MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
February 11, 2021
Virtual Conference
Palo Alto, California

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

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Council Member Kou

Staff Present: Daren Anderson, Catherine Bourquin, Lam Do

I. ROLL CALL

Chair Cribbs: Good evening, everybody, Council Members, Council Member Kou and Commissioners and staff. Welcome to the special meeting of February 11, 2021, of the Park and Recreation Commission. It’s nice to see everybody. Thank you so much for making time for this special meeting.

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Cribbs: Are there any members of the public who would like to speak on something not on the agenda tonight?

Mr. Do: Chair Cribbs, I’m seeing no hands raised.

Chair Cribbs: Good, because I didn’t see any hands raised, either. I was looking, so thank you very much for that.

IV. BUSINESS

1. Foothills Park Annual Pass and Visitor Capacity Limit

Chair Cribbs: Daren, do you have a staff report?
Mr. Anderson: I do, Chair. Thanks very much. We’re here tonight to talk about Foothills Park and the visitor limit and the annual pass option. On February 1, 2021, City Council approved an ordinance for a $6 per vehicle entry fee and a visitor limit of 400 people, not to exceed 500, at any one time in the park, and an At Places memo explained to Council that the Parks and Recreation Commission would be holding this special meeting to discuss these issues – visitor capacity and the annual pass. Staff looked at a range of different annual pass options, based on our neighboring county parks as the main model. The main ones we explored were the $65 to $80 annual pass for non-Palo Alto residents, with a 25-percent discount for either seniors or low income, and a $50 to $60 annual pass for Palo Alto residents, with the same discount. Staff met with the Foothills Park Ad Hoc Committee on February 2nd to discuss these matters, and the Committee recommends providing a 25-percent discount on the annual pass in addition to the two that I already mentioned, being the seniors and people who qualify as low income, but also to active military personnel and veterans. The Committee also felt that the upper range of the annual pass price and structure, the $80 for non-residents, is too high of an expense, given that this annual pass is only good for one park; whereas the models that we had been looking at, of course, are for entire county of parks, or even wider for the state park examples. And, that high price may deter people from coming and visiting the park. The Committee recommends a $65 annual pass for non-Palo Alto residents, and you can see the 25-percent discount for the groups we just discussed, and a $50 annual pass for the Palo Alto residents with a corresponding 25-discount for the groups we talked about. The Committee had shared with me that the feeling was that this pricing structure is reasonable and would help incentivize the purchase of annual passes, which would create a little more efficient process of vehicles entering into the preserve. This list is details on how the annual pass would be managed. It’s, again, based on policies that I borrowed from California State Parks and Santa Clara and San Mateo County Parks, the idea being that this annual pass may be used within a household for up to two passenger vehicles with a capacity of nine people or less, and anyone in the household of this pass-holder could use the pass, although it must be in those two identified vehicles. The vehicle license numbers would be printed on the pass, and the annual pass would be displayed on the vehicle’s dashboard where it’s visible. Annual pass would be valid for one year from the date of purchase, so if you purchased it anytime in February, it would be good until the end of February the following year. The annual pass would be nonrefundable, and if you lost or was stolen, you’d have to purchase a new one. An annual pass would be valid any day of the week and holidays if space is available. Now, there would be no priority given to passholders, and you’re not assured of entry, meaning if were at capacity when a passholder showed up, there’s no special exemption that would let you in when the park is full. The pass is not valid for resale or commercial use and should not be assigned for profit, and it’s void if it’s misused. The pass is valid unless it’s revoked, and it cannot be used in connection with other passes and/or discounts, nor can it be copied or altered in any way. All sales are final – no refunds, replacement or exchanges would be made for any reason. Annual passes would be available online and over the phone, at least to begin with. Staff is certainly already

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exploring and looking at options to expand, where people could more easily get it, but there are some challenges right now, of course, with COVID, that make it a little more challenging. We’re still figuring out the entrance station operation, where we wouldn’t want to clog it up with people stopping and filling out lengthy forms, but we will certainly be working on that to try to make it as easy as possible. The timeline for implementing these fees – we’re aiming for February 27th as the beginning for collecting fees on weekends and holidays, and we believe we can have the annual pass set up by that time, so people can purchase it online or, again, on the phone. The turnaround time is relatively quick. We’d be running this through our Civic Rec program. This is the Recreation system for reservations. It’s got a lot of power and capabilities, including printing the cards ourselves, which is really helpful. They told me the turnaround time is really quick, so if you did it online or via the phone they could mail it out, sometimes the same day, so you’d get it two to three days. So, we’re hoping for a fairly quick turnaround. Again, the weekday collection would begin later in the spring. We’re still working on some of those scenarios. For the visitor limit, on February 1st Council had set that visitor limit, as I mentioned, to 400 to 500 at any one time. Again, the City Manager is authorized to adjust the limit within that range. The 400-person or 160-vehicle limit was used on Tuesday, February 2nd through Saturday, February 6th. I just wanted to share a little bit about what that experience was like up at the park. The park on that Saturday closed three times, due to reaching capacity, and the visitation was still relatively high relative to previous years, with over 1,000 visitors for the day. We had shared the feedback with the City Manager that evening, and the following day, and he agreed to raise the limit to 500 people – approximately 200 vehicles, 500 people – and on that Sunday we again reached capacity three times. The Rangers did note that that limit of 200 vehicles/500 people seemed to work a little bit better than that lower limit the previous day in terms of not unnecessarily turning people away. They noted that there weren’t any problems parking in the preserve and at no point did it feel overcrowded from their perspective, with a big grain of salt that this is one day at that rate. I want to make a note, I made a mistake on the February 11th staff report regarding the Ad Hoc Committee’s feedback on the visitor limit. I omitted some information that I put in at the At Places memo. Just to clarify, the Ad Hoc Committee supports a Foothills Park visitor limit that does not exceed 650 people, or 260 vehicles, at any one time, again with the authority for the City Manager to adjust the limit lower as necessary. The Ad Hoc Committee also suggested that 500 people or 200 vehicles would be an appropriate starting place for the visitor limit while staff experiment and learn about what the most appropriate limit should be. I also want it noted that I had a conversation with the City Attorney’s Office regarding the visitor limit. The Attorney offered a suggestion in terms of the policy perspective, that the Commission may want to consider a lower limit range in addition to that “do not exceed” limit, so that the City Manager doesn’t have too much discretion and authority over the visitor limit. This would not preclude the City Manager or the Department Head from closing the preserve when necessary for hazards or public safety, like we did during the early days of the pandemic and the wildfire. Staff will return to City Council on February 22nd with any recommendations that the Commission makes this
evening, and this lays out the rest of the timeframe. For example, on the 22nd, the City Council, if they take action and pass an emergency ordinance, it would be effective immediately, and if it was a regular ordinance, it wouldn’t be effective until April 8th. When we take up this discussion again, as we plan to February 23rd as the Parks and Recreation Commission discussing Foothills Park, that will be discussion only, and then we’re planning on there being an action recommendation on March 23rd. That would go to Council, most likely the earliest would be May 3rd, and you can see the relative dates for when effective actions will take place. Chair, that concludes the staff presentation.

Chair Cribbs: Great. Thank you very much, Daren. I really appreciate that. What I’d like to do now is to, before we go to any members of the public, is to see if any of the Commissioners or Council Member Kou have a clarifying question for Daren, not a comment, but just a question to clarify anything that he said. So, Commissioners, anybody have a question?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I have just a clarification. Was it the City Attorney that said that she wanted a lower limit?

Mr. Anderson: No. It was the City Attorney’s Office, not the City Attorney herself, and it was just a suggestion that we may want to consider having a lower limit, meaning that we’ve got a range, essentially so there’s just not too much discretion for the City Manager to go all the way to 100-visitor limit, for example.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Right now, who makes that final decision? Is it you?

Mr. Anderson: No. It’s the City Manager with consultation with the Department Head, and I will provide insight.

Commissioner Reckdahl: And the Department Head is you?

Mr. Anderson: No, that’s Kristen.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Kristen, okay.

Mr. Anderson: O’Kane, yes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, we’ll talk later about this.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, thank you. David, did you have a question?

Commissioner Moss: No, I just wanted to get a copy of the report via email later.

Chair Cribbs: Okay. Thank you.
Commissioner Moss: Of the summary.

Chair Cribbs: I don’t see any other questions from Commissioners at this point so Lam, do you have any public –

Vice Chair Greenfield: I have a question.

Chair Cribbs: I’m sorry. Do you have your hand up? Okay.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Daren, just a quick question on the annual pass and the two license plates associated with the pass. Is it possible for those to get changed? If someone has a pass, and they get a new car, they get a new license?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, I think, especially because we’re making them in-house there’s probably a lot of discretion for us to make adjustments. This starter language I borrowed for the methodology of how to manage them, largely taken, as I mentioned, from these other agencies, and I assume because they’re longstanding and they’ve worked well. But I think there is certainly possibility for doing things like that, especially since it will be all managed in-house.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you, that was all.

Chair Cribbs: I think the way we have our two meetings set up, there will be time in the meeting on the 23rd to bring up all of those other questions as well, so that will be good. Now, I don’t see…oh, I do see three hands, so let’s go to the members of the public. Lam?

Mr. Do: Yes, and Chair before we do, I think you were going to comment on the time limit.

Chair Cribbs: Oh, yes I was. Thank you. We ask that each member of the public speak for two minutes, please.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Chair. Our first speaker will be Hamilton Hitchings [phonetic], to be followed by Carlin Otto.

Mr. Hitchings: Hi. I’ve been a resident for 25 years, just put our daughter all the way through high school. My wife and I use the park. We’ve used it before and after. Before it was opened up, a lot of times you’d see turkeys walking around, lots of deer. I haven’t seen any wildlife. I saw wildlife the very first day it was opening, at 10:00 in the morning, but I haven’t seen any deer or turkeys since. I’m sure there’s still deer around someone. And we do go back in the hills, on the trails as well, not just in the main concrete loop. It’s really sad that the wildlife has been scared away. I mean, I think it’s great that the park is open, and that’s a road we’re not going to go back on, but I do think that if you want any wildlife there, and if you want a preserve, you really need to keep the number low. I’m
really disappointed that the number proposed goes all the way up to 650. I think that’s way too high. I’d like to see a number around 400 at a time. Four hundred is still quite a lot. Now, I know that you guys are getting a lot of different perspectives, and mine is just one. What I would suggest that might make your life a little easier is you could say 500 on the weekend and 400 during the week. That’s at one time. Remember, when there’s 500, that’s 500 at one time, so they’re letting in a lot more people than that during the day. But I really encourage you not to go above 500. Yeah, I mean 650 is just way too high. That’s my comments, and again, thank you for listening and thank you for having discourse on this subject.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Hamilton. Our next speaker will be Carlin Otto.

Ms. Otto: I’m a long-term resident of Palo Alto. I adore Foothills Park. I can’t tell you how much it means to me, and it has broken my heart the last few months. I mean, truly broken my heart. So, I am going to plead with you to let the limit stay at 400. This idea of 650 is just awful. The park cannot sustain that number of people. I would encourage you, I beg you, to ask experts, to rather than driving with no headlights- we’re all driving blind – to find experts to tell us what this nature preserve can sustain. And I would almost guarantee you, their number is going to be 400 or less. You are ruining this park by allowing so many people in. I am ecstatic that we have a wider range of people who can enjoy it, but please, let’s not destroy it. So, 400. I’ll repeat this. I’ve said it so many millions of times – 416 is the 17- or 20-year average. Anything over that will change the park. Five hundred is too many. Please, leave the number low. Encourage the City to keep the number low, so people can enjoy a nature preserve. It’s not the number of people that matter. It’s the quality that each person enjoys.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Carlin. Our next speaker is Aram James.

Mr. James: Thank you very much. I did send you all the naming city-owned land and facility policy statement revised in 2008. Fortunately, the City Manager has some independent ability to name portions of the park after people, even if you all stonewall and don’t even discuss, which I think is disgusting. You all look kind of like me. I’m a half-Jewish guy, white skin, and there’s some implicit bias going on here that you don’t even want to talk about naming the park after LaDoris Cordell. And I’ve got a couple of other women in mind as well. But you know, it’s shameful. You need to look at yourselves and say, “You know what? Maybe we need some implicit bias training.” I’m not, of course, including Lydia Kou, because she’s not on the Commission. She’s a woman of color. But thankfully, you all don’t get to make the final decision anyway. All you get to do is recommend it to the Council, and there’s a lot of people that feel that you all are just not doing your job. You’re just afraid to admit there’s some bias going on here. Some bias going in. I know I’m not going to change your minds, because you’re…There’s some people that have an opinion, and there’s other people that are their opinion, and you simply
are your opinion, so nothing I say can make a difference to point out how biased you all are to not even have the discussion about naming this park after extraordinary LaDoris Cordell. Or, we can name it after a person who combines an amazing history herself after a flower and a bird. You think about that for a second. I’ll bring up that controversial woman next time. And there’s another woman who has a nexus to the City and spent a lot of time in the county jail here at one time, who is an extraordinary person that the park could be named after, but you all don’t even want to have that conversation. That’s disgusting. That’s not being democratic. Let’s do something different here, folks.

Mr. Do: Thank you, Aram.

Mr. James. You’re welcome.

Mr. Do: Chair Cribbs, that concludes speaker requests.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you very much. I appreciate it, and thank you to all the public speakers. Let’s now go to discussion. I think we’ll start with the Ad Hoc committee. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: I’m in support of all the recommendations that Daren put forth. We’ve discussed it at length. I think they are reflective of all the Ad Hoc comments, to my knowledge.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Jeff.

Commissioner LaMere: As Jackie said, as a member of the Ad Hoc, we have discussed this with Daren and given our input. As we go through this I would just like to note that we always want to keep in mind how we best serve the underserved communities, which is one of the reasons we pushed to open the park, so I think that’s extremely important to note as we go through this discussion of park limits and fees. In addition, just keeping in mind how we best serve our school children in our community and in neighboring communities, and it think those are two key points to keep in mind as we balance the use of the park, how open it is, the fees, and then balancing that with keeping a nature preserve.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Jeff. Very well-said. I’m glad you mentioned the people that we serve. I think what I’d like to do is ask the Commissioners to first discuss the annual pass and what Daren reported about the staff thinking about the annual pass. Let’s have a good discussion about the annual pass, and then we can move on to the entrance limit. We have two things to do tonight, and that’s to take action on both of those, and give the Council the benefit of what we’re thinking. So, if we could talk about the annual pass first. Daren, could you get that up on the screen again, so the Commissioners can see the details? There we go. Okay, so I’ll just start that off. As a member of the Ad Hoc Committee as well, I wanted to see if we could bring down the price of the annual pass and start it at the $50 to
$65 annual pass for non-Palo Alto residents and then bring it down to $49. And then, the $50 for Palo Alto residents and $38 for seniors and low income and active military. I’d like to ask other Commissioners how you feel about those fees, and I’m assuming that everybody is very much in favor of an annual pass, so that kind of goes without saying. Anybody want to go ahead, or should I just call on people?

Commissioner Reckdahl: For the low income, how do people qualify for low income?

Mr. Anderson: It’s HUD-based, Santa Clara County HUD definition.

Commissioner Reckdahl: And we use that already in recreation?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The same criteria that we use?

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: And do you know what that is, roughly?

Mr. Anderson: No, I don’t. Lam, do you happen to have any information on that? If not, I could certainly bring it to you next time.

Mr. Do: I can pull it up. Give me about 30 seconds and then, when appropriate, I’ll share my screen.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think it makes sense to be consistent with what we have for recreation for just simplicity, but I’m curious where we get that break.

Mr. Anderson: Do you have any other questions we should hit while Lam searches for that number for you?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I guess there’s two payment issues. If people call in and order by phone, they can just use a credit card?

Mr. Anderson: That’s correct.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, and then at the gate, are we going to be just taking cash, or are we also taking credit cards at the gate?

Mr. Anderson: We’ll take both cash and credit card at the entrance.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. That’s good. There’s a couple of reasons for that. One is it will be easier for change purposes. It also may be quicker if the process of swiping may be faster than having to deal with change, so it’ll be both a convenience issue for you,
convenience in not having to stock so much cash, and also getting people through there as quickly as possible.

Chair Cribbs: Anything else, Keith?

Mr. Do: Chair Cribbs, I have the information available if I can share my screen, and Daren, if you could unshare, please.

Chair Cribbs: Of course, good.

Mr. Do: Okay, I believe my screen is sharing, and it should show a webpage with two tables. This is the City’s fee reduction application. Currently this is used for recreation programs, and it is based on other counties’ Housing and Urban Development Guidelines. It depends on how many people are in the household and what income level, so we would focus on what I’m circling here, the 25-percent discount and the income level respective to each household size.

Commissioner Reckdahl: So why wouldn’t we just mimic what we do for recreation and also give a 50-percent discount if you’re super low income?

Mr. Anderson: We certainly can.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I mean, that makes it more complicated, but it also makes it more equitable, so it’s a tradeoff there. What do other Commissioners think?

Chair Cribbs: Keith, what are you suggesting again? My screen went blank for a second. Could you just repeat? Thank you.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Right now, we just are proposing a 25-percent discount for low income. For Recreation, we currently offer 25-percent discount at one income level and a 50-percent discount at a lower income level. The question is, do we want to consider a 50-percent discount, or do you want to just keep it simple and have a 25-percent discount?

Commissioner Moss: I would rather allow 50 percent, and I would like it so that it uses the exact same scheme that you have today, so there’s no additional technology changes, such that nobody at the front gate needs to know how much someone paid for the annual pass. So, all of this information is strictly behind the scenes, and as you can see below, how you have to qualify yourself. But I think that it would be so much simpler, technology-wise to just do the same scheme.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, David. Other thoughts from other Commissioners about this point?
Commissioner Olson: I would be supportive of adding that 50 percent as well. I wasn’t aware of this differential. I think that would be a great addition, and since these are only available online anyway, I don’t think it adds to the administrative burden that we see at the gate.

Commission LaMere: I’m in agreement with my fellow Commissioners on adding the 50-percent discount.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Mandy?

Commissioner Brown: I also agree. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Vice Chair?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes, I agree that supporting the two levels of discounting makes a lot of sense for consistency with what we’re doing in the City already for related programs. I do have concerns about the numbers that we end up with when the discounts aren’t round numbers, like the difference in the…The resident annual pass becomes $50, but the non-resident discounted rate is $48.50, or whatever it is. It seems like getting to numbers like that makes it more complicated at the entrance gate. I would be in favor of rounding to multiples of $5, particularly if the annual passes will be available at the entrance gate. And I’m thinking this more in mind with the discounts for seniors, discounts for active military as well. I’d actually propose a similar discount for City of Palo Alto staff, but I’m just worried about the complexity of the numbers. It seems like we had three numbers - $65, $50 and $40 for the different tiers and then we’d need to be adding something else for the 50-percent discount, which I support, but if we can simplify them, I’m in favor of that.

Commissioner Moss: This is why I wanted to have it behind the scenes and not be able to buy it at the kiosk, but you have to go through the normal process and really you can’t tell by looking at somebody how much they paid, and whether or not it was more or less than what someone else is paying in the next car or behind you.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I appreciate the concern in terms of the privacy aspect. I think that once you purchase your annual pass they all look the same. I think that, from a convenience standpoint, the community, both residents and non-residents, would have a strong preference to be able to purchase an annual pass at the entrance kiosk. And if you’re not able to, maybe you don’t even know that an annual pass is available. For example, if there are seniors that are going up, they show I.D. showing that they’re over 60 years old, then they can purchase an annual pass at the discounted rate. I think the low income discount, where you’re going to have to show some documentation to qualify -

Commissioner Moss: That’s what I was concerned about."
Vice Chair Greenfield: It’s a little bit different.

Commissioner Moss: Yeah, as far as seniors, if they can prove it very quickly, then yeah, there’s not many choices, so it would be easy to do that one at the kiosk.

Chair Cribbs: It seems like there’s a couple of questions going on. We started this to talk about what the eligibility was for low income, and everybody seemed to be in agreement. Tell me if I’m incorrect with the 50 percent for a higher size of household. I think there’s agreement on that. Daren, are you keeping a list here?

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Chair Cribbs: Good, okay. Then we started talking about the differences of the discount and the numbers and the pricing and all of that, and it seems to me that those are good points but that’s a staff situation that the staff should be able to come back and say, “Here’s what we think the numbers should be, and this is what we can manage at the gate.” So that’s another question. Does that make sense to you Daren? I’m bringing up Vice Chair’s point about the differences in the figures.

Mr. Anderson: I’m sorry. I’m a little -

Chair Cribbs: That’s okay. Jeff, maybe you can go back and explain what you were talking about.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Sure, and share that the way I heard you phrase the question, it sounded, to Daren, are you asking him if staff should be setting the price levels or should the Commission be doing that? I’m not sure if that’s –

Chair Cribbs: No, I was asking Daren if the staff could figure out what would follow what your recommendation was. That’s all. Not the staff setting the pricing. So why don’t you reiterate what you said, and then we’ll figure it out.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Sure. Let me reiterate, taking into consideration what everyone is saying, I think. It seems like maybe it would be best to be talking about two different types of discounts. We’d consider the low income discount separately, and this would be 25 or 50 percent of the regular annual pass rate, and it would only be available through a staff office. It wouldn’t be available at the entrance station. And then for the other more straightforward qualifications for a reduced rate – seniors 60 and above, active military and veterans, and Palo Alto employees, as I’m suggesting – that seems straightforward enough that we would want to be able to support that at the entrance gate once staff is able to accommodate the creation of the annual passes at the entrance gate. For those passes, we might want to have simpler numbers that are easier for the gate to deal with. Does that make sense?
Chair Cribbs: It makes sense to keep it simple, for sure, so that’s a good start. Daren, does that make sense to you?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, I think this is a good one for staff to work out. We’ve got a number of other logistical challenges that I mentioned with selling the annual passes at the entrance that I think we’ve got to navigate through first, but I’ll certainly keep that in mind. That will be the long-term thing we strive for, is making it simple as possible for people to a) know about the annual pass, and of course, b) to purchase them. But in the beginning it’s going to be online or over the phone only, and then we’ll transfer as quickly as we can to a different and easier situation.

Chair Cribbs: I guess I was hopeful that we would sell the annual passes either by phone or online and not have to do that at the front gate after we’ve publicized the fact that they are available.

Commissioner Moss: And if you do go at the annual pass at the gate, that there are limited options for how you pay for it and what you can get. I think that’s what staff can work out is, what are the options that they can do at the front gate? If you’re a non-resident and you’re not a senior, it should be a no-brainer, so that’s what you can work out, is what options you can do at the gate and what options you can’t do at the gate.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, thank you. Council Member Kou, do you have any comments about the annual pass and the pricing that we’ve been discussing?

Council Member Kou: No, not at all. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you very much.

Commissioner Olson: Chair, one more comment from me. I think my preference would also be to not sell the annual pass at the gate, but if we do entertain that idea, I don’t think we can treat any group of people differently. I understand the intent is good, but that still would be seen, I think, as treating a group or a class of people differently.

Chair Cribbs: Yes, very good point. Thank you.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Excuse me. I’m wondering if Daren could comment on what the process is right now for people to qualify for the low income discount for other programs.

Mr. Anderson: The process for the low income discount?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes.
Mr. Anderson: That’s the screen Lam shared. There is information that they would provide online, and so this online system that I’m mentioning, Recreation staff already uses it and has assured me they’d be able to have submit everything they needed to online to qualify.

Vice Chair Greenfield: It’s an application process and then it’s reviewed by staff?

Mr. Anderson: That’s right.

Vice Chair Greenfield: This is very different from…It seems reasonable that this wouldn’t be possible to do at the entrance station.

Mr. Anderson: I don’t think so, for a number of reasons, not just that. As people come in, there’s no place for them to wait to fill out lengthy forms. It’s just far more challenging.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. Just one last point I’d add. I kind of feel like if we’re not offering the annual passes at the entrance station that, to me it’s a little bit of an exclusivity factor, where we’re less inclusive of people who don’t live in the area that want to get an annual pass. It just seems like we’re making it more difficult to acquire an annual pass.

Ms. O’Kane: One thing we talked about, Commissioner Greenfield, I was allowing someone to pay the $6 – assuming the entry fee is $6 – pay that amount when they enter and then if they want the annual pass, they can go potentially to the interpretive center, or make a phone call and buy the annual pass and have that $6 reduced from the annual pass fee. So, they would be able to get into the park that day and potentially resolve it immediately by just going to the interpretive center, or possibly online or one of the community centers when they’re open. So, that’s sort of what we’re thinking and what’s modeled after what other parks do, as well.

Chair Cribbs: I really like that, having the opportunity to do that once you’re there, to pay the $6 and then the opportunity to buy an annual pass, and I guess the only thing to work out is if somebody were buying the annual pass using this verification we’re looking at, then that may get a little tricky. But that’s great that you’re thinking about that and in the perspective, “Welcome to Foothills Park,” there can be the information about the annual pass as well. Thank you for that.

Commission LaMere: Chair, I have one clarifying question for Daren or Kristen. The fee reduction program and form, that would show up if they had already applied for that for, say, sending their child to camp. They wouldn’t have to then subsequently fill out the form again and provide their tax forms and everything else that this form requires. Is that correct?
Mr. Anderson: That’s correct. There is, however, Commission LaMere, a cap, I believe $300 total, that you can use towards community service programs and discounts.

Commission LaMere: I would hope that this would not apply to the cap of Recreation programs. It would be my preference that this would be a stand-alone discount.

Ms. Bourquin: Daren, may I say something?

Mr. Anderson: Thanks, yes.

Ms. Bourquin: The cap, basically, the $300 is for seniors with low income. It’s $150 for other people, not being seniors. Those were the two caps.

Mr. Anderson: Thanks, Catherine.

Commissioner Moss: Is that cap something that staff manages, or does that have to go up to the City Council if we wanted to increase it or not have this be tied to that. Because this is half of that.

Mr. Anderson: This is all going to City Council for approval, so I think you could say what you would like to do for this program. If you wanted to mirror Recreation it would look a little different. If you want it to stand-alone and not be associated with the cap, I think that’s possible.

Commissioner Moss: I wanted to avoid new technology and use the same scheme, but I’m wondering if this would fly in the face of that. It doesn’t seem right, so the question is, can that cap be increased at your discretion, or does that have to go up to the City Council?

Mr. Anderson: Well, the fees get approved, as you know, by Council. [gap in recording] …and I imagine this discount would also [gap in recording] that would also need to be approved by Council.

Chair Cribbs: Daren, could you start over again? I think you were frozen for just a little bit, please.

Mr. Anderson: Sure, my apologies.

Chair Cribbs: That’s the world of Zoom.

Mr. Anderson: The world of Zoom. The fees are approved by Council, so if we wanted to make a change to this system, it would have to go to Council for their approval, as I understand it.
Commissioner Reckdahl: That’s kind of moot, because this whole thing has to go to Council, anyway, right?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, yes. It’s going to Council anyway, so whatever you put forward. It can be separate from what we do for the other CSD programs if that’s what you would like to recommend to Council.

Commissioner Moss: Then I would like to recommend what Jeff LaMere said, and that is to have this not be part of that cap.

Chair Cribbs: What do the other Commissioners feel about that?

Commissioner Reckdahl: I agree.

Commissioner Brown: I agree.

Commissioner Olson: I agree. I think that cap is awfully low. I know that’s not a topic for the agenda, but it seems very low.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I support this as well. The only concern would be where the money is coming from, but I think this is a different case, where we’re not talking about Recreation programs that have an inherent cost with them. We’re just talking about a discounted fee, so I support that.

Chair Cribbs: I think it is agreement from everybody. I definitely agree, so Daren, can we include this in the motion?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. When we’re ready to do that I’m glad to make sure this is part of it.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, that’s great. So, it seems like we have agreement about the annual pass, unless anybody has anything else to add.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I have a follow-up question, too. Originally, there was a desire to make this whole program self-sufficient, or revenue-neutral, so Daren, do we have an estimate of how much Foothills Park is going to cost us? Is that going to affect our pricing to try to make this revenue-neutral?

Mr. Anderson: There aren’t any scenarios that we’ve put forward that will break even to the total cost of operating Foothills Park in this pricing scenario. The revenue-neutral was associated with a pilot recommendation, and that’s when Council had provided that guidance. That hasn’t been the case with the pricing scenario in their direction for this, of opening the park. So, it’s two separate things, and to your question, no, it’s vastly short of covering all our expenses.
Commissioner Moss: What about just the expenses associated with these additional changes that we’ve made starting December 17th?

Mr. Anderson: I’m not able to break out any incremental increases in cost based on that.

Commissioner Moss: I have on more comment, Chair, and that is that I’m going to say this a couple times tonight, but do we want to say in the annual pass that classes, work parties, docents, volunteers, guided hikes and tours, in the future you may not have to pay an entrance fee for some of those? That may help somebody decide if they want to get an annual pass. If they would like to do things with partners that don’t require paying an entrance fee, that may determine if they want to do an annual pass. I know we can’t come up with details today, or even in the next couple months but by the end of the year when the COVID restrictions are done, it could come up.

Chair Cribbs: Yes, I was going to respond and say I think that that discussion is for the 23rd and also the future when we have more data and COVID is gone. So, I think that it’s certainly worthy of a discussion, but not tonight.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Chair, could I add that there already is a provision that volunteers are allowed free access? That’s people coming into the park for service programs or for docents, is part of what David is addressing. I just wanted to clarify; you were asking if we’re in agreement on the annual pass? I suggest that –

Chair Cribbs: I’m asking to… I’m sorry. Go ahead.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I suggested including the Palo Alto residents in the group that would receive a discount. I was wondering if we could hear other Commissioners’ feelings on that.

Commissioner Moss: And my point was just to put some wording in the annual pass request form. That’s all.

Chair Cribbs: I guess the way I was thinking about it is that that would be a discussion that we would have in two weeks, based on the worksheet that we’ve been looking at, so I don’t know that we want to include it tonight. I’m anxious to get consensus about the annual pass. Vice Chair, I’m not so sure that we want to expand to talk about volunteers. That was part of the suggestion already.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I wasn’t suggesting that we expand it. I was just pointing out that that’s already the policy.

Chair Cribbs: Right, okay.
Vice Chair Greenfield: I do think there is an opportunity that we might want to weigh in on matters a little bit deeper, including reviewing the entrance fee, since this is the first opportunity that the Commissioners have had to weigh in on park matters officially since November of 2019, and given that anything that we don’t address tonight isn’t going to take effect until mid-June at the earliest, and knowing that this recommendation is getting fast-tracked at City Council, I think there are some straightforward things that we can agree that are appropriate to this, it’s incumbent on us, and actually it’s based on the direction from City Council in their motion on the 19th, they were referring to the Parks and Rec Commission and staff to return with consideration on fees, discounts and rules and enforcement policies, and that was further emphasized in the At Places memo on the 1st. So, I agree. We absolutely need to focus first on the annual pass and on the visitor limit, but I think there’s a place for us to talk tonight about the entrance fee as well.

Chair Cribbs: Here’s what I’m suggesting. I would suggest that we focus on the annual pass. I think we’ve got consensus there. Daren’s got a couple additional notes to move on; that we then take up the limits on attendance and have a discussion about that, and then look at the time and see how we’re doing. I’m very much aware that everybody’s been asked to do another meeting in February, and we have a lot of time set aside for these discussions on the February 23rd. If that’s okay with everybody, let’s go ahead and talk about the limit.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Excuse me, Chair. Are we clear on what the fees will be for the annual pass? I don’t think we had the opportunity to discuss that, and also I raised the question of including the Palo Alto city employees within the group that receive a discounted rate on the annual pass.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, I thought we were going to wait on the Palo Alto city employees until we got information from both the Ad Hoc and also how other cities handle that.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I would be interested in –

Chair Cribbs: I wasn’t aware we were going to talk about that tonight. We can go back and we have the Ad Hoc feedback for the fees, so thanks for reminding me about that. I felt like we had consensus on the annual pass, but now let’s talk about the fees, and let’s start with Jackie again, with the fees for non-Palo Alto residents and then Palo Alto residents. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: Daren, perhaps we can flip to the slide that has the daily fee?

Mr. Anderson: The $6 daily fee? I just have the annual pass one.

Chair Cribbs: I’ve got the annual pass up now.
Commissioner Olson: Oh, okay, so we’re reviewing the annual pass fee?

Chair Cribbs: Yes.

Commissioner Olson: I think the Ad Hoc feedback captures what I think is the right fee structure with the change for low income to have that additional layer. That, in my view, is where I landed on that.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, and Jeff?

Commissioner LaMere: I’m in favor of what is listed right there for Ad Hoc feedback with the additional 50 percent addition for low income, and I’m in favor of the numbers that are listed - $65 and $49, and $50 and $38.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, so this is the part that I thought we had agreement on that we were going forward with, so thank you for that. Keith, do you have additional comments?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, I overall am happy with this. I can see Jeff’s point, rounding that $49 to $50 and $38 to $40 might make more sense, or might be easier. People deal with round numbers better, but I don’t feel strongly about that either way.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Mandy?

Commissioner Brown: I agree with everything that the Commissioners have said, with the additional discount to be in accordance with the other fee reduction programs.

Chair Cribbs: Thanks. David?

Commissioner Moss: Yeah, same thing. I agree.

Chair Cribbs: Great, and Vice Chair.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I can go along with this, and I agree. I think the additional discount rate for low income.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, so Daren has that in his notes, so I would recommend that we set this aside, because I’d like to put both of the subjects in the same motion when we get to a motion.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Excuse me, Chair. I would like to understand why we wouldn’t be able to consider a different group to qualify for a reduced rate without even hearing how the other Commissioners feel about that. To me, it feels reasonable to discuss this when we’re talking about the annual pass. We’re talking about the suggestions for groups for a reduced rate that the Ad Hoc recommended, but just because the Ad Hoc didn’t
recommend it doesn’t seem like it’s a reason that the Commission shouldn’t be able to
consider it.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, well, let’s then consider it.

Vice Chair Greenfield: And if it doesn’t go anywhere, that’s fine.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, well I would just start off by saying that I would like more information
before I recommend a decision on that one way or another, so I would like to wait until
we do a little bit more research. Keith, thoughts?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Everyone I work with in the City, no one lives in Palo Alto, so
this is really their employer, so to me, I would think it would be appropriate for their
employer to give them a discount so I would want with the employees in there.

Chair Cribbs: That’s a really good perspective. Thank you for that. I appreciate that. That’s
the kind of research, even though it’s anecdotal, that I was interested in hearing, so thank
you. David?

Commissioner Moss: I’d be okay with adding that clause in there about city employees.

Chair Cribbs: Mandy?

Commissioner Brown: As a municipal employee myself, I understand why this would be
a nice thing for your employer to offer. I am supportive of it. I just ask Daren or Kristen
to speak. I’m sure the City gives discounts on other programs and things to city employees,
so this is consistent with their practices?

Mr. Anderson: I think so, yeah. I think that’s correct.

Ms. O’Kane: Yes, city employees, for example, have the same rate as residents when
they’re taking for example, a Recreation class or a summer camp. The employees are
considered in that fee structure in all our other reduced fees programs.

Chair Cribbs: So, to reiterate, whatever price the Palo Alto resident would pay, an
employee whose company is in the city would pay that same? Is that correct?

Ms. O’Kane: An employee that works…Maybe I missed the point of the conversation. I’m
thinking employee, so Daren and I and Lam are city employees. I’m not thinking of
employees of city companies who might live in a different town.

Chair Cribbs: So, what I heard Keith say was that everybody who works with him doesn’t
live in Palo Alto.
Commissioner Reckdahl: No, everyone that I work with in my various city commissions – everyone. We have a sample of three – Kristen, Daren and Lam. None of you live in Palo Alto, correct?

Unidentified Speaker: Correct.

Commissioner Reckdahl: So, I think it would be appropriate for their employer to give them the same discount as they give city residents. So, the City of Palo Alto should give the employees of the City of Palo Alto the same discount that the City gives to residents. That was my point.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Sorry for being vague, or being imprecise.

Chair Cribbs: No, maybe my hearing wasn’t precise. I’m not so sure. Okay. Jeff?

Commission LaMere: All I would say is in general I’m for limiting who we give discounts to, in order to not leave a group out or for a group to feel slighted. However, I am in favor of following whatever the City policy is of how they treat their employees in regard to Recreation programs and with other programs. So, if they do receive discounts and are treated as residents in other facets, then I would say that it would be reasonable to add them to this as well.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Vice Chair?

Vice Chair Greenfield: This is great information from Kristen, actually, and I guess one question I would have is, if we don’t add a policy on this, would City employees still be treated as residents? Do we need to act on this?

Ms. O’Kane: That’s a great question. I think our staff are used to accepting employees as residents, so I think the employees would get the resident rate whether it’s in this policy or not.

Vice Chair Greenfield: That was slightly different from what I was suggesting. I was suggesting that the employees would qualify for a discount, so if they were a non-resident, they would qualify for, effectively, the resident rate, but that makes sense. This makes more sense.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, well it sounds like we’re in agreement about city employees, but because there’s already a policy, we don’t need to add it to this action that we’re taking. Is that correct, Daren?
Mr. Anderson: There’s a couple ways of thinking about this, Chair. I think Kristen is right that there’s sort of something set within CSD, but as time passes, in ten years from now if it’s not captured in writing, sometimes these things get lost, and I could see someone saying, “Wait a minute. Are you giving favoritism to employees?” So, sometimes it’s nice to capture it. I suppose I can go either way.

Ms. O’Kane: I would agree with Daren on that. I mean, it is nice to have something in the ordinance or regulations that explains why something is the way it is.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, well are the Commissioners all in agreement that we should add it to this particular motion?

Commissioner Moss: Yes.

Commission LaMere: If we were going to add it to the motion, I would be most comfortable in it stating in line with City policy. If City policy were to change and not allow discounts anymore to city staff for whatever reason, then I think it should fall off of the annual pass.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think that’s a reasonable way of looking at it, to say residents get the discount and anyone who gets the resident discount in Recreation programs. We’re consistent with the way that Recreation does their discounts.

Chair Cribbs: Any other thoughts?

Vice Chair Greenfield: That makes sense to me. The only I have is – and it’s kind of splitting hairs, but it’s important in terms of how we phrase this – if a city employee is a Palo Alto resident, do they get the discount, do they get an additional discount for being a Palo Alto resident, or do they just get the same regular rate as the resident?

Commissioner Reckdahl: They get the resident rate.

Vice Chair Greenfield: So that’s important to sort out. Otherwise, it’s sort of like if you’re a resident and you’re a senior, then you get the reduced rate. If a city employee were a senior, would they get the reduced senior resident rate?

Commission LaMere: They would just buy their pass as a senior resident.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Okay.

Commission LaMere: If they’re already a resident they have no need to go through a city program. They would just get whatever they qualify for as a resident.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Good point.
Commission LaMere: Correct?

Chair Cribbs: I think so, so it sounds like we have consensus about this. Daren, you have what you need to add it?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. I think so. We can finetune it when we get to the motion portion and clarify, but I’ve captured what I heard.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, that’s good. I think that was a good discussion. Can you put the numbers up on the screen for entrance limits? Okay, so the Ad Hoc feedback was not to exceed 650 people, or 260 vehicles at any one time, with the authority for the City Manager to adjust below the limit. The Ad Hoc suggested 500 people, 200 vehicles, would be an appropriate starting point for the visitor limit. We have the Ad Hoc feedback. Jackie or Jeff, do you want to add anything to that?

Commission LaMere: I do not have anything to add at this point to what we’ve listed.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: The same here. No adds from me.

Vice Chair Cribbs: All right, well, let’s go to Commissioner Moss.

Commissioner Reckdahl: One second. Lydia Kou has her hand up.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you so much. I don’t have that on the screen. Council Member Kou?

Council Member Kou? Thank you and sorry to interrupt.

Chair Cribbs: No, please do.

Council Member Kou: Just given some of the comments from the public and reading some of the emails that have come through, could the Commission and staff, would you be willing to provide a little bit understanding about why the recommendation to go to the 650 number? What does it do, in order to help determination to evaluate? So, if the Commission and staff would do that, maybe the public would have a better understanding of why you’re recommending not to exceed 650 persons in the park.

Vice Chair Cribbs: Thank you for that. Daren?

Mr. Anderson: Sure. Thanks for that good question. I think the thought behind it is that right now we’ve got a lot of people congregating in these high use areas – the lake, the hill, the entrance and Orchard Glen picnic area, and over time it would be helpful to have flexibility as things change and people change the use of the park, which does happen.
Right now, it certainly seems that everything is in flux, in terms of where people go and when they go that building in some capacity for change makes sense. For example, if we were to make some improvements to the 7.7-acre area – this is at the very end of the park, and there’s a large parking there that’s very seldomly used right now – that’s the approximately 90 parking spaces associated with the Oak Grove picnic area. Well, when no one is picnicking there, that thing is empty, even though every other parking area, near the lake and Vista Hill is jampacked, and I think the thought would be, if something were to change, if we were to develop the 7.7-acre area and make it a point of interest and more people there, there’s a capacity for more folks to come and visit if they were using those remote areas. So, I certainly wouldn’t advocate for starting tomorrow with that limit. I think it would be something we observe and experiment with and monitor the park very closely so that we’re protecting those resources and avoiding that overcrowding problem or any hazards on the roads, parking issues, that we’ve talked about before.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you for that, Daren. Ad Hoc Committee, do you have anything to add to that in terms of the 650?

Commission LaMere: I would say that, in terms of the park and development of the park, it’s my hope that we can direct more people down to the 7.7-acres parking area, for example, or the Interpretive Center. It’s actually my preference to get rid of any street parking, and I think that would open up areas where people could walk safely. I think one of the problems that we observe now is, especially at Boronda Lake, is you have cars parked as well, around Boronda Lake and you have people walking around them in the street, because there’s no place to walk off of the street. I think there’s some management areas that we can look at that would help people park in different areas and would also help the park seem a little less crowded. I especially feel that it’s crowded when you’re seeing people walk around the lake or walk around Vista Hill, and there’s a lot of cars driving around, but if we can do a better job of steering people to those other parking spaces. Daren, how many parking spaces are in total in the park?

Mr. Anderson: It’s a rough number, but about 373 to 375, and the roughness is predicated on the fact that there are several areas that aren’t striped, so it’s dependent on how people park.

Commission LaMere: Great, okay. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Jeff. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: I agree with everything that Jeff just said. The one thing I would add is that a lot of these issues are sort of intertwined, because we are also hoping to move to a reservation system, where you can get information at the time of your reservation about places to visit within the park that will really draw people out into other areas, or maybe even highlight different things to look for in nature to give people something to

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sort of look for and get away from some of the more crowded areas. I believe that’s why we’re wanting this to be something we can live with for a while and to give staff and the City Manager some flexibility to manage based on their experience.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, I would just echo that and say that I was very interested in the flexibility that the staff and the City Manager could have as we see how people start to enjoy the park and have different patterns. I feel like, as we’ve said right now, they’re pretty much at the lake and down in the meadow, and hopefully will begin to explore and get out further, so I’m hopeful we can have this limit now and then review things after COVID goes away. So, other Commissioners, to comment on that limit. David?

Commissioner Moss: I think that the 650 limit is high, because I know that it’s going to take a while for these changes and patterns to occur. We can leave it there, but I’m hoping that we can keep the limit, the initial limit to 400, not to 500, and keep it there for a long time, until a lot of these issues have been worked, maybe in a year or two. So, I suggest starting at 400 and we can leave the 650 limits, but I don’t want to come even close to that for quite a while.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Mandy?

Commissioner Brown: I raised this issue last time about the thresholds for changing it, but to Commissioner Moss’s point, if the 650 is included in the ordinance, I think there needs to be some clarification on whether it’s performance measures or indicators. There needs to be some communication about what is triggering those changes. I know that you gave me some general answers about what goes into the thought process for adjusting that limit, but I don’t know if you can speak to that any further or if there’s been any thought about the development of those thresholds or performance metrics on the justification for adjusting the limit.

Mr. Anderson: I don’t have any additional data from what I last shared on those thresholds.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Mandy. Keith?

Commissioner Reckdahl: There’s a lot of reasons…This is not a simple question. It reminds of last year, or I guess it’s been more than a year ago, when we first were talking about this and one of the members of the public said, “Be careful what you wish for, because you don’t want to turn Foothills Park into a mini Rancho San Antonio.” I have not been there since we’ve re-opened, just because between my schedule and worried it’s not going to be enjoyable; I’ve not been up there, but even before we opened, during COVID, it was really crowded. It was a different experience, and it made me feel like I was at Rancho. When I drove by the lake, it was like a herd of bison crossing the road. It was just very, very difficult. So, the one limit is the user experience. Do you want this to be a busy place, like Rancho San Antonio, or do you want it to be a quieter place, where
you have a different experience with nature? The second thing is the safety of the pedestrians. Daren talked about that, maybe adding some paths. The third thing is not related to humans at all. It’s all the animals and Hamilton mentioned this before in his public comment, is that we really, again, are driving blind here. We don’t have a good idea of how we’re affecting the nature. Daren, is there any way...? I know that Acterra is looking at the invasive species. But that’s not really looking at the nature itself. Is there any way we can do counts or have some idea, are we displacing animals and hurting nature?

Mr. Anderson: Thanks for that good question. It’s a hard one, and Grassroots Ecology is helping with anecdotal observations on wildlife impacts that they’ll see. That’s something that you would see over a long period of time, and you need a great baseline to start attributing impacts. “I saw 15 turkeys on Saturday. A year ago, I came and there were 23.” Saying that’s because of “X” more visitors is a really big stretch. Wildlife is super dynamic. Changes happen all of the time, and pinpointed exactly why is touch, but I think Grassroots would be the main source we’re relying on for assistance in looking at and interpreting impacts to wildlife and doing our best to mitigate them as they come up, and as we see them.

Commissioner Moss: I would hope the Rangers would, also. They’re driving by. Would they see the turkeys and the deer, and help with that?

Mr. Anderson: Of course. They’ll certainly be, and have been, making observations wherever they can.

Commission LaMere: And Daren, have the Rangers given any recommendations about number of people in the park, or any observations?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah it’s still pretty new, and we haven’t had a lot of days at a particular setting, so the 750 number that we started with on the December 17th opening date – a little over 280 cars,750 people – felt very busy. That was echoed by, not only the staff, but also the majority of visitors who went on those days and saw it and experienced it, especially in the high use areas – the lake, Vista Hill that we’ve talked about. We dropped it to 400. Again, that was only one week. Those are weekdays, where we didn’t hit capacity. It was slower and the weather was poor. And then that Saturday the 6th where we had the 400-people limit. On that day there were a lot of turn-aways. We were shutting down really quickly because you hit capacity so fast, and the repercussions are more people driving up and down Page Mill Road, people making strange U-turns in inappropriate places on Page Mill Road, the park being very quiet, no parking issues at all. Then, the following day, as I mentioned in the presentation, we bumped up to 500 people. No appreciable difference in the experience, in that parking was still available, even in the popular areas, and it didn’t feel overcrowded. Again, the very large caveat, qualifier, that that was just one day at that level. So that was the feedback I got so far from staff.
Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Daren. I appreciate that. Vice Chair?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I support the general consensus and the Ad Hoc recommendation of extending the upper limit to 650 people. I think the reality is, we don’t know what the limit should be, and I think we need to give staff the flexibility to try things out, as they’ve suggested, and trust staff that they’re going to do the right thing. I was up at Foothills last week and on Sunday. The limit was 500. I didn’t know it had changed to 500. I drove around and did a car count. It felt pretty empty. I was there during one of the pockets where it opened up. Sunday, at one point, it closed early in the morning and opened up at 11:00, and closed again at 11:10. So that’s just an example of staff’s working out the process. They need flexibility to change things and make adjustments. This isn’t the only factor or tool that’s changing and impacting the park, as Daren mentioned. So, I’m supportive of that. I’m also supportive of the recommendation which Daren was alluding to, to add a lower limit, and I think 400 would be a reasonable lower limit, based on the observations that staff has seen this week that 400 certainly wasn’t a problem. But it’s probably lower than we want to end up at. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Daren, were you suggesting 400 or 500 for the lower limit?

Mr. Anderson: I wasn’t suggesting, Chair. I was just mentioning that the Attorney’s Office had said having a lower limit would be helpful.

Commissioner Moss: I would prefer the 400 limit until changes can be made to handle…like paths along the road and more striping and less barbecues, and all of those things that you had planned to do over the next six or eight months, or even a year. Until then, I think that the quality of the experience and having quiet environment and also the uncertainty about how many people it’s going to affect the preservation and conversation issues in the park. There are so many unknowns and so much work to be done that I think that a 400 limit now would be more prudent until these things are worked out.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think I’d want to go even lower, because what we’re saying is that the only time that this would matter is if Daren uses his judgement and says, “I think we need less than 400.” And then, the limit has to say no, you have to let 400 people in. Do we really want to violate Daren’s best judgment and force him to let more people in than he thinks is appropriate? I don’t think so. I think I’d want a lower limit and let…I trust Daren’s judgment, and I don’t think we should force him to let people into the park if he doesn’t think it’s prudent.

Chair Cribbs: Daren, how do you feel about that?

Mr. Anderson: I’m certainly open to that. Flexibility in general is a good thing. I can tell right now, based on the limited experience that I mentioned, 500 feel appropriate, and that’s what we’re using this minute. That’s what we used on Sunday, and that’s what we
planned on using this coming weekend and the weekdays as well. And then adjusting as
needed, like you say, as things arise, or things pop up.

Commissioner Moss: You’d never want the flexibility to go to 400 if you had to?

Mr. Anderson: No, I’m not saying that. It’s very difficult to predict. Having a range, I
think, is handy. I’m just saying for right now the experiences we’re seeing, based, again,
on a very limited sample, that 400 was so constrictive and unnecessarily so. But like we
talked about, this is a dynamic situation and things may change where at some point in the
future perhaps something lower is appropriate. I can’t predict that.

Commission LaMere: And for clarification, ultimately it’s the City Manager that will set
it within the range that is given to him by Council. Is that correct?

Mr. Anderson: That’s correct.

Commissioner Reckdahl: An example that come to mind for me would be, suppose we
had some heavy rains, and everything was mud-soaked, and we thought that there would
be more danger of ruining nature, and Daren wanted to go down to 350 or 300? I think we
should let him go down to 350 or 300 if he’s trying to protect the park. I don’t think we
should force him to let 400 people in if he doesn’t think 400 is appropriate.

Chair Cribbs: I would think that the staff would have the flexibility to do that if there was
a dangerous condition anyhow, without a lower limit. Is that true, Daren, or not?

Mr. Anderson: I had shared earlier, there’s a Park and Open Space regulation that gives
authority for a department head to make certain closures. You can close a facility if there’s
a safety hazard to the facility or to the public. And you can close portions of the preserve
as necessary for the same reasons. So that already exists in the existing regulations.

Commission LaMere: Would that also empower you to go below the set limit of, say, 400?
If you close part of the park and you then make a unilateral decision to say, “Now the new
limit is 200 today?”

Mr. Anderson: No, I would not.

Chair Cribbs: So, you couldn’t make a decision?

Mr. Anderson: We can make a decision about closing things. The capacity is a different
question, and I think, like you say, if there’s a wider range, yeah, we could use that, but I
couldn’t say, “Today it’s going to be 200, because there’s a mudslide on Vista Hill.” At
least, that’s my understanding. I could close portions of Vista Hill if I needed to.
Vice Chair Greenfield: I think our goal is to work towards determining a maximum limit by the end of the year roughly. Once we have data to review on how other things are working out to have full seasons of visitation to review. Given that, I have no problem with going with a wider range and having a lower limit of 300 or 350. This is a temporary measure in that sense, in that we’re looking to set an interim limit, range, and come back with a fixed limit recommendation later this year, I’m happy with any direction.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, well let’s do this. It seems like we’ve had some good discussion –

Commissioner Brown: Could I ask a question?

Chair Cribbs: Of course.

Commissioner Brown: I don’t know if you can speak to it, Daren, a little bit about the City Attorney’s thought process or justification for trying to mitigate this risk. Is it to widen that range, or is it to essentially eliminate option for the City Manager to delegate it to go down to zero?

Mr. Anderson: I think the latter. He certainly didn’t give a number. He just said you might want to put some range around it, so it’s not absolute authority to go to any number.

Commissioner Brown: Got it. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Let’s see if we can’t put together a motion to take action on these two issues, so would somebody like to advance a motion? Jeff LaMere?

Mr. Anderson: Can you bear with me just one second, Chair, so I can pull up a Word document?

Chair Cribbs: Of course.

Commission LaMere: Chair, I’m unclear if we settled on a lower band for the number. I feel comfortable that we decided upon a limit of 650, but I’m not sure I’m clear on a lower limit to suggest.

Chair Cribbs: I thought perhaps you could make the motion, include the lower limit. Then we would have discussion and we could change the motion, but we can do it either way.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I agree with Commission LaMere that it would be good to have the limit set before a motion is made. I am also interested in considering including a little bit more regarding the visitor limit. I think there’s an important question about what are we counting and how are we counting? We’re currently counting vehicles, and this has been the case for decades, and we don’t have the means to accurately count people, so I think that this would be an appropriate time to change the policy to reflect this. I’ve heard City
Council mention this subject on multiple occasions. The reason I’m bringing it up now, before a motion is made, is if we’re talking about making a motion about the limit that we’re going to go with, if we would potentially change the limit to be a vehicle limit, it’s important to decide that before we make a motion that’s calling for a people limit, if that’s clear.

Chair Cribbs: Comments?

Vice Chair Greenfield: And I appreciate our desire to try to get resolution on the two items that we’re talking about first, but I think that this would be something reasonable to consider first.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, well let’s go back to some discussion about the lower limit. It sounded like people were starting out at 5 and then moving to 4. Is there a consensus about 400, or not?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Should we have a discussion first about whether we’re counting people or cars?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I think we can get the lower limit sorted out first, and I think we should recognize that right now the lower limit is 400, so if we’re talking about reducing the lower limit or expanding the range we would be talking about 300 or 350, and I’m happy with either of those numbers.

Chair Cribbs: I didn’t hear that we were really wanting to go to 350, but maybe I missed it. Thoughts? I think, Keith, to answer your question, I think we’re counting people at this point.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, I guess we can look at the numbers and then we can convert it after if we decide to go cars. I want to give Daren, for the lower limit, I want to give Daren as much flexibility to let him…We don’t want to tie his hands unnecessarily. Daren has no incentive to drive it too low, because it’s really a pain for staff to close the park, so if we give him the ability to go down to 200, he’s not going to do down to 200 unless he really has to. So, I really don’t think we should make that lower limit very high at all. I think we should be, like 300 would be what I would pick.

Commissioner Brown: I support that. I think 300, a low one, making it as wide as possible is the right thing to do in terms of safety. Yeah, I agree.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, how do other people think about that?

Commissioner Moss: I’m okay with that.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m fine with 300.
Chair Cribbs: Jackie?

Commission LaMere: I guess I just want to clarify that it’s not the City Manager unilaterally making these decisions, but it’s with input from staff, or the City Manager could make a decision to put it at 300 for whatever reason that he chose, or she chose.

Mr. Anderson: Thanks, Commission LaMere. I don’t know that I can speak for the City Manager. I can say only that our current City Manager, Ed Shikada, has been very open to feedback from Kristen and myself on these matters and is certainly a person who visits Foothills Park a lot, so he’s also seeing with his own eyes, but he’s very open to staff input.

Commission LaMere: I’m in favor of $300 if that gives staff the opportunity to address based on park closures, so that they could still let people in without closing the park completely and felt that 300 was the safe number at that time. But I really want to voice my support of 500 as being the number that we want to look at to let in, but 300 as a lower limit I could be comfortable with, based on circumstances within the park.

Chair Cribbs: Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: I’m fine with having that lower limit of 300 and offering maximum flexibility based on all the input and information that we’ll be getting. As we all know, this is new, and we’re trying to figure out what’s right without a lot of information. I’m in favor of that. I would like to note that our intention is to have it be a people number, but to also have that multiplier there for vehicles, because operationally we know that what we’re actually counting is vehicles, but we are equating it to a people number, so we will, I hope, in the motion and what goes to City Council, have both numbers, so people can see what that equates to in cars, because that’s operationally what we’ll be able to count.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah. I think good points. Just to weigh in, I’m pretty in favor of, certainly in favor of, flexibility for the staff. I’d like to make sure that we’re not doing things that will really keep people away, and I’m sure everybody is operating in that spirit of both wanting to open the park to as many people as possible, while keeping the environment safe and the animals and plants safe, and the visitor experience be the way we’d all like to see it be, so I have been more comfortable with a higher number, like 400, but I’m okay with the consensus of the Commission. I think we’ve agreed on that bottom number, so can we go ahead and craft a motion?

Mr. Anderson: Chair, give me one second, and I’ll share my screen.

Chair Cribbs: Council Member Kou, while we’re looking for the sharing of the screen, did you have any comments?
Council Member Kou: No, thank you. It’s interesting listening to the discussion. Thank you for the discussion.

Mr. Anderson: Chair, do you want to look that over and see if I’ve captured the feedback correctly?

Vice Chair Greenfield: While we’re waiting for this, Chair if you don’t mind, I’d like to mention that there was another suggestion that I have that I think is straightforward regarding the visitor count. Currently, it’s not clarified who is counted or, more specifically, who isn’t counted towards the attendance limit or the visitor limit. City Council had previously talked about not including people with reservations in the count, but ultimately this was left to the Parks and Rec and staff to advise on. I recommend that we should be specific about what groups the count should exclude. Real simply, I would suggest that the visitors with reservations, the total campground or picnic area and the Interpretive Center meeting room, also the permitted Recreation and Education groups, the summer camps, school field trips and the partner groups such as Grassroots and EV, and also the entry fee-exempt volunteers, that they not be applied to the visitor count. I don’t know if that’s something that would be considered. It’s something that I would suggest as an amendment if we don’t have an opportunity to discuss it before a motion is made.

Chair Cribbs: I’m going to ask you to restate that, Vice Chair, because my screen is breaking up and I heard about one-third of your comment, so I apologize.

Vice Chair Greenfield: No problem. That’s what we’re working with. So, I am recommending that we not count the following visitors towards the attendance limit: One, visitors with reservations – Towle Campground, Oak Grove Picnic Area, Interpretive Center meeting room. Two, permitted Recreation and Education groups, summer campers, school field trips, community partner youth groups. And three, entry fee-exempt volunteers. And I would just add, there is a consideration. There is the concern that we might need extra flexibility if something happens and we end up having too many people in the park, in the preserve, but the limit isn’t reached, not including these groups, staff still has the flexibility to close the preserve in the event of an emergency, as Daren mentioned, is already a regulation. That gives me more confidence that something like that, this makes sense. I’m certainly interested in staff’s viewpoint about this.

Mr. Anderson: Glad to share my perspective on that one, Vice Chair. We’ve discussed this with staff, including the Recreation staff that lead the summer camps, to understand how many people they come in, where they’re typically located in, how many vehicles they’re associated with, and I’ll share just a little bit of facts, because I think it’s important. Recreation has three camps that use Foothills Park during the summer vacation. They use them five days a week, Monday through Friday. This is 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Those camps are around 100 people. They will typically just come in two busses of about 55 each
bus. The busses will park in the most remote area of the park, typically down in Oak Grove, where there’s room for a large bus. So, we talked a little bit about that with the camp directors and their thoughts on what’s their perspective on accounting for or against. They wouldn’t be there on the busier weekends, so that wouldn’t be a conflict, but in the summer maybe the weekday visitation ends up pretty high, and their thought was they’re likely not to have an impact on the other visitors, with the small exception of there are times when they’re in the Oak Grove Picnic Area, so there are quite a few kids using the picnic tables in Oak Grove, or sometimes Orchard Glen.

Chair Cribbs: If I may, the Ad Hoc had discussed this, and we had thought to push this discussion to the 23rd of February, along with all of the other subjects having to do with Foothills Park, so we didn’t think that this would go as part of this motion. However, it seems like we maybe have time to discuss it, so is that what you’re asking, Jeff?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m asking if we can consider this as part of the motion, yes, depending how the Commissioners feel about it.

Commissioner Moss: I’m okay with this. I think it’s great.

Chair Cribbs: Keith?

Commissioner Reckdahl: In general, this seems reasonable. My only concern is, do you ever do stuff at the lake? The lake seems to be the most congested area right now.

Mr. Anderson: Yes. I believe on occasion the camps do end up coming to the lake. These are City-led summer camps, so we have input, of course, on what our staff are doing and where they’re taking the campers, but I believe the lake is definitely a spot they will visit during their day.

Chair Cribbs: If I could add to that, Keith. When I was a Girl Scout leader at the camps, we would bring the troops up to the lake on a controlled basis, so 20 at a time, not all 100 in the camp. But they did go to the lake.

Mr. Anderson: We could also work with the camp to select hours of the visit to that part of the park at the less popular times.

Commissioner Brown: I’ve got to ask the question. Would this sort of traffic at the picnic tables and use during certain seasonality factor into the decision of what the visitor capacity would be at any given time into the decision-making?

Mr. Anderson: I certainly think so, especially in those first couple days. I would intend to be there and see if for my own eyes. The Rangers to monitor it very carefully, and to understand it’ll be new. It’ll be a new experience, and I think we’ve got to look at it with fresh eyes and make recommendations to City Manager based on that.
Ms. Brown: Great.

Chair Cribbs: Jackie, any thoughts?

Commissioner Olson: My view is that I would really like to stick to sort of the most core issues for this pass, because there’s a lot of tweaking around the edges that we’re going to need to do, and a lot of things that we’ve considered about carve-ins and carve-outs that I think warrant a more full discussion, and I don’t want it to get side-tracked at Council either, because I think we could probably spend a few hours just going through all of the different things that we have discussed in the Ad Hoc about which groups to bring in or out of this discussion. So, I’d be in favor of just sticking to the core issues that we had thought to bring up tonight and then deferring the other things that don’t need to be solved in a more expedited fashion, with lengthier time to consider all the options.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Jeff LaMere?

Commission LaMere: I’m in agreement with Jackie.

Chair Cribbs: Going back to the motion that you asked me to read, Daren. It looks fine to me. What about other people?

Mr. Anderson: Chair, were you thinking I would strike this highlighted area?

Chair Cribbs: I wasn’t thinking that yet. I was concentrating on the first part, which I wanted to be the core part of the motion to go to Council, which is what we wanted to get done tonight. So, let’s look at the first A and B, and does that reflect everybody’s thoughts?

Commission LaMere: Chair, I have a quick question. As we had discussed and some members were more in favor of a 400-person limit to begin with and some of us were a 500-person limit, should any of that be noted in this, Daren? Or is it just the fact that we have a range and then the City Manager will set it however they like it, or City Council will direct them? Is there any room for a suggestion of what that starting number should be, or no?

Mr. Anderson: Thanks, Commission LaMere. I do think it’s important to have…I don’t know that it needs to be in the motion, but I can pass it on in the body of the report that the Commission supports…. I already have in terms of the Ad Hoc saying this, but if the full Commission feels this way, that they support around 500 people/200 vehicles, being a good starting place, that could be conveyed to Council in the body of the staff report. I don’t know that it needs to fit into the motion necessarily.

Chair Cribbs: So, you’re okay leaving the motion the way it is?
Mr. Anderson: I am, in terms of that starting place, I’m certainly open to feedback, of course, but…

Chair Cribbs: Well, I gave you mine.

Commissioner Moss: I’m thinking that the public may really want to know your starting position, and so having it in the body of the report, will that get to the public?

Mr. Anderson: Would you like me to add it to this?

Chair Cribbs: Why don’t you add it, and see what we think?

Commissioner Moss: I think so.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m going to say that I’m not in favor of adding it. I think we’re already in the middle of a process where staff is making adjustments, and we’re trying to give staff more flexibility to adjust within a broader range, and if they’ve already decided somewhere between 400 and 500 is where they want to be, I don’t think that we have more knowledge than staff does on where that should be set.

Commissioner Moss: Okay.

Chair Cribbs: My preference for this motion is to leave A and B the way they are, and to take out the information about counting the visitors toward the attendance limits, so the a. and b. underneath B, so that we can address it next time and have more time. This is on the agenda for the 23rd. I’m worried if I look at this, that the Council will want to take up a lot of discussion about this, and I’d rather just get the A and B done as our recommendation or as our motion.

Commissioner Moss: And what if this doesn’t get done until June, that A and B part? I guess it’s okay. It’s just part of managing the overall number.

Vice Chair Greenfield: That’s a good question. I’d be interested in staff’s opinion on that. What happens if we don’t address this until...? If we don’t address it tonight, it doesn’t take effect until mid-June at the earliest.

Mr. Anderson: The most impactful will be those summer camps. I think those are the largest groups that you’d see, and if visitation on those weekdays rises considerably, there could be more closures associated with those numbers. So, if we’re counting the hundred kids that are coming for the summer camp – of course, there’s a hundred fewer than are going to be allowed in.

Commissioner Moss: And we’ve given you that discretion. We’ve given you that range, so you could manage it without having to go to City Council to get their approval.
Vice Chair Greenfield: That means you’d have to raise the weekday limit higher than it would be on weekends to accommodate the summer camps and the campgrounds, the campground reservation people as well, and then lower it back down on the weekends. If 500 was the number you wanted, and you go to 600 on weekdays to accommodate the summer camps, that seems awkward.

Mr. Anderson: It would be a little challenging, I think, definitely at first, trying to figure that out.

Commissioner Reckdahl: How hard is it for you to change the limit? You want to change if from one day to the next. Is it a pain, or is it easy to do?

Mr. Anderson: I can only give you the most recent example, and that was this last Saturday to Sunday. It was a conversation with analysis from the Rangers that Kristen and Ed Shikada and I discussed. They made the call, and we made the change the next day.

Chair Cribbs: It feels like in the past, Daren, there’s been a lot of coordination between the City staff and the camp counselors?

Mr. Anderson: That’s still the case, yes.

Chair Cribbs: In terms of where the camps go and where they hike, and what they do. So, it feels like that’s something that the staff could have the flexibility to deal with.

Mr. Anderson: To some degree I think that’s true for where they’re at, but their numbers, of course, are what they are. If we have 100 kids in the camp absent something like this exclusion, we would be deducting that from how many people we allowed in the park.

Vice Chair Greenfield: So, you’re talking about requiring from the Department Director and the City Manager and the Rangers to make the change each time? You might have to do that multiple times a week if you’re changing between weekdays and weekends?

Mr. Anderson: Potentially.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Or am I making it sound more complex than it is?

Mr. Anderson: You know, it’s new. I have never done that, so I’m not quite sure exactly what it would be like. But I would imagine it would require some adjustments.

Commissioner Reckdahl: But I would think that, for example, if the kids on one day would be way in one corner of park and they’re not bothering anyone, you would not want to count them, but if they’re going to be spending a lot of time up at the lake or in Oak Grove, you may want to count at least half of them, or something like that. So, I’m not sure of the right way to do this. In some ways it’s easier just not to mention this and let you adjust the
overall visitor limit to account for what the kids are doing each day. What would be easiest for you, Daren?

Commissioner Moss: Especially if you can get them to go to the lake, say, at 4:00 in the afternoon instead of noon. You could manage that kind of thing because this limit is not a daily limit. It’s at any one time limit.

Chair Cribbs: I think Keith’s is a good question, Daren. What’s easiest for you?

Mr. Anderson: Probably exempting their numbers would be the easiest. And as I think the Ad Hoc had pointed out – and that maybe all the Commission recognized – is that once we get to summer, we’ll have learned a lot more and continue to learn a little bit more and adjust as necessary.

Chair Cribbs: I would prefer on this one to delete what you’ve grayed out, at least on my screen, and then we can talk about it in two weeks and just use the motion that we see without the gray stuff. So, if somebody could make that motion, and we’ll get a second.

**MOTION**

Commission LaMere: I move to amend the Municipal Fee Schedule to add an annual pass option for Foothills Park with the following pricing structure as listed below, and additionally to amend the PAMC Section 22.04.150(k) to authorize the City Manager to adjust the attendance limit at Foothills Park to the listed numbers.

Chair Cribbs: Is there a second to that motion?

Commissioner Moss: Can you add the word “rate” or “fee” behind the word Palo Alto resident.

Chair Cribbs: David, could you wait until we get a second, please?

Commissioner Moss: I’d rather not, because City of Palo Alto employees qualify for the Palo Alto resident what?

Mr. Anderson: That was my typo.

Commissioner Moss: Okay, now you can go ahead.

Mr. Anderson: My mistake. Apologies.

Chair Cribbs: Is there a second?

Commissioner Moss: I second.
Chair Cribbs: Thank you. I guess we should have a voice vote. Catherine, please?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Excuse me. I have a comment.

Chair Cribbs: I’m sorry. Wait a minute. I wanted to go to discussion.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yeah, you should go to the maker of the motion and see if they want to say anything.

Chair Cribbs: I’m sorry you were breaking up again. What did you say?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I was suggesting you first go the maker of the motion and the second to see if they have comments regarding the motion, and then allow other comments if they exist.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, thank you very much.

Commission LaMere: One comment based on what David had mentioned in terms of adding “rate.” Should that read something like “City of Palo Alto employees qualify for the Palo Alto resident rate as…” I don’t know what the language is, Kristen or Daren, that it currently says.

Mr. Anderson: Per the…

Commission LaMere: Per the current regulations, per the current city staff employee regulations or…?

Ms. O’Kane: Just say “per City policy.”

Mr. Anderson: Okay.

Commission LaMere: Thank you, Kristen.

Chair Cribbs: David, do you have any other comments?

Commissioner Moss: No.

Chair Cribbs: And discussion from the Commission?

**FRIENDLY AMENDMENT**

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes, I appreciate that a couple people have suggested that we might be better off not having the guidance on who’s not counted, but I don’t feel like the full
Commission has had an opportunity to weigh in on that, so I’m going to propose a friendly amendment first to add back in the three groups that would not count towards the attendance limit. So, as a friendly amendment, then it’s up to the maker of the motion, Commission LaMere, and the second, to accept that right now. And then if they choose not to accept it, I can suggest this as an unfriendly amendment and seek a second, and we could vote on that, and then it would become part of the motion, or not, depending on the vote.

Commissioner Moss: In the interest of simplicity, I’d like to leave it just the way it is and do something additional later, or later on today.

Commission LaMere: I’m in agreement with Commission Member Moss to keep the motion as read and as listed.

**UNFRIENDLY AMENDMENT**

Vice Chair Greenfield: Okay, then I’m going to make an unfriendly amendment to request and seek a second to add back in the changes to the attendance limit, with the consideration that if we don’t address this this evening, it will not be effective until mid-June at best. In addition to that, if we can knock this out tonight, that’s one more thing that we don’t have to talk about the next time. I’m seeking a second. So that’s my unfriendly amendment.

Chair Cribbs: And now we need a second to that, but let’s wait until it gets up on the screen.

Mr. Anderson: So much respect for the City Clerk’s Office, who manages these changes so skillfully.

Chair Cribbs: Daren, you’re doing great. Thank you very much. Is there a second?

Commissioner Brown: I’ll second, and to the point of clarity, I agree that I think we’re trying to streamline this as much as possible to go to the Council, but I think it’s sort of an investment in the future by not having so much confusion on, “Well, what’s the limit today?” It keeps changing, having to modify it so often during the summer, I think we’re just sort of getting ahead of the issue. So, I’ll second this.

Chair Cribbs: Is there discussion on that?

Vice Chair Greenfield: As the maker of the amendment, I’ve added what I need to already. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Jeff, I’m sorry. Can you say that again? You’re breaking up.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I have no further discussion on this. Thank you.
Chair Cribbs: Okay, thank you very much. I won’t tell you what I thought you said. Mandy, any further?

Commissioner Brown: No. I’ve already said it. Sorry.

Chair Cribbs: Okay. Thank you. Catherine, could you do a vote, please?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Can I speak to it?

Chair Cribbs: Oh, yes, of course. I thought there weren’t any speakers.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I’m torn about this, because on one hand I do appreciate the arguments about just keeping it simple, and I think this is kind of getting into the weeds. But what I heard Daren say is that he thought this would be easier for him. And that pushes me over to support this. Daren, do you want to give us any more wisdom? Does this make your life better or worse?

Mr. Anderson: I do believe that it makes it easier. I think the constant adjustment would be challenging. I think it’s just easier for the Rangers to know we’re not going to count the camps or those few special trips. That’s my hunch, and I think we’ll learn more as we go, but that’s what I anticipate.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay.

Commission LaMere: Chair, I have a clarifying question. I’m unclear why this would be…if we don’t include this today, why it would not be instituted until this summer? I’m unclear why there would not be other opportunities with subsequent meetings to dive deeper down into all of the policies of Foothills Park?

Chair Cribbs: I’m glad you asked that question because that was going to be my question as well. I thought that this would be part of the package that we would talk about next time, so Daren, can you refresh our memory about that?

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, thanks Chair. The timeframe would be that we would discuss this on February 23rd, take an action on March 23rd, get to Council at approximately early May – May 3rd, let’s say – and then you’ve got the 45-day wait for the ordinance to take place. We’d be looking at approximately June 17th.

Commissioner Moss: My only reason for not putting this in was I thought this would never have to go to City Council, this portion right here that Commissioner Greenfield added, that we would never have to bring this to the Council. Is that true or not?

Mr. Anderson: It is not true. If the Council sets a visitor limit, staff would follow the visitor limit that Council sets.
Commissioner Moss: All right, then I change my vote, too. I would rather keep this in.

Mr. Anderson: And let me just make that one qualifier, just so I’m clear. We’d still have the flexibility within the range. It’s just that it seems – and again, we have not used it yet – that that is a complex system to be managing and adjusting.

Commissioner Olson: Daren, are these categories listed below, are they inclusive of all of the ones that we had discussed and aligned on bringing to the leader meeting?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. I believe so.

Commissioner Olson: Okay, great.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Excuse me. Daren, I’ll just mention that I emailed you the text of what I was looking to include. Oh, you’ve got it already.

Chair Cribbs: If there’s no more discussion, we’re voting on accepting the unfriendly amendment, correct?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes, although if the maker and the second are willing to accept this amendment as a friendly now, then we don’t need to vote.

Commission LaMere: I’ll accept it as a friendly amendment.

Commissioner Moss: I accept it with friendly unfriendly [inaudible].

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Any discussion?

Commissioner Olson: Do we need to hear from the members of the public on this at all?

Mr. Anderson: I don’t know that we do it once we make a motion. I don’t think that’s the norm, but I defer to the Chair and the Vice Chair, and perhaps if Kristen has ideas?

Chair Cribbs: I didn’t understand that we did need to hear from them at this point.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I agree with you, Chair. Normally the public has an opportunity to comment after the staff report.

Commissioner Olson: Did we give them that opportunity?

Mr. Anderson: I believe we did, yes. We had the comments on Foothills Park.

Commissioner Olson: Okay, great. Just making sure. Thanks.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, Jackie. Okay, so I guess we can vote now. Catherine, could you?
Ms. Bourquin: Seven to approve the amended motion.

**MOTION PASSED, 7-0**

Chair Cribbs: Okay, that’s great. Thank you all for a very thoughtful discussion. I think that’s good. I think the only other thing on our agenda tonight is to discuss the Ad Hoc Committees and also the Liaisons for 2021. Daren is going to put up the list–

Vice Chair Greenfield: Excuse me, Chair. I’m sorry. Before we close out this item, there are a couple of things that I think are worth the Commission considering, given the timeframe of anything we don’t consider tonight, we won’t be able to consider and wouldn’t take effect until the middle of June. One of the specific ones regards the daily entry fee. And what I consider to be an omission in the current policy, where handicapped visitors, vehicles displaying disabled plates and placards currently are not allowed free entry. They aren’t given a waiver for entry. This is the common practice for the local county parks, consistent with parking in the city as well. Personally, I think it’s worth us reviewing the daily entry volume overall, since that is something that Council had directed us to do, but I think it would be worth weighing in on this potentially as a second motion. The second item I think that’s worth consideration is admittedly more complex, is the number of people that are considered a vehicle, a passenger vehicle, consistent, for example, with what state parks do. The normal entry rate applies to up to nine people per vehicle and then there’s a small bus and a large bus rate of 10 to 24 people and 25-plus people, so I don’t if that’s something that we would want to consider as well, given the circumstances.

Chair Cribbs: You’re asking to speak about the handicap access and are disabled access and the vehicle size?

Commissioner Moss: Are you asking for an amendment to what City Council already approved that the $6 vehicle fee, there are some exemptions?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes. What I’m looking at is the City Council has approved what they refer to as an interim entry fee policy, and this was with the understanding that staff and the Commission would return with a recommendation on a more detailed entry fee policy. While we briefly talked about it in our meeting two weeks ago as a discussion, we haven’t had an opportunity to weigh in on this as an action, and it seems appropriate that we discuss this. Also, the fact that pedestrians and bicycles don’t pay an entry fee. That’s the current policy. I think that’s good. I think we should recognize that as something to evaluate at a later date. But the specific things that I think that are appropriate to address are the handicapped entry, and then also considering the bus rate. This would be a separate motion. My understanding from your previous discussion is that you wanted to wrap up

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**APPROVED**
and make sure that we had a motion clarified on the two primary items. I didn’t raise this at that time, assuming there would be an opportunity for further discussion on additional motions [inaudible].

Commissioner Moss: Daren, do we have to deal with this? Is there a county law or a state law that already takes this into consideration?

Mr. Anderson: No, it does not.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Jeff, why don’t you make a motion, and then we can discuss it?

MOTION

Vice Chair Greenfield: Okay. I’ll make a motion that the Parks and Rec Commission supports the daily entry rate of $6 per passenger vehicle and also includes no entry fee for vehicles displaying disabled plates or placards. Also included in the group – and I don’t know if this needs to be included in a motion – but there would be no entry fee for pedestrians or bicycles, to be further evaluated at a later date, and there’s no entry fee for volunteers on the day that they’re volunteering in Foothills Park with a city partner, which is also the current policy.

Chair Cribbs: Just to respond, I’m a little concerned because we put on the agenda that we were going to talk about the annual pass and visitor capacity level, and this seems like we’re getting a little bit out of range of that, and I don’t know whether the staff is prepared to discuss it right now. Jackie, you had your hand up?

Commissioner Olson: I was going to say the exact same thing. This is an item not on the agenda. I don’t think we can take action. We were pretty specific in the agenda tonight.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I think, particularly considering that the bus rate, as well, would apply to the annual pass, right now as it stands, an annual pass could apply to a bus. There’s nothing that would restrict that. Also, I think the fact that we’re talking about the annual fee, it’s directly related to the entry fee. I would defer to staff for an opinion on this, but I think that would be within the purview of the discussion and action.

Mr. Anderson: Two things, and I’ll also defer to Kristen for some input on this. It’s definitely true that, right now, as we’ve worded this, we don’t have anything separate for larger vehicles. I had shared in the staff report I think the details on how we’d implement the annual pass, but we don’t have any separate cost items for larger busses right now. It would still be $6 as the existing Council motion and what the PRC has proposed tonight. In terms of the agenda and if that creeps too far off, maybe Kristen could help me a little bit if you think this would be appropriate.
Ms. O’Kane: Thank you for that question. I tend to agree. I do feel like we’re expanding the scope a little bit of what the intent was for tonight, understanding that you do raise a good point, Vice Chair Greenfield. I think tonight’s intent was really to fill that gap that was missing when Council made the motion to do the $6 entry fee, and it was a realization that we missed adding an annual fee to that, and this was to fill that gap. I think beyond that, my understanding was intended to be discussed at a later date as a full package of other Foothills Park related items. So that’s, I guess, that’s my opinion on that.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Is changing the daily fee, is that something that the staff could recommend to Council and Council would not need our opinion? For example, if you wanted to charge busses more than $6, could you recommend that directly to Council and have Council directly approve that?

Mr. Anderson: I believe so.

Commissioner Moss: Yeah, because it seems sort of a management detail.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I think that the process that the Council was looking for was for staff and the Commission to review further recommendations before acting to make changes to the policy. Not that they can’t and not that they didn’t do this in the first place in the case of the emergency ordinance to deal with the situation that needed dealing with. I appreciate the concerns of whether it’s appropriate to be addressing this as an action. I’m just voicing how I think the preference of Council would be for the Commission to be able weigh in on this, rather than moving forward with a recommendation from staff. So, perhaps a compromise would be to discuss…I don’t know if it would be reasonable for us to discuss this and not make an action on this, and the discussion could be included in the staff recommendation to Council, but again, that’s not exactly the process we’re aiming for. I don’t see a perfect solution here.

Council Member Kou: If I could add one more thing, I think it does warrant a little bit more discussion, only because that fee reduction program that you’ve already approved in your motion, the fee reduction program includes, the reduction is also for seniors, children, people with disabilities and then adults as well. So, we’re already doing a fee reduction for the annual pass for people with disabilities, so then if people with the placard get in the park for free, then I think the monthly pass fee reduction needs to be adjusted, because they’re not aligned. If that makes sense.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m not clear where the fee reduction applies to handicapped or to youth, based on the text of our recommendation and from Council, the fee reduction only applies to seniors, low income, active military, and veterans.

Mr. Anderson: The current motion that we just passed does not have disabled in it.
Ms. O’Kane: Okay, well that doesn’t align with the fee reduction policy.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Can we bring up the fee reduction policy, because I want to make that as parallel as possible.

Mr. Anderson: Lam, do you mind pulling that up?

Ms. O’Kane: If you go to the top, you’ll see that eligible youth, senior and disabled residents, as well, have the $300 subsidy cap, which we talked about, and then $150 subsidy cap is for adults. At the top, “Disabled residents of Palo Alto that meet the household income guidelines may also receive a 25- or 50-percent with the subsidy cap.” So, if we’re trying to align with this policy, then disabled residents would be included in this.

Commissioner Moss: Does that mean we have to actually spell it out, or it goes back to my original argument that this is behind the scenes, and if you fill this out and you qualify, then you get the discount, no questions asked. No further questions asked.

Commissioner Olson: We didn’t say to align with the City of Palo Alto fee reduction program generically. We called it low income, so I would be in favor of amending that prior motion, and either calling it, “aligning with the fee reduction program,” or saying the low income and disabled residents, because I do think the intent was certainly to mirror what we already have in place.

Commissioner Reckdahl: This language confuses me. Does it confuse other people?

Ms. O’Kane: I can tell you why it’s confusing, is because we never used to have adults included in this. It was for youth, seniors and the disabled. Residents initially. A couple years ago at the request of a City Council member – I can’t quite remember – we added eligible adults. So, I understand. It’s now confusing, because really, if you’re an adult or a youth regardless of whether you’re disabled or not, and you meet the income requirements, you would get the discount. So maybe I should have not mentioned anything, and I just confused everything even more, but I understand why it’s confusing. It’s because the adults was added as a trial a couple of years ago, to see how much interest we would get in it.

Mr. Anderson: Kristen, is it correct to say we wouldn’t really be mirroring this program, because this is only for Palo Alto residents and has those two caps, and what we’re proposing for the annual pass applies – and has to apply – to both residents and non-residents, and as the Commission noted, they didn’t want that cap limit. So, it really wouldn’t be mirroring this. It is separate on at least those two points. Is that correct?
Vice Chair Greenfield: I also think it’s a bit of apples and oranges and doesn’t really fit particularly, considering the perspective of a handicapped person in a vehicle. They’re used to having a placard or a license plate and being able to park free wherever they go. That’s, I believe, fairly common policy throughout municipalities. Also, what we’re talking about in terms of the entrance fee to Foothills Preserve is quite different from enrolling in a Recreation program, which is what this primarily geared to, I believe, so I wouldn’t be in favor of pushing forward with that.

Ms. O’Kane: Okay. I apologize if I confused and extended the conversation by bringing this up.

Vice Chair Greenfield: No, I think it’s worthwhile to bring it up.

Commissioner Olson: Jeff, would you be in favor of adding a discount for disabled individuals, or are you saying that you prefer that they have a free pass?

Vice Chair Greenfield: My recommendation is a free pass. That’s consistent with what San Mateo County parks and Santa Clara County parks do. State parks do something slightly different. You need to qualify for a special handicap card, and then you get a special rate. I think it might be 50 percent off. I don’t recall off the top of my head.

Chair Cribbs: I guess I always thought that if you have a handicap placard that the entrance to Foothill would be free, so clearly I misunderstood that. All of this discussion right now is really discussion that we intended to have at our next meeting, so I’m still concerned with the fact that this discussion is really not on the agenda, and it’s kind of expanding the agenda, and I’m not so sure that we can do that. We have a lot to talk about on the 23rd, and it would be nice to get some of these things out of the way. So, I guess we’re a little bit stuck, unless somebody wants to make a motion to include this discussion now.

Commissioner Reckdahl: It certainly would be within our scope to say to either give disabled people a discount to annual fee, and also change the annual fee for busses or vans. Those both would be within the agenda, so we can discuss that.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I guess that means that we could say that an annual fee for disabled would be zero, and that would be the same as having no daily fee, except a disabled vehicle would be required to get an annual pass, which is an extra step that they normally wouldn’t have to do. And it creates an additional workload on staff, obviously.

Chair Cribbs: Does somebody want to make a motion, or not?

MOTION

Vice Chair Greenfield: I would be willing to make a motion regarding the annual fee, that it apply only to passenger vehicles with a maximum of nine people or less.
Commissioner Reckdahl: I’ll second that.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Sorry, and I’m still thinking about if we should include something in that motion to address the vehicles displaying handicap, disabled vehicles. I guess I have a question for staff. If we had a policy in place where the annual fee for handicapped vehicles displaying a placard or a plate was zero, could the entrance station interpret this to be that no entry fee would be required, whether they had an annual pass or not? It seems consistent with the spirit of it, it’s equivalent and it’s easily documented in that a handicapped status is clarified with a placard or a license plate.

Mr. Anderson: Yeah, I believe so.

Vice Chair Greenfield: So then, I would add in the motion that annual passes be offered to disabled license plates or placards with a zero fee.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I’ll second that, too, so we can discuss it. I don’t know. I certainly think the annual pass should only apply to the small vehicles. The handicapped, I’m not sure whether we should just give them a discount, or give them free access. I’d be interested to hear other peoples’ opinions on that.

Vice Chair Greenfield: As the maker of the motion, I’ll just add, regarding the impetus for providing free entry to handicapped vehicles, I think this is the norm and the expectation for handicapped vehicles. It’s the norm at county parks in our vicinity, and so I think we’re opening ourselves up to some backlash if we don’t do this, as far as making it free versus discounted. So, I’m in favor of zero fee.

Commissioner Olson: Jeff, do you have examples? The struggle I’m having is that we’ve looked at a lot of data at the Ad Hoc, but we have not looked at any data here, so I’d love to see examples of county parks that charge an admission but exempt anyone with a handicapped placard.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Daren could probably pull up a website of the county parks fee schedule if that would be helpful.

Mr. Do: I’ll search for that.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I can pop it up right now if you want me to share my screen.

Mr. Do: Sure, please go ahead.

Commission LaMere: I also believe we’ve lost the Chair.

[Technical problem]
Commission LaMere: I have what Daren wrote in a document that we’ve been working on. He had written that San Mateo County parks do not offer a discount on daily entry fees or annual pass for disabled. Seniors and veterans only. Santa Clara County parks has no fee for disabled daily fee, and state parks has a 50 percent discount for disabled daily fee.

Commissioner Olson: So, the ones that do offer it are all on the dailies, not on the annual.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Right. It’s an entry waiver of the daily fee. I’m looking at San Mateo County parks right now. I can share that if you like.

Mr. Anderson: Maybe I missed that one. I’ve got the Santa Clara one up.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Go ahead, Daren, if you want to share instead.

Mr. Anderson: It’s just to confirm that it says daily fee, disabled, no fee. Vehicles must display either DMV permanently displayed placard, DMV-issued disabled person license plate, etc. So that’s Santa Clara County Parks daily fee, no fee for disabled.

Vice Chair Greenfield: And for San Mateo County vehicle entry fees, vehicles displaying disabled plates/placard.

Commissioner Olson: Again, that’s for daily, Jeff?

Vice Chair Greenfield: It’s the vehicle entry fee, which is daily, yes.

Mr. Anderson: And it’s zero for that one, for San Mateo?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes, it’s a waiver.

Mr. Anderson: My apologies, Ad Hoc, I missed that one.

Commissioner Olson: Is that the only waiver of the daily fee? Is that the only category for those two parks that you noted?

Vice Chair Greenfield: No. For San Mateo, the entry fee waiver is veterans with proof of veteran status, seniors 62-plus on weekdays, VA hospital-sponsored patient activities, County employees on County business. Then it gets into specific stuff, like Archery Club members and rifle range users, et cetera.

Commissioner Olson: I think that’s where I’m struggling is having a graduated discount and treating one group different than others, if it should be separated out in that way. I’m totally in favor of adding folks with a handicapped placard into the discount, and then maybe Council Member Kou can raise this, regarding the daily fee at Council, but it seems difficult in my mind to treat groups differently when we’re talking about discounts.
generally. That’s my early opinion, but definitely this is not an area we have a ton of data on, so I’d love to hear what other folks think.

Ms. O’Kane: We lost the Chair, so Vice Chair, could I say something?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes, please.

Ms. O’Kane: I recognize this is a very important topic, and I think it should be further explored. Where my concern is – I’m not sure who said it earlier – I just looked again at the agenda item. It doesn’t include this, and I think there is plenty of people from the community who might want to weigh in on this topic. Some of the things we heard at some Council meetings are people who are disabled and have been accessing the park or not accessing the park for various reasons, and I think it would be really important to agendize this, so they would have the ability to participate in the conversation. I think we’re straying a little bit too far.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Okay. Does that apply to discussion on limiting the annual pass to vehicles with nine or fewer occupants? And I see the Chair is back, so I’ll return to her.

Ms. O’Kane: The agenda item is Foothills Park annual pass and visitor capacity limit, so if it’s related to an annual pass, I think it’s fine, or capacity limits, I think it’s fine. If it’s related to something else, I think it needs to be deferred.

Chair Cribbs: Apologies, everybody. I couldn’t get in. I could listen to you, but I couldn’t say anything, because I was there as an attendee, or something like that. Anyhow, it is life in the world of Zoom. So, where did we get to? The last thing I heard was Kristen saying that we’re straying a little bit far afield, which I had thought, but are there things that we can –

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think we were talking about the daily fee, but that was just in context of do we want to change the annual fee to give a discount or a free? My inclination would be to lump the handicapped into the 25-percent discount that we’re giving to military and other people. I think that would be a reasonable way to address this, but this is hard.

Ms. O’Kane: Maybe it’s something that staff takes back and redo a little bit of analysis and thought on this and bring it back at the regular February meeting?

Commissioner Moss: Or, just bringing it up at the City Council. We’ve made our recommendation, and if you want to legalize it, go to the lawyers and adjust it ever so slightly, that’s okay with me. We’ve done our job. You have our input.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I think there is still a place for a recommendation regarding the vehicle size with respect to the annual pass, and I think we can include that. I also think if
we were to make a recommendation for, bring up the issue of handicapped rate in the annual pass, then this would at least be something for the Council to consider and they can change how it’s implemented as they see fit, so I think including it in an action, along with the vehicle limit would be useful for Council to act further.

Chair Cribbs: I’m still back with feeling that these things should be discussed at our next Commission meeting. I’d like to hear a little bit more from the staff about both the vehicle size and the other things on our list that we were going to discuss, so I would actually like to defer this until next time, but I may have missed a motion that anybody made, so I’ll sort of see where we are right now.

Vice Chair Greenfield: There was a motion made for the purpose of discussing this, to limit this and Keith had seconded. My biggest concern is that we don’t address this, we don’t have an opportunity to get this change implemented until summer. I appreciate the other concerns.

Commissioner Reckdahl: In particular, I don’t want busses to be able to pay their annual pass and shuttle people up and down, and fill the park with people. That’s technically what they could do. We have no limits on commercial vehicles, no limits on size of vehicles. They can have their annual pass and have unlimited access to the park.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I think we have a motion and a second. I don’t know if there’s more discussion on it. Maybe we just move to a vote on it.

Mr. Anderson: Would you like me to share the screen, Vice Chair, with that…?

Vice Chair Greenfield: It’s really up to the Chair.

Chair Cribbs: Would you please?

Mr. Anderson: Sure. Please clarify if I’ve captured your thoughts correctly in the second motion here. For what it’s worth, down below I copied all the information I had in the PowerPoint presentation, which is the details on the annual pass that we had discussed, which includes that bit about the two passenger vehicles with capacity of nine people or less.

Commissioner Brown: I have a clarifying question about the second part of the motion. The placard counts as the annual pass, rather than applying for it and getting a separate placard?

Mr. Anderson: From staff perspective, that’s the way we would handle it.

Commissioner Brown: Okay.
APPROVED

Commissioner Moss: I second it.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I think Commissioner Reckdahl has already seconded it. Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: You want to speak to it, Vice Chair, or have you while I was off the phone?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m just looking at the wording.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I’d be interested in going around and hearing what people feel about the “disabled.” Do you want to give them free annual pass or do you want to give them the discounted annual pass? That would help me with my vote.

Chair Cribbs: Let’s do that. I would prefer to give them a free annual pass.

Mr. Anderson: Could I just verify that I probably mis-wrote this second point. Do you want to clarify what you said? I think I might have missed it.

Chair Cribbs: I didn’t want to charge people disable with a placard.

Mr. Anderson: Okay, I just to make sure I phrase it correctly. What I have written is annual pass at no charge to people with disabled vehicle…? How do you want to phrase that?

Disabled vehicles –

Chair Cribbs: Well, the vehicles aren’t disabled, so just with vehicles displaying…

Mr. Anderson: Thank you.

Commissioner Moss: Disabled vehicle plates or a disabled placard.

Ms. O’Kane: I think it’s license plates or placards.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Plates is what San Mateo County uses, so either way.

Chair Cribbs: I heard something while I was on the phone. Did you have the information about other County parks? Is that the way they treat…?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes. Santa Clara and San Mateo County parks are free. State parks are different. They’re generally 50 percent off, but that’s a broader range.

Commissioner Olson: I think the clarification there is that they are free for the daily fee, along with veterans, seniors, et cetera. They are all treated the same in those others, as opposed to having a different tier for disabled versus everybody else. So, I had stated my preference to add the folks with a disabled license plate or placard in the categories of discounts that we already have, rather than having a new tier of discount for a group and
treating them differently, but then advocating, since we can’t really speak to the daily fee here, asking staff to maybe raise that with Council. Otherwise, I feel like this is a back door way of having a waived daily fee.

Chair Cribbs: Back door way of what, Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: Having a waived daily fee.

Chair Cribbs: I see. Thank you. Mandy?

Commissioner Brown: I support the second motion as written.

Chair Cribbs: Jeff?

Commissioner LaMere: I’m in agreement with Jackie in terms of not creating more tiers. I feel like it could also people warrant people to ask why we don’t allow seniors in for free or create more carve-outs and categories.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I would just clarify, for Santa Clara County parks, the free entry is only for the disabled vehicles, the vehicles with disabled plates or placard. There’s a different discount for seniors. For San Mateo County parks, seniors have free entry on some weekdays, but not on weekends, just to clarify. And also, for San Mateo County parks, veterans with proof of veteran status are free. I would also like to change the wording on the first item and have it say that the annual pass rather than fee, is only applicable for passenger vehicles with nine people or less.

Commissioner LaMere: I am in favor of the passenger vehicle limit, however.

Commissioner Olson: Me too.

Chair Cribbs: Me too. Everybody in favor, let’s see if we can get one that we all agree with. Everybody in favor of the passenger vehicle limit? I don’t hear anybody objecting.

Ms. O’Kane: I’m sorry I have to say that, because we’re doing Zoom calls, the vote has to be taken by each person. Were you just taking a vote on the motion?

Chair Cribbs: I was not taking a vote on the motion. I was trying to see where agreement was.

Ms. O’Kane: I’m sorry. I apologize.

Chair Cribbs: No, that’s okay. David?

Commissioner Moss: I’m okay with the wording of both A and B.
Commissioner Reckdahl: My preference would actually…I agree with Jackie and Jeff. My college roommate is legally blind, so he has a placard, but he’s a patent lawyer and is filthy rich, so it’s like well, do we…? I think we should give them a discount, but I don’t think we should give them more of a discount than someone who has very low income or is a military veteran or something like that. I think simplicity of just having the handicapped people in the same category as the other discounts makes more sense.

Commissioner Moss: Okay, I change my vote. The same as what Keith just said.

Vice Chair Greenfield: So, if you’re not in favor of free entry for people with a disabled plate and placard, are you in favor of adding them into the 25-percent discount group? Is that what the group consensus is here? That’s my first question. My second point is, Keith, I appreciate your comment about your filthy rich friend who is blind, but I would also say that there’s other considerations that he has to work with being blind, and he can find someone to get him up to the park to experience it, I’m okay with free entry.

Chair Cribbs: Are you guys suggesting modifying the description and putting the disabled into the category with seniors? Is that what we’re doing now?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Can we split this motion?

Chair Cribbs: I was going to say, it might be better to split the motion. Daren, could you take out B, please?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I think that’s a request to the maker to split the motion.

Chair Cribbs: Yeah, it is. I wanted to see what it looked like, and then I was going to ask.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Another approach would be for someone to make an amendment to the motion.

**AMENDED MOTION**

Commissioner Reckdahl: I’ll make an amendment that the annual pass for vehicles displaying disabled plates or placard, will be…You say the same as before, or same as the…? Just say a 25-percent discount.

Commissioner Olson: Are we able to amend the prior one that already passed, instead of having it be a stand-alone?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, maybe amend the previous motion to include –

Chair Cribbs: Amend the first –
Vice Chair Greenfield: I don’t know. I’m not clear on what the guidelines are for amending a motion we’ve passed.

Mr. Anderson: I’m not either.

Commissioner Olson: We’re getting lots of procedural questions tonight, aren’t we?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah.

Chair Cribbs: Well then, maybe we should go ahead and work on this motion, and see if we can make a decision about it.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m going to suggest that we split this out into separate motions, because I’m not going to support the 25-percent discount for handicapped vehicles. My thinking in that is I appreciate your point of view, and I am in favor of consensus on this, but I think if there’s a nonunanimous vote on that, that would be something for the Council to look at and to consider other options, and potentially consider how to address this the right way.

Mr. Anderson: So, you would like me to remove B? Is that correct? You’re splitting that?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes, please. That’s going to become a separate motion.

Chair Cribbs: We’re having two motions now, Daren.

Mr. Anderson: And the second motion has been changed to this?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Correct.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes, and we can probably vote on the first motion.

Mr. Anderson: So technically, a third motion here?

Chair Cribbs: Let’s vote on the first motion. Catherine, I think we need to do a voice vote.

[roll call vote]

Ms. Bourquin: Seven to pass the second motion.

**MOTION PASSED, 7-0**

Chair Cribbs: Great. Okay, let’s work on the third motion. Do we have a motion for that now?

**MOTION**
MOTION

Commissioner Reckdahl: The third motion will be a copy of the second motion, but with the free admission for the people with disabled placards.

Chair Cribbs: Yes.

Commissioner Reckdahl: And then I have amended that to change that to be 25-percent discount, and we have to vote on the amendment.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I would suggest, in the interest of expediting this that…You’re creating a new motion, so you can make it whatever you want without the amendment. So, make the amended motion to start off with.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. So, 25-percent discount for annual pass for people who are displaying a disabled placard. Is there a second?

Chair Cribbs: Is there a second?

Commissioner Olson: Commissioner Reckdahl, could I ask a question. In the prior tiers, we had the Palo Alto resident with a discount, and then a nonresident with a discount. Are you adding them to the 25 percent in both categories, as are the others?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Correct, as are the others. Maybe include vehicles displaying disabled placards in the 25-percent discount categories in annual pass fee structure.

Mr. Anderson: Say that last part again, please?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Include vehicles displaying disabled plate/placards in the 25-percent discount categories in the annual pass fee structure.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Can I suggest for both resident and nonresident?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay, so say in the…Okay.

Commission LaMere: I guess it’s plural for residents and nonresidents, so you can take out the word “amendment.” This is a brand new motion. Do we have a second for this?

Chair Cribbs: Do we have a second for this motion?

Commissioner Olson: I’ll second.

Chair Cribbs: Keith, do you want to speak to that?
Commissioner Reckdahl: I understand the desire to give disabled people a break, but also there’s good arguments for giving other people breaks, and it’s hard for us to judge who gets the best break, and I think it’s simplest just to have one category of discounts. I think for simplicity, 25 percent is reasonable.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you. Jackie?

Commissioner Olson: I agree, and I would also point out that we are limited by what we can do in this meeting to the annual pass. I don’t want to treat folks differently, but I would encourage Council to consider the waiver for the daily rate.

Chair Cribbs: Other discussion?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Excuse me, Commissioner Olson. When you say the waiver, are you meaning a free entry waiver, or a 25-percent discount?

Commissioner Olson: I’m saying the daily, because we cannot discuss the daily rate or act on it, which is where I think that belongs that I would encourage Council to take that up as a consideration when they see the discounts that we are offering here and are proposing to offer in the annual pass.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Thank you. I agree with that, and that’s why I’m going to vote no on this, just to be able to make clear that the reason that I’m voting no is I think there should be no charge for an annual fee for disabled vehicles, or disabled drivers.

FRIENDLY AMENDMENT

Commissioner Brown: I’m sorry. I just think for clarity that maybe for this motion I’d like to essentially offer a friendly amendment that I imagine will become an unfriendly amendment, that it should be at no fee, just so there’s clarity in the record that the minority opinion is no fee, and we’re not voting against a discount for the disabled community. I don’t that to be in the record and be confusing to anybody.

Vice Chair Greenfield: That goes to the maker of the motion first to accept the amendment or not.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think we should vote on this amendment. I think that’s the cleanest way to do it.

Vice Chair Greenfield: So, if you want vote –

[inaudible, crosstalk]

UNFRIENDLY AMENDMENT
Commissioner Reckdahl: So, not friendly. This would be unfriendly and have a separate vote on this amendment.

Vice Chair Greenfield: And I’ll second the unfriendly amendment.

Mr. Anderson: How would you like that phrased, Commissioner Brown?

Commissioner Brown: Sorry, we had the language before. The annual pass fee is waived for vehicles displaying disabled plates. Sorry, you said that staff would use the placard as the annual pass. That’s just implied.

Chair Cribbs: Okay. You need a second to that unfriendly amendment?

Vice Chair Greenfield: Yes, I offered a second.

Chair Cribbs: I didn’t hear that. Thank you. Okay, so I’m sorry. Keith, you made the motion, right?

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yes, and Mandy made the amendment, Commissioner Brown.

Chair Cribbs: I’m sorry. I was talking about the other motion.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, I made the original.

Chair Cribbs: Okay, so if you made the original, you are not accepting the unfriendly amendment, or are you?

Commissioner Reckdahl: No, I do not accept it, so it’s unfriendly.

Chair Cribbs: Okay.

Vice Chair Greenfield: So, there can either be discussion on the unfriendly, or we can vote on it.

Chair Cribbs: Well, let’s have a little bit of discussion. Any discussion from anybody?

Commissioner Olson: I guess since I seconded the original, if we were including active military and veterans and the other categories in with the fee waiver, I’d be much more comfortable, but I am not comfortable having a difference here.
Chair Cribbs: Okay, well I don’t have anything to add to the discussion. I don’t hear any other comments, so let’s have a vote on this.

[roll call vote]

Ms. Bourquin: Five no and two yes to the amendment to the third motion.

**AMENDMENT FAILS, 2-5 (Cribbs, LaMere, Olson, Moss, Reckdahl – no; Greenfield, Brown – yes)**

Chair Cribbs: So now we have the third motion to vote on?

Commissioner Olson: Do we go back to a vote on the original third motion?

Vice Chair Cribbs: Yes, we do.

Ms. Bourquin: Would you like me to call roll?

Chair Cribbs: Yes, unless there’s any further discussion. No discussion, okay. Call roll, please.

[roll call vote]

Ms. Bourquin: Five to pass. Two to fail.

**MOTION PASSES, 5-2 (Cribbs, LaMere, Olson, Moss, Reckdahl – yes; Greenfield, Brown – no)**

Chair Cribbs: Okay. So, during the time that I was offline, was there anything else that was brought up that we need to discuss now, or can we move on to the Ad Hoc Committees?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I don’t believe there was anything else. I suggest we move on.

2. **Commission Ad Hoc and Liaison Discussion**

Chair Cribbs: Daren was going to put up the Ad Hoc Committees. What you’re seeing is the 2020 Ad Hoc Committees and the people who served on them, and 2020 Liaison rolls and whoever was the Liaison. We took a look at this and, actually the task today is, there’s no action on this. We just want to talk about it and have some discussion. We tried to reduce the number of Ad Hoc Committees, so you see the 2021 proposed Ad Hocs. This is really also in reaction and in response to the Boards and Commissioners Handbook, which asks that the Ad Hoc be for a specific task, and not like a standing committee, so the proposed Ad Hocs for 2021 are the Baylands Tide Gate, the Fund Development, a CIP review that may not be necessary right at the moment, a Foothills Policy ad hoc, a Racquet
Court Policy, Dog Park and Reservations, and New Recreation Opportunities. Comments?

Discussion?

Commissioner Moss: I have a serious issue with us single Foothills Policy Ad Hoc. I think, based on the discussion today and ones we had last month, there’s way, way too many issues involving Foothills policy for just one ad hoc to deal with. I feel that almost all of the – maybe all of the Commission – would like a say, or a hand, in doing some of the legwork for Foothills, since it’s such a big, big deal. So I was wondering if we could break that up into two or three and perhaps not have so many other ad hocs this year.

Chair Cribbs: I appreciate that, David. Certainly, we have a lot to talk about with Foothills Park this year. I think it’s important for all the Commissioners to have the opportunity to opine and provide their expertise on ideas about Foothills Park. I think that there may be – Kristen can speak to this as well – a Brown Act issue involved, in that we could get into conversations and sort of serial conversations, so the alternative is to continue with the one ad hoc, look at the composition of the ad hoc, and I think we can’t have more than three members. But then as needed – and clearly tonight was very useful – we add special meetings, so that the whole Commission can discuss issues around Foothills. That would ensure that all the Commissioners would have their opportunity and be participating in decisions about Foothills, and also be able to do, I believe, some of the research that might be necessary to assist the staff. I’m worried about the fact that we are down some, in terms of staff, and I’m worried that we’re taking an awful lot of staff time, so I want to be cognizant of that. Kristen and Daren, would you –

Commissioner Moss: Could I make one more comment?

Chair Cribbs: Absolutely.

Commissioner Moss: That is, it was the research that I was most concerned about, and staff time, and when I look at the different things, what I’m talking about is that there are certain things that are health and safety issues. There are certain things that have to do with our partner relations and liaisons regarding classes and special events and tours and guided hikes and work parties and volunteers, et cetera. That’s another whole category of research that needs to be done. Then there’s another whole set of research that has to be done regarding publicity and the Enjoy catalog and the online real time website status and that kind of thing. Then there’s another whole bunch of research to do with technology, like car counters and reservation systems. Then there’s stuff that really the staff can do, like trash and staffing and signage and dog policy and bike policy and things like that. So, can staff comment on that tremendous amount of research that needs to be done and how we could help?

Mr. Anderson: I’ll take a stab at answering that one, Kristen, if you don’t mind. To answer the first question of can we have multiple ad hocs, Kristen and I did consult with the City
Attorney’s Office, and the answer was no, that the likelihood of having serial meetings out
of that kind of arrangement is too high and too risky for Brown Act violations. So, we
can’t do that. Chair, Vice Chair and I were discussing alternatives, which is essentially –
because your point is well-taken. We want to make sure all the Commissioners have a
chance…The alternative that is available to us is more special meetings. We can have
another meeting wholly dedicated to Foothills Park to do so. The second part that I wanted
to address is the tremendous amount of research that you highlighted, I think, really ably.
There is an enormous amount. The City Manager had formed a stakeholder group. I think
I’ve reference this before in a couple presentations and updates. Within that stakeholder
group they’ve broken out subgroups, little task forces, that are looking into many of the
issues, if not all that you just enumerated, and they are being remarkably helpful in
brainstorming through it. I think also there will end up being helpful in terms of doing
research as well. Where this comes back to the Commission is we’ll work with those task
forces to develop at least a draft recommendation or something substantive that I can share,
and I’ll bring it back to the full Commission for discussion. That way, we’ll make sure the
full Commissioners is opining and sharing their feedback on all those different categories
that you talked about.

Chair Cribbs: David, do you have any additional comments?

Commissioner Moss: I want the Commission to be helpful to the staff. That’s our goal.
That’s our job. If staff thinks that they can do all the research within their…that I just
enumerated, that’s okay. If you need help, tell us how we can do that. You don’t have to
answer today. Think about it and come back to us and tell us how we can help.

Mr. Anderson: Yeah. I just want to thank you for that. Staff greatly appreciates it. My
whole team, I know so many different staff people are working hard on this, and I just
want to assure you that the Ad Hoc has been very helpful with doing research and
contributing. Chair Greenfield and I have met in the park and walked through things. He’s
part of that stakeholder development group that I mentioned and has done a tremendous
amount of research, so we are getting a lot of help. There is a need, because there’s such a
tremendous amount, so I’ll keep looking for different opportunities to seek assistance from
the full Commission. Again, I greatly appreciate the offer, because we do need it.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you, David. That was really well-said, and Daren, I think you
understand how much the Commission wants to help the staff and wants to be a support
for the staff during this time, because I think we all know how much additional work
you’ve been doing and how much we appreciate it all.

Mr. Anderson: Thank you.

Chair Cribbs: Going back to the other Ad Hoc Committees, take a minute to review those
and see if you have any thoughts. We’re not taking any action on this tonight. We just
wanted to bring it to everybody’s attention. Same thing with the Liaison roles. Any comments about the Liaison roles? I talked to Daren and he felt like we had covered them all, but if there were others that people wanted to bring up, we can do that at the next meeting.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I think the NVCAP, the North Ventura, is wrapped. It’s possible there might be one last meeting, but for all practical purposes, it’s wrapped up. I guess it doesn’t hurt to have me on that, or to have someone on that.

Chair Cribbs: I think it’s really important that as that development goes forward that you’re there or somebody is there to ensure that the parks don’t get short shrift.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Yeah, so better safe than sorry. We’ll leave it on the plan.

IV. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR February 23, 2021

Chair Cribbs: I think so. Okay, well if there’s nothing more about that, I think we could have a motion to adjourn.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Excuse me, are we talking about our next agenda?

Chair Cribbs: I think that the next agenda is Foothills Park and the fees, Daren?

Mr. Anderson: That’s correct, the impact fees.

Vice Chair Greenfield: Okay. Since it’s a discussion item, it may not be necessary to narrow down what our priority focus is on Foothills Park, and maybe the first part of our discussion could be to talk about where our priorities are. I don’t know if it would be helpful for the Ad Hoc to hear from the Commission what the priorities that they might be interested in pursuing might be, if that would help moving towards the discussion on the 23rd.

Chair Cribbs: Are you talking about the priorities for Foothills Park, Jeff? Or priorities in general?

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m talking about, as we consider the Foothills Park agenda item on the 23rd, we have this broad list. Do we need to spend any time – not that I’m looking to spend a lot more time – but do we need to spend any time talking about what the priorities are for discussion at the next meeting? What the top priorities we’re focused on would be. I think we have more latitude since it’s a discussion item and not an action item.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Will it be agendized as a discussion item or an action item?

Mr. Anderson: Discussion.
Chair Cribbs: It’s all discussion. And then the action would be a month later unless we plan to have a special meeting.

Commissioner Reckdahl: So, if we want to make a recommendation to Council about something, we can’t do that?

Mr. Anderson: You could change it to an action item, if you wanted, for the 23rd. The Ad Hoc and I have looked over the very, very robust list that you had seen before, with green and yellow, purple – breakdowns of different priorities and topics. It’s fairly lengthy. Maybe I could defer to the Ad Hoc, but my impression is there’s so much to discuss, it would be very difficult to make an action item on much of it.

Vice Chair Greenfield: I’m also concerned about the frequency of action recommendations we make to Council on the same topic and the burden that places on staff to prepare a staff report that goes to the Council for that. And trying to get agendized on the Council slate.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Okay. I just want to make things as flexible as possible, just because tonight we were kind of hamstrung because our agenda was a little too narrow.

Vice Chair Greenfield: And I’ll also note that we probably wouldn’t have a second special meeting for Foothills next month if we move forward with having our annual retreat, which would already be a second meeting for the month.

Chair Cribbs: Thank you for that.

V. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned by motion by Commissioner Reckdahl and second by Commissioner Moss at 10:15 p.m.