondered if they could open that up. They will have discussions going forward about that.

12 Sidewalk Vendor Policy – Commissioner Moss said they met for many hours and have
13 gone through all of the initial input from the attorneys, and it is now back with them. They
14 will have more to report later in the month.

15 Community Gardens – Commissioner Brown said she met with Ms. Bourquin to discuss
16 this. There was an isolated incident with trapping at one of the gardens. She was wondering
17 if this was something to handle on a Commission level or something that staff could handle
18 in updating the guidelines to clarify the baiting and trapping policy. Commissioner Moss
19 said in the past with such issues, getting best practices from experts at other gardens was
20 valuable, and it builds community as well. The last issue was about PVC pipe instead of
21 something else. People had lots of ideas, so he encouraged getting other gardeners’ input.
22 Ms. Bourquin said when they got approval for them a couple years ago, they didn’t want
23 to have to keep coming back for approval, so now the City Manager just reviews them and
24 gives approval, but they definitely would incorporate all of the gardeners’ input as well,
25 once they do another draft of the rat control policy, because they want to prohibit any
26 baiting.

27 Field Users – Vice Chair Greenfield said there are no updates beyond the report and the
28 update on turf replacement. Chair Cribbs asked if more soccer fields are needed. Vice
29 Chair Greenfield said this is not really the issue. Commissioner Moss commented on
30 practices from 4:15 to 10:15 p.m. He said he doesn’t know of fields where you can play
31 up until 10:15 p.m., certainly not Cubberley. Vice Chair Greenfield said it is the fields
32 with lights – Stanford Soccer Complex, Mayfield and El Camino Park.

33 Golf – Commissioner LaMere said he met with Lam, and the course is busy and at a
34 stronger pace than last year. The revenue will be more than projected. They had a question
35 about a youth fee a couple months ago. Lam followed up on that. A junior fee is offered,
36 at \$5 during after school hours, during the week. The catch is that they have to register
37 with the National Youth On-Course program. If they do that, they can then get on the
38 course after school on weekdays for \$5. Also, there are ongoing discussions with First Tee



1 regarding their proposal that they had brought to the Commission. Chair Cribbs asked how
2 to get information regarding the \$5 course fee for youth. Mr. Do replied that there is a
3 National Youth course program that supports golf and opportunities for youth, defined as
4 age 18 and under. It is a non-profit that underwrites the program and there are about 1,500
5 courses throughout the country that participate. Upon registration with the national
6 program and registering at a participating course, youth depending on time and date
7 restrictions, youth can get on the course for a \$5 fee. The national program subsidizes
8 another portion of the green fee as well.

9 Hawthornes Area – Vice Chair Greenfield appreciated Mr. Anderson attending the
10 meeting and giving the update. He was not able to attend this meeting.

11 PAUSD/City – Commissioner Reckdahl said the joint school board meeting was held, but
12 there was nothing that pertained to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Commissioner
13 Moss asked if Cubberley was on the agenda. Commissioner Reckdahl said there is a
14 separate Cubberley group that meets. Council Member Kou said she is on the Ad Hoc
15 committee along with Mayor DuBois and Councilmember Cormack. They took a break
16 during the summer break. After a little bit of time to adjust, they will be meeting again.

17 Sustainability – Commissioner Brown attended the Ad Hoc meeting and said staff get a
18 good job of organizing so that high school students could attend and were prioritized to
19 speak. She thought it was a well-run public comment session. The next meeting is focused
20 on residential building electrification, on 9/9/21 at 9:00 a.m. There is also a great post on
21 the City’s media page for those who are interested.

22 Urban Forestry – Vice Chair Greenfield said the Policy and Services Committee of City
23 Council had Urban Forestry issues. The Tree Protection Ordinance was on the agenda this
24 month. Part of the recommendation was to move forward with the work that Parks and
25 Recreation Commission started some time ago with formalizing a relationship between
26 Urban Forestry Department and Parks and Recreation Commission, for PRC to serve as a
27 community forum for urban forestry issues and advice on policy, essentially. It will go to
28 City Council for consideration probably in mid-October. The PRC Urban Forestry
29 Liaisons – Commissioner Reckdahl and Vice Chair Greenfield – will be meeting with staff
30 and the acting Urban Forester to review what has been discussed and sync up with the
31 directors of Public Works and Community Services as well. This would become part of
32 the staff report recommendation to City Council.

33 NVCAP – Commissioner Reckdahl said they are coming back to Council later in
34 September.

35 Youth Council – Chair Cribbs said they have not met yet, but she looks forward to their
36 next meeting.

1 **3. Park Improvement Ordinance for the Baylands Tide Gate Structure Repair**
2 **Project**

3 Mr. Anderson introduced Valley Water staff, Rechelle Blank, Robert Yamane, Sunshine
4 Julian and Alex Hunt.

5 Rechelle Blank, Deputy Operating Officer, Water Sheds Design and Construction
6 Division, Valley Water, addressed the Commission to discuss the PIO for the Tide Gate
7 Replacement Project and the trail work they had planned to complete in the fall. She
8 provided a summary of the decision to cancel the trail work. Valley Water had initially
9 planned to prepare the trail surface to improve the haul and truck route for the contractor's
10 use in constructing the replacement tide gate structure. In the timing to acquire all the
11 necessary regulatory requirements they decided they were taking longer than they
12 expected. After their last update to the Parks and Recreation Commission on June 2nd, they
13 received notification from the Regional Water Quality Control Board about permitting
14 requirements. The requirements of them to implement the trail work were going to be more
15 onerous, so it became clear that there were some disagreements in the trail work
16 requirements that they would need to take time to talk and work through with the Regional
17 Water Quality Control Board. It would likely mean a delay in the receiving of permits and
18 then being able to actually initiate the trail work.

19 Ms. Blank said they became concerned that all of the trail work would not be able to be
20 completed in one season, so they had planned to do this to improve the conditions for the
21 contractor for the four years of the construction project and because they would not be able
22 to implement all the trail improvements that were needed, and those improvements would
23 still be costly, they weren't going to benefit the contractor. So, they readjusted and looked
24 at what they would need to do and went ahead and cancelled the trail work. The current
25 trail access road is used for maintenance and they were trying to prepare it for inclement
26 weather in the rainy season. They are instead going to add additional specification
27 requirements to the contractor for the periods when he is actually performing the
28 construction work over the four years. They will not be adding the geotextile fabric or the
29 aggregate base to the trail that was planned for this fall. She said she recalled at the last
30 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting there were quite a few concerns raised about
31 the aggregate material and its impact on trail users and that it would be out there for
32 approximately five years. With that, and taking all this into consideration, they are going
33 to cancel that work.

34 Robert Yamane recapped some of the slides from their previous presentation in June. He
35 reiterated that the existing structure was built in 1957, is about 64 years old, at the end of
36 its expected service life and is very important because it controls the water surface
37 elevations for the three creeks that feed into it for the 100-year storm flood capacity. It
38 also protects against coastal flooding. The City of Palo Alto operates a motorized sluice



1 gate on one of the bays to enhance water quality in the Palo Alto Flood Basin. They will
2 be providing a replacement structure to provide the existing or better level of service for
3 those three creeks to protect against coastal flooding, to also practically address future sea
4 level rise, as well as limit impacts to existing habitat within the Palo Alto Flood Basin.
5 Projects are coordinated to limit impacts to the public, and this was something they have
6 been discussing, regarding the trails. He said the existing tide gate structure is located
7 along the Adobe Creek Loop Trail, so implementing the project is for the benefit of
8 maintaining the trail. He shared photos of the existing structure, the sluice gate, illustrating
9 the end-of-life condition of the structure.

10 Mr. Yamane explained that the pre-construction trail improvement work has been removed
11 from the project scope. Their original intent was to smoothen, strengthen and provide an
12 all-weather trail surface for trucks during the four years of construction seasons, but the
13 trail improvement work was not going to fully eliminate the risk of possible trail surface
14 damage or levee damage. Ultimately, permitting requirements led them to reassess the
15 work for several reasons. After the 6/22/2021 PRC meeting, regulatory agencies indicated
16 other onerous requirements that would complicate and delay the start of the trail work.
17 With this, the Valley Water O&M staff would be able to complete the entire stretch of trail
18 work, which would reduce the benefit of doing the work for the contractor. They
19 reassessed the need for the trail and surface improvement work. By not installing the trail
20 improvement work, they will eliminate three or more months of trail closures that were
21 originally planned for this year.

22 There was concern that replacing the dirt with a very hard compacted gravel may not be
23 liked by all trail users. Mr. Yamane said there are some benefits, but they recognize there
24 is an increased risk that the levees may require repairs. However, this work would remain
25 during the planned construction seasons over the four years. The contractor will be
26 performing in-kind repairs to the levee surface during the normal construction work
27 seasons, and the contractor will lighten their truck loads to find optimum balance between
28 the number of truck trips to reduce damaging the levee surface. The levees have been used
29 in the past for major construction activities, such as to construct the existing tide gate
30 structure. There will be project specification provisions limiting truck usage at the levees
31 after a significant rain event, and they will also require the contractor to repair the trail
32 surface at the end of each work season to the satisfaction of Valley Water and the City of
33 Palo Alto prior to opening to trail users between construction seasons. At the completion
34 of the project, the contractor will be required to provide a final trail surface that meets or
35 exceeds the pre-construction conditions.

36 Mr. Yamane shared a schedule of the proposed trail closures and the different trail
37 segments and dates, which is an attachment in the PIO . There are two trail segments where
38 there would be shared traffic between construction and trail users. First, a small section on
39 City of Mountain View right-of-way. This is the cross traffic at the intersection of the

1 detour. There will be a flagger there. Second, there is about a 1,300 to 1,400-foot-wide
2 trail segment where construction traffic will be on the left hand side, and the trail user
3 portion will be partly on the flat portion of the trail and partly on the righthand shoulder.
4 He said they want to get the City’s input on this because the shoulder has some undulations
5 and is not as smooth, although there is a lot of space for the shared traffic. There would
6 not be any construction traffic on Sundays, and during the five-month seasons, it will be
7 Monday through Saturday. The project will allow for continued use of the Adobe Creek
8 Loop Trail. The new tide gate structure will be a little bit wider and will have an
9 aesthetically pleasing railing, new educational signage and it will replace the weathered,
10 aged existing sluice gate system with a new motor-driven sluice gate and SCADA that will
11 provide better control over water elevations and water quality within the Basin. They will
12 work closely with the City for public outreach, such as pre-construction public meetings,
13 signage, their website, Nextdoor, and postcard mailers.

14 Alex Hunt, Environmental Planner, went over some of the environmental impacts stating
15 they appreciate the very sensitive environment that the project occurs in. with a lot of salt
16 marsh, the Bay, and many sensitive species that occur in the area. The focus of the
17 presentation is on their work as it pertains to the Adobe Creek Loop Trail, which is part of
18 the greater Bay Trail. He said they sought to minimize environmental impacts. They have
19 a short work window because they need to avoid impacts to nesting birds, specifically the
20 California Ridgeway’s rail. They looked at various alternatives on the project site. All of
21 them had comparable wetland impacts, but the one selected avoided any erosional impacts
22 on Hook’s Island or the Palo Alto Sailing Station boat dock. They incorporated a host of
23 best management practices into the project description to further avoid impacts. As part of
24 CEQA compliance, they have developed a suite of mitigation measures, such as pre-
25 constructure surveys, as-needed monitoring for protected species, installing
26 environmentally-sensitive area fencing, providing awareness training to contractors, doing
27 fish exclusion and relocation prior to dewatering, and compensating for the relatively small
28 wetland impacts by purchasing credits at a mitigation bank. They completed the CEQA
29 review earlier this year and are in the process of obtaining all of the environmental permits

30 Chair Cribbs thanked them for the presentation. She asked Mr. Anderson for any
31 comments. Mr. Anderson thanked the Valley Water staff for being receptive to working
32 with the Ad Hoc, who he thought did a wonderful job of digging in to make sure the
33 reasons for the change were articulated. They were sensitive to the fact that they had just
34 come to the Commission asking for approval for the Park Improvement Ordinance, got the
35 approval, and then changed the terms. He thought they did a good job explaining why this
36 happened and reacting to the concerns from the Ad Hoc and the Commission. He thought
37 they had a good proposal. From a City perspective, he emphasized how important the
38 project is to the community and to the Baylands Preserve. As a former manager of the
39 Preserve and caretaker of the sluice gate, he shared that it is unmanageable at this point.
40 The water cannot be controlled, which means that 622 acres of wetland in the flood basin



1 that are not being properly managed. They also run the risk of mosquito vector issues, an
2 increasing problem for the last five years in which the tide gate structure has been
3 progressively failing. Any further delays may exacerbate all of these issues, including the
4 flood protection, mosquito abatement and habitat enhancement abilities. He is hopeful the
5 project can move along with as much support as possible.

6 Chair Cribbs first invited any comments from the public. There were none.

7 Commissioner Reckdahl said one of the things the Ad Hoc talked about was that Valley
8 Water had planned to do this prep work to prevent damage to the levee, and now are not
9 doing it. Their question was what risks are they taking and what do we lose by not doing
10 this prep work? Mr. Yamane explained that, since not having the all-weather surface, they
11 will have to incorporate a waiting period after a rain to make sure the surface can dry out,
12 so potentially perhaps a three-day period after a significant rain event, so there is a little
13 more involved in incorporating the provision into the schedule. They believe there is still
14 time to do that within the tight work windows, but that will be part of their milestones and
15 requirements in the project.

16 Commissioner Reckdahl asked, if they do see any damage along the way, with they fix it
17 as it comes? Mr. Yamane said this will be a very-closely watched item, and at the first sign
18 of damage they will assess and do the repair. They anticipate there will be some that will
19 need to be done over the four years. They will repair it as they goes within the season, but
20 it will be quick repairs, repairing earth with earth. He said smoothing it out can be done
21 very quickly. Commissioner Reckdahl asked Mr. Hunt, if not doing any prep work will
22 cause any environmental damage to the system. Mr. Hunt said he does not think so. In
23 fact, it might lessen the environmental impact since it will shorten the duration of work in
24 a particularly sensitive environment. He said the Water Board was concerned with creating
25 more impervious surfaces and the runoff associate with that. He thought the risk was not
26 in the levee falling apart and trucks falling in, but it is actually an environmental benefit.

27 Commissioner Reckdahl asked for clarification on what will be done at the end of
28 construction to guarantee that the trail is back to being what it is today. Mr. Yamen said
29 they will do a pre-construction survey with City staff as well, to make sure there is good
30 documentation of the condition of the entire levee trail stretch and it will have to be
31 restored to the prior smoothness. The condition of the surface will have to meet or exceed
32 the pre-construction conditions. This will be a requirement in the project specifications in
33 the contract.

34 Mr. Anderson added he has worked on previous projects with Valley Water in the
35 Baylands, and there was concern about damage to the paved asphalt trail on the San
36 Francisquito Creek levee as well as the dirt levee by the mouth of the creek. When the
37 project was complete, he had pointed out a few areas where he thought the impacts had
38 changed. The Valley Water staff had documented every single crack there with photos and

1 measurements, rulers. He was impressed with their preparation and meticulous attention
2 to detail in terms of the existing conditions. He intends to do the same on behalf of the
3 City as well and will be there with the Valley Water team to make sure the City's interests
4 are looked after in terms of getting an end product they are happy with.

5 Vice Chair Greenfield added that the timing was unfortunate that it had gone to the Parks
6 and Recreation Commission, a PIO was recommended, and then this quick change right
7 afterwards, so it was appropriate to review it again and understand. He was appreciative
8 of the changes and enhancements to the planned way forward, calling for specific steps
9 and articulating the plan and guidelines a little more clearly, which gives him more
10 comfort. He has appreciated their responses to their questions. He asked when the signage
11 would be up, as the public outreach is very important to communicate to the broader
12 community what is coming. He said, ideally, it should be communicated when they still
13 have an opportunity to ask questions before plans are finalized. Mr. Yamane said they
14 dropped a little of the urgency because of not having the planned work this winter, but
15 they will get back on it, and he will relay the information to Mr. Anderson who can give
16 an update to the Commission. Vice Chair Greenfield said he especially like the idea of
17 having signs that can be adjusted over time, more of a current status update to be included
18 with the signs. He understood that some parts of the sign will be permanent and some parts
19 will be updated as the project goes through. Mr. Yamane confirmed that that was the idea.
20 There would be a more permanent metal sign and then they are talking about using 11x17
21 smaller laminated signs to post in more locations and could be updated depending on the
22 season.

23 Vice Chair Greenfield highlighted that over the course of years that this project has been
24 discussed, the overall months of trail closure has been decreased. The overall impact to
25 the community who really enjoys using this trail has not been lost on the Valley Water
26 staff, and has improved. He appreciates that the concern has been heard and responded to.
27 He said he said for some segments of the project, some of the either north or south
28 entrances towards the tide gate won't be used so heavily, so he is hopeful that any
29 opportunity to open even the partial trail a few days here and a few days there could be
30 worked out. He wondered if the trail was closed due to rain, closed to trucks for that three-
31 day period, if it was possible to open up the trail to the community for access during those
32 times. Mr. Yamane said they want to be careful not to overcommit, and it's hard to plan
33 that into the construction schedule with the contractor, but they are open to looking into
34 any creative solution. Vice Chair Greenfield said he would be interested in an approach to
35 revisit this periodically to see if there is some increased access that could be provided
36 pragmatically when the project is underway, something to review at least annually if not
37 quarterly or semiannually. He said the bottom line is that the project is critical and the
38 work must get done. He appreciates that Valley Water has taken such an extensive and
39 detailed role in working with the community on how to get it done.

1 Commissioner Moss commented that he hopes they have a lot more rain than in the past
2 two years and that it won't impact the schedule when it happens. He assumed they have a
3 number of days of rain delay, but there is no way to anticipate exactly how many.
4 Regarding the weight of the trucks and the number of them, two things come to his mind.
5 One, he asked if they are talking about double the number of truck loads and half the
6 weight, but he is not so worried about that. He would rather protect the levee and put aside
7 the extra pollution. Mr. Yamane said they want to balance the schedule but also have a
8 proactive approach to addressing the first sign of damage and to have the contractor go
9 back. They are looking into putting in their specs having a QC manager that requires them
10 to revisit the air quality control submittal plan and how they will address any levee damage.
11 They will take it one step at a time, starting with the fully loaded haul truck, and if there
12 are no signs of distress then that will be okay. At the first signs of damage they will reassess
13 and they will be contractually required to address that and adjust. They don't want to say
14 they can only use half a truck full and then have it not be constructable within the season
15 either, as they are on tight windows. Commissioner Moss asked if the loaded trucks would
16 cause additional compaction to the levee and lower its elevation. Mr. Yamane said it
17 should be just topical rutting on the levee surface, which can be easily repaired.
18 Commissioner Moss asked if they would have to spray it down to keep the dust down. Mr.
19 Yamane said the program will have all the best management practices for construction, for
20 dust control, water runoff pollution, et cetera. Commissioner Moss said his preference is
21 that they not use postal mailers, but emails are fine and websites.

22 Commissioner Brown commented on the tradeoffs, and said it is easy to look at this as a
23 plan B from a Plan A, but there are certainly some benefits that have been expressed. It
24 does require more monitoring by the contractor and by City staff. She is sympathetic to
25 staff's role. She asked if staff's monitoring of the impacts is something that the staff can
26 handle and they are willing and able to take on. Mr. Anderson said the bulk of the staff
27 involvement will be in the pre-construction examination. That's where they want to
28 carefully monitor and document the existing conditions. During the project it will largely
29 be Valley Water and their contractors monitoring, less the Rangers or him going out there.
30 Once the construction season is over they would again go in and work closely, talking it
31 through and looking at it. He said he thinks there will be a considerable amount of time
32 with this, but he is confident they can manage that portion.

33 Commission LaMere asked how often the trucks will be running on the levee during a
34 typical day, with people out there walking. Mr. Yamane said it would be during the time
35 when they are bringing in new import fill, new levee material, or excavating and taking
36 out old levee material. There will be multiple trucks during those times. The trail segment
37 that is about 1,300 or 1,400 feet wide, where there will be shared traffic, is a pretty wide
38 portion of the trail. They are looking at having some kind of barrier, perhaps a temporary
39 K-rail. It depends on whether the shoulder is acceptable for trail users. Commission

1 LaMere asked if potentially there could be an entire day of truck traffic. Mr. Yamane said
2 this is likely.

3 Commission LaMere said they talked about the 100-year flood capacity. He asked how
4 that is calculated and if there have been any updates as the climate changes. Mr. Yamane
5 said Adobe, Matadero and Barron Creeks have a 100-year probability, the statistics on
6 those storm events. When such a storm occurs, it requires the water level in the basin to
7 be at a certain level, so it provides that capacity to take that storm event for the duration.
8 The hydraulic team has run the numbers, and one of the issues is that the way that the tide
9 gates work is when the tide is low, when the water in the basin is higher than the water in
10 the Bay, it pushes the gates open and lets the water out. So, as sea level rises and the low
11 tide becomes higher, that becomes less efficient and the gates are open for a shorter amount
12 of time. This was one of the factors in the design, to provide a larger opening. This was
13 part of the calculation of the hydraulic modeling.

14 Chair Cribbs asked if there were changes in the budget because of changes in the plan. Mr.
15 Yamane said this is an unknown value. They are taking the same budget that they were
16 planning for the trail improvement work and holding it for trail repairs, to pay on an as-
17 needed basis during construction, so it is basically a wash. Chair Cribbs asked Mr.
18 Anderson what he anticipates in terms of staff time, if anything, and if more staff would
19 have to be pulled in to monitor. Mr. Anderson said he thinks they were going to do the
20 inspections anyway, even with the trail hardening that was proposed. He could still
21 imagine there being issues, and they would have to do the same sort of inspections. So the
22 same documentation pre-construction, the same end-of-construction season analysis to
23 ensure that it's held up, and where it wasn't they make it safe. It might be a little more
24 robust, but he didn't think it will be overly onerous compared to what it would have been
25 had there been the trail improvements.

26 Council Member Kou recommended in regard to communications to the community that
27 the notice also be sent to the City Manager's Office so they can send it out through their
28 social media sites, as well as the City Manager's blog.

29 Commissioner Reckdahl said the trucks are going to be driving and may be loaded and
30 may make deep ruts. He asked how they would go about fixing them. Mr. Yamane said
31 new fill would go on top, generally, and a motor grader would go over it which smooths
32 and compacts at the same time. He said it is a fairly quick process. Commissioner Reckdahl
33 asked if there is anything they can do when they're all done, to make the surface more
34 bike-friendly, more compact and easier for bikes with thinner tires. Could they use finer
35 gravel when filling in the ruts, or compact it better? Mr. Yamane said he would have to
36 look into this. Commissioner Reckdahl said the surface near Moffett is a much better bike
37 surface, on the levee. He wondered if there are small things they can do when finishing

1 the project, such as using finer gravel and packing it tighter, it would be wonderful because
2 they want this to be a very bike-friendly route.

3 **MOTION**

4 Motion to recommend that Council adopt and approve a Park Improvement Ordinance
5 authoring Santa Clara Valley Water District Palo Alto Flood Basin Tide Gate Structure
6 Replacement Project was moved by Commissioner Reckdahl and seconded by
7 Commissioner Brown. The motion passed, 6-0, by roll call vote.

8 **4. Approval of Memo to Council on NVCAP regarding park land**

9 Chair Cribbs referred to the memo discussed at the last meeting regarding concerns about
10 the Ventura Park project and the fact that there is not a lot of parkland created in the plans
11 being looked at.

12 Chair Cribbs invited comments from the public.

13 Rebecca Sanders thanked the Commissioners for taking up this topic. She said South
14 Ventura has the Ventura Community Center, central Ventura has Boulware Park, and
15 North Ventura has no parks. Even with the Boulware Park expansion they will be
16 inadequately served in parkland. Ventura school really isn't a bona fide park, per se,
17 because it is shared with a lot of other organizations. She said there is no problem with
18 sharing the park, but they just need more of it. She said they crave parity with other
19 neighborhoods, and they don't seem to be served traditionally with the amenities that other
20 communities currently enjoy in Palo Alto, which makes them angry and frustrated. She is
21 glad the Commission understands what they are going through, especially with the
22 proposed development with North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan, with apartment
23 buildings with 50 units starting to dot the proposed landscape of North Ventura. She asked
24 where these people will play, and where these families will go. Will they have to get in
25 their car and drive someplace to run and throw a ball for their dogs, have a picnic, et cetera?
26 She said the Commission is on the right track but would like them to add some statistics
27 to the memo.

28 Angela Dee [phonetic] voiced strong support for Commissioner Reckdahl's memo. She
29 has been told that Palo Alto's good schools and wealthy residents have made land here so
30 valuable that it's not financially feasible for the City to meet its own requirements of four
31 acres per 1,000 people. Residents of Mountain View and San Francisco have the luxury of
32 more park space per person than residents of Palo Alto. Weirdly and improbably, she said
33 it sounds as if Palo Alto is too wealthy to have ample park space. She believes Palo Alto
34 is perfectly capable of finding the wherewithal to pay for park space. In the coming years,
35 many families will move into dense housing developments in South Palo Alto. She asked,
36 if current residents should worry about whether these families will have space to relax and

1 play in and if those who have already enough outdoor space in their own backyards need
2 to worry about those who do not. She said she is sure the Commissioners would answer
3 yes.

4 Jonathan Brown, Chair Ventura Parks Committee, said he very much supports the memo
5 and had similar thoughts when listening to a recent hearing about the North Ventura
6 Coordinated Area Plan. He said it is a great idea to add affordable housing, and there may
7 be some places in Ventura along El Camino or perhaps in the coordinated area plan area
8 to add housing, but they are already underserved in terms of parkland and they need to add
9 more, especially if adding more people. He said park space is a critical part of peoples'
10 everyday lives, and if you go to Boulware Park you will see a mixture of all sorts of people
11 – people who live here, people who work there and live elsewhere. You may see un-housed
12 individuals using the park. There is a great demand for parks and more are needed. He
13 fully supports the memo and even making an even stronger statement. He supports the
14 reference to the Committee, the citizens like Angela who have been on the citizen group
15 working on the North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan, and the work that they have done
16 has been good. He hopes it gets more attention and that the City Council comes up with a
17 good plan for the community.

18 Commissioner Reckdahl said some of this comes out of the frustration when he was in the
19 North Ventura meetings. The Area Plan staff was not convinced that four acres per
20 thousand was a real requirement, so the first paragraph talks about the fact that the Council
21 twice in the past four years has reaffirmed that four acres per thousand is a goal for the
22 city. They don't meet it right now, but it is a goal that they should be working towards.
23 That's why the first paragraph has discussion of both the Parks Master Plan and also the
24 Comprehensive Plan endorsing the four acres per thousand.

25 The next paragraph talks about the fact that the North Ventura Area Plan's three designs
26 not only don't meet it, but don't come anywhere close to meeting it. If they were coming
27 in at three acres per thousand they might not need the memo, but they are down below
28 one-and-a-half per thousand. Also, some of their definitions for parks are rather loose,
29 such as planting strips, which are very nice features, but are not parks. They really need to
30 do have usable parks, not just there for ornament. People want to be able to have picnics,
31 to be able to throw a ball with their kids.

32 Finally, "people can go elsewhere for parks." One of the explicit goals in the Parks Master
33 Plan is that they want parks to be distributed equitably around Palo Alto. They don't want
34 a cluster of parks in some areas and no parks in others. They want parks near where people
35 live so they don't have to get in their car or walk two miles to get to a park. The North
36 Ventura Area plan designs need to be changed to include more park space. He is interested
37 to see what the Commission's thoughts are about things to add, things to change in the
38 memo.

1 Chair Cribbs thanked him for putting the memo together. She said as a young mother many
2 years ago she lived in the Ventura neighborhood on Park Boulevard, and it was very hard
3 to find a park she could go to with a stroller and two small children, and she doesn't know
4 that things have changed much.

5 Commissioner Moss said one of the speakers mentioned a lack of statistics. He fully agrees
6 with the letter and it is just the tip of the iceberg, and they need to go ahead with it. He
7 said the City Council needs to know that this is just the beginning. In last Friday's *Palo*
8 *Alto Weekly* there is a huge article about the census data for 2020. He was shocked to find
9 out that in the past ten years, the City has grown by 4,000 people, from 64,000 to 68,000,
10 and 700 more households. The only land added is the AT&T property, which he is very
11 happy about, but at the same time they should be counting some of the community gardens
12 that have been added. He said, also, the pickleball courts don't add more square acreage,
13 but they have gotten extensively more usage out of the acreage that they have. They might
14 want to reconfigure how the four acres per thousand people is calculated and such things
15 as ornamental planting versus usable space for throwing a ball around. Several dog parks
16 have been added in cubby holes in parks that until now have been grossly underutilized.
17 Somehow they have to incorporate the increased usage in the configuration, not just the
18 number of acres. He also noted that Los Altos Hills and Stanford have very little, if any,
19 parks and it is so important that parkland be dedicated.

20 Commission LaMere said the letter is great and he is in full support and also appreciates
21 the brevity of it, that it is succinct and to the point. He feels it is important to not get bogged
22 down in too much detail. He said perhaps one or two more stats could be added, or
23 demographics, but he is in full support.

24 Vice Chair Greenfield said he is fully supportive of the letter and said it disconcerting to
25 hear that the Area Plan staff wasn't clear on the concept or necessity of the four acres per
26 thousand residents. He feels it is very important for the Parks and Recreation Commission
27 to emphasize this and do their best to make this clear. He thinks the comments that people
28 can go elsewhere for parks is a real concern and is an equity issue. For example, the South
29 Palo Alto tree initiative where the City is working to improve tree canopy coverage in
30 South Palo Alto to decrease the disparity between North and South Palo Alto. There are
31 important studies showing direct correlation between tree canopy coverage, or shade, in
32 neighborhoods, and the heat exposure and air quality and ultimately the employment
33 associated with economic benefits to neighborhoods, so he thinks this is very important
34 and adding parkland will serve a similar directly-related benefit to the general physical
35 health and well-being of the community

36 **MOTION**

37 Adoption of the letter to the City Council was moved by Commissioner Moss and
38 seconded by Vice Chair Greenfield. The motion passed 5-0, by roll call vote.

1 Chair Cribbs said she will talk with Mr. Anderson about how to send the letter to the
2 Council.

3 **TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2021 MEETING**

4 Mr. Anderson said they are looking at sidewalk vendor regulations. The Ad Hoc has been
5 doing good work, is close and he believes it will be ready. The skate park is something he
6 would like to bring in September, pending the Ad Hoc's thinking and perhaps a community
7 meeting before. There will be an informational report from Valley Water on a purified
8 water project at the Los Altos Sewage Treatment Plant site, LATP. They were tentative
9 for that, so he will confirm. If the Chair is supportive of that. The Ad Hoc update on
10 funding is a possibility. Also, having the First Tee proposal coming to the PRC for an
11 action item to recommend something to Council.

12 Chair Cribbs said she would appreciate it if the skate park could be moved along, so
13 whatever he needs from her to make that happen would be great. She is excited about First
14 Tee appearing. She invited additions or comments from the Commission. Commissioner
15 Moss requested to talk about future agendas. He proposed adding at some point discussion
16 of purple pipe update, a Cal Fire update, an anabolic digester, and he also would like to
17 know when recruiting starts for commissions.

18 **VII. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

19 Chair Cribbs said there is an amazing promotion called, We, the 15, and you can find it
20 on a website, produced and supported by the International Paralympic Committee, who
21 is responsible for putting on the Paralympic Games and speaks to the fact that 15 percent
22 of the world have disabilities. She thinks it will be an excellent opportunity for people to
23 really look at what the Paralympic Games does and what all can do in the area of
24 disability. She is excited about it and wanted to share. She would like to send the url out
25 to others in the city. She looked up the words having to do with Para Olympians, they are
26 words like courage, determination, inspiration and equality, all good words for the Parks
27 and Recreation Commission to think about as well. She wished all a good rest of August
28 and beginning of September.

29 Council Member Kou wished Ms. Bourquin all the best in her retirement and wished her
30 the best in retirement. Ms. Bourquin expressed her appreciation.

31 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

32 Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.