



**MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
DECEMBER 13, 2022
In-Person & Virtual Conference
Palo Alto, California**

Commissioners Present: Chair Greenfield; Commissioners Amanda Brown, Anne Cribbs, Nellis Freeman, Shani Kleinhaus, and Joy Oche

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present:

Staff Present: Daren Anderson, Javod Ghods

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

BUSINESS

1. Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing Use of Teleconferencing for Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting During COVID-19 State of Emergency

Commissioner Freeman moved to adopt the Resolution. Seconded by Commissioner Cribbs, the motion passed, 5-0, by roll call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nate Blair, volunteer coach for Palo Alto Little League, called in to comment about the poor condition of the field at Hoover Park. He believes there is confusion about whether Palo Alto Little League or the city is responsible for the cost of maintenance of the field. He asked the Commission to see if there is a way to facilitate keeping the baseball field in better condition for the city's residents. One impediment to the field remaining in good condition has been dog owners using it as a dog park despite there being a dog park nearby. Mr. Blair asked the Commission to advocate for better enforcement of the ordinance that calls for no dogs off leash in that area.

AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1 **2. Approval of Draft Minutes from the November 22, 2022, Parks and Recreation**
2 **Commission Meeting**

3 Chair Greenfield recommended delaying the approval of the draft minutes from the
4 November 22, 2022, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting given they were
5 presented to the Commission the morning of the meeting.

6 **CITY OFFICIAL REPORTS**

7 **3. Department Report**

8 Daren Anderson, Community Services Department, gave an update on the recruitment
9 status. Staff is still recruiting for a Park Maintenance position, the hourly Open Space
10 Technician positions and Budget Analyst. The daily flamingo feedings at the JMZ have
11 resumed at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Donations for the yearly Holiday Toy Drive can be
12 dropped off at the fire stations, libraries and community center in Mitchell Park. The day
13 after the meeting will be the last day for that and also for registering for the Holiday
14 Decorating Contest. Judging will take place December 16 through 20. More information
15 for that can be found at cityofpaloalto.org/decoratingcontest. He provided an update on
16 the infill at Mayfield Soccer Complex. The contractor completed all work on the north
17 field. It is now open and they will start work on the south field. They had to stop due to
18 rain and will resume Thursday. There is no firm date for when the project will be
19 completed because of the weather but it is anticipated to be reopened by the end of next
20 week. The Magical Bridge Playground improvement project has been completed and the
21 playground opened on December 1.

22 Commissioner Kleinhaus reported that an email was received about an arts installation
23 on sea level rise and questioned whether the public will be informed about it.

24 Mr. Anderson explained that this is being led by Karen Kienzle with the Art Division
25 from Community Services who will post signs at the park and the city manager will
26 announce it on the website. He explained what the exhibition and that it will be placed
27 just off the banks in front of the Nature Interpretive Center.

28 Commissioner Brown asked for an update on the Foothills entrance fees from the last
29 meeting.

30 Mr. Anderson answered they were waiting on the purchasing department to finalize the
31 contract. The IT department stated the contractor will be required to provide \$2M worth
32 of insurance liability as opposed to the typical \$1M because of a cybersecurity element.
33 The contractor agreed but is not able to right now. A temporary exception is being
34 sought and when the risk management department reviews that and gives their ruling the
35 work can be started.

BUSINESS

4. Advanced Water Purification System (AWPS) – Diego Martinez Garcia – Discussion

Tom Kapushinski, Senior Engineer with Public Works, presented an agenda of what was to be discussed and presented a slide show outlining the details and purpose of the project to include the tree removal, planting palette, irrigation plans and lighting considerations.

Mr. Martinez Garcia added to the presentation discussing the proposed sound wall and tree removal and replacement. He detailed how recycled water will be used for irrigation purposes.

Mr. Kapushinski discussed the lighting considerations including using timers.

Mr. Martinez Garcia added further details on the lighting considerations and outlined the next steps for the project stating they continue to undergo a finance evaluation with their partner, The City of Mountainview. The plan will be to complete the design in January 2023.

Mr. Kapushinski mentioned that the planning department has been reviewing this and once their input is received, they will go through permitting. The construction is estimated to start near the end of 2023 and will take about two years to complete the project.

Commissioner Oche questioned if the amount of potable water demand they are saving will be communicated.

Mr. Kapushinski answered they are not adding any recycled water at this point, just improving the quality. They are monitoring the flow going out. Mountain View is interested in getting more recycled water but need higher quality.

Commissioner Oche asked what the frequency will be for the stated gallons of water needed.

Mr. Martinez Garcia answered that number was the volume of the container of the plants when they were purchased.

Bob Norbutas from Siegfried explained that using water efficient planting and drought tolerant, indigenous plants, the expectation is to establish them with a low water amount and eventually shut off the system in 3 to 5 years when they are acclimated to the area. It will educate the community that using plants like these will save water whether using potable or recycled water.

1 Commissioner Freeman asked when the removal and replacement of plants will start and
2 what the growth rate will be.

3 Mr. Martinez Garcia said the removal will be at the beginning of the construction. The
4 replacement will take place a year and a half after starting the project.

5 Commissioner Freeman asked if the selection of plants was an attempt to duplicate the
6 current plants.

7 Mr. Norbutas explained how they determined the selection of plants and trees.

8 Commissioner Kleinhaus inquired if they plan to clear the shrubbery and undergrowth in
9 the area between the other property and the plant where they plan to leave the existing
10 trees.

11 Mr. Kapushinski answered they will try to minimize that area as much as possible.

12 Commissioner Kleinhaus asked if something can be added to the specs, so people know
13 not to clean that area.

14 Mr. Martinez Garcia showed the trees to be cleared and the ones to remain were marked
15 in the plans.

16 Commissioner Kleinhaus added that does not mean somebody that comes in will not
17 decide to just clean the area. She expressed concern for the 4000k blue light being
18 provided and asked them to provide the code requiring it. She felt 2700K would be
19 sufficient.

20 Mr. Kapushinski said they would provide that code. He stated that Black & Veatch felt
21 2700K would not be adequate.

22 Commissioner Brown asked for signage to incorporate education of the beautification of
23 the site.

24 Mr. Kapushinski stated there is an educational placard proposed into the design about
25 what the system entails and how it treats the water.

26 Commissioner Kleinhaus expressed concern about the melaleuca trees because they have
27 been shown to be invasive in Florida and may not belong near the bay as they are not
28 native to California. She suggested looking at the plants the Public Works planted on the
29 other side of the water facility.

30 Mr. Martinez Garcia said that in 2013, this portion of the plant was landscaped with
31 feedback from experts and species will be the same.

1 Mr. Norbutas stated during that project, it was important to establish a plant palette that
2 would work with recycled water, which were not common, and they had to guess what
3 would work best at that time.

4 Commissioner Kleinhaus commented that it is good the recycled water will be used
5 because the plant produces more than the customers absorb, which means a lot of it ends
6 up in the bay introducing chemicals in the bay.

7 Chair Greenfield asked why construction will take two years.

8 Mr. Kapushinski stated they were originally looking at an 18-month schedule but supply
9 chain issues and permitting have caused them to need more time.

10 Chair Greenfield asked for explanation on the various approvals that City Council has to
11 provide before moving forward.

12 Mr. Kapushinski answered they need recommendations from the Architectural Review
13 Board then will go to Council. They will not be ready to go to construction until the
14 financing aspect has been worked out involving Palo Alto and Mountain View. He
15 estimated near the end of next year they might be ready to go to construction.

16 Chair Greenfield asked what approvals City Council will need to give.

17 Mr. Kapushinski stated City Council will have to approve the construction contract after
18 the financing has been agreed on. The construction costs have gone up from the initial
19 estimate. Funding arrangements have to be worked out between all parties in the project
20 before presenting the construction contract to City Council.

21 Chair Greenfield asked if there will be motion-sensors used for the lighting.

22 Mr. Kapushinski stated they are working on delay-timers for the lighting.

23 Chair Greenfield emphasized he wants to make sure there continues to be a green border
24 between the plant and the street and that the sound wall will be hidden with plants. He
25 inquired whether the tree replacement ratio of 75% is this the number of trees or the net
26 canopy being changed and why it is not 100%.

27 Peter Gollinger, Urban Forestry, explained that based on the species, composition and
28 condition of the trees that were there, a 75% replacement ratio would be acceptable. This
29 was number of trees, not canopy replacement.

30 Chair Greenfield asked if the updated tree production ordinance would have changed that
31 number.

1 Mr. Gollinger answered if the project had started after that ordinance was put in place
2 they would have pushed for a minimum of 1:1.

3 Chair Greenfield asked what the net loss of the canopy would be after 15 years given the
4 species being removed and the species and sizes that are being planted.

5 Mr. Gollinger said based on the density of the plantings, they are not losing that large a
6 percentage of the canopy because they will be planted close together and higher quality
7 species.

8 Mr. Martinez Garcia commented there is a sun filter in the middle of the wooded area
9 that is not covered by any sort of vegetation.

10 Chair Greenfield asked how the Commission will respond to the questions that were not
11 answered at the meeting.

12 Mr. Anderson stated the comments shared will be passed on to the remaining boards,
13 commissions or councils that will do the review. During the permitting process, it will be
14 conveyed that the Parks and Recreation Commission have expressed concerned about the
15 lights and the ARB will give the findings.

16 Commissioner Kleinhaus questioned where it will go in Mountain View for approval.

17 Mr. Martinez Garcia answered Mountain View's City Council will approve the
18 construction part of the project.

19 Commissioner Kleinhaus asked if they will pay for the water.

20 Mr. Martinez Garcia stated that is being discussed.

21 Commissioner Kleinhaus asked them to consider just having a switch to turn the lighting
22 on and off as opposed to permanent or motion-censored lighting.

23 Chair Greenfield asked for an explanation for why Mountain View is involved in the
24 project.

25 Mr. Martinez Garcia answered that Palo Alto has an agreement with Mountain View
26 entitling them to 75% of the recycled water. They have had more expansion in the North
27 Bayshore area increasing their usage which is why they are interested in the project.
28 They, along with 4 others, are partners in the sewage side of the waste water facility.

29 Commissioner Cribbs inquired how much the project is going to cost.

1 Mr. Kapushinski stated the project will cost around \$56M at today’s cost, possibly more
2 in 2 years. They will do a cost update later next year as they get closer to construction.

3 **5. Urban Forestry Annual Update – Peter Gollinger – Discussion**

4 Mr. Gollinger gave an annual Urban Forest update presentation for FY22. He outlined
5 the benefits of the Urban Forest including increasing property values, reducing energy
6 consumption, reinvigorating neighborhoods, helping students, benefitting individual
7 health and more. He gave an estimate of how many trees make up the Urban Forest. He
8 outlined the responsibilities of the Urban Forestry to include the maintenance and
9 development plans of all public trees in the city. He gave an outline of the Urban
10 Forestry staff and their functions. He reported their accomplishments for FY22 including
11 updating the Tree Protection Ordinance and outlined those changes. He explained their
12 methods for staff development. He presented data and a graph of tasks completed by
13 Urban Forestry in FY22. He detailed some challenges for FY22 including COVID-19
14 restrictions, staff vacancies, reduced budget and drought. He reported the plans for FY23
15 including implementation of the new Tree Protection Ordinance and Urban Forest
16 Master Plan. He offered ways that the Urban Forestry can be helped and how to request
17 having a tree planted.

18 Commissioner Kleinhaus questioned what the 600 construction inspections were for.

19 Mr. Gollinger stated they were for tree protection fencing inspections in advance of all
20 projects that require tree protection fencing. They were primarily residential but also
21 large projects.

22 Commissioner Freeman inquired if the tree protection on development and new
23 construction is part of the permitting process and if the fee is incorporated in that and
24 goes back to the Urban Forestry.

25 Mr. Gollinger answered the fencing is part of the approved plans. The inspection has to
26 happen before ground is broken and is part of the permitting process.

27 Commissioner Freeman asked if the Urban Forestry team is involved in the tree
28 trimming in the city as far as the landscapers getting permission, especially for a
29 protected tree.

30 Mr. Gollinger said if anyone is trimming a public or street tree, it should be either their
31 internal crew or contractors. They rarely issue permits for residents to trim their trees as
32 long as it is within city standards.

1 Wintergery@earthlink.net asked when the updated Tree Protection Ordinance will be
2 public knowledge in the community and if they keep data about how many phone calls
3 received with concerns for at-risk trees.

4 Commissioner Cribbs asked if there is opportunity to work with East Palo Alto in
5 improving their tree canopy or if it is all through Canopy.

6 Mr. Gollinger answered it is primarily through Canopy.

7 Commissioner Oche asked when the public tree inventory will be available and if it will
8 be shared with the public.

9 Mr. Gollinger stated the public tree inventory is available to the public on their website.
10 It is updated every 10 to 12 years.

11 Chair Greenfield requested Mr. Gollinger email a link to that information for the
12 Commission to place on the public record.

13 Commissioner Kleinhaus asked if there is a process to decide if a tree needs to be
14 trimmed and how much. She felt some trees have had limbs removed unnecessarily.

15 Mr. Gollinger answered when a request is made for limb removal, a legitimate reason by
16 city standards, including visibility or vehicular and pedestrian access, is required.

17 Commissioner Brown asked what requirements an arborist needs to meet for the city to
18 accept their report regarding the health of existing trees and if there is a standardized
19 report they need to submit.

20 Mr. Gollinger stated under the existing Tree Technical Manual, the minimum
21 requirements for submitting an arborist report is that the arborist is certified and either in
22 good standing with the International Society of Arboriculture or be an ASCA Consulting
23 Arborist. The guidelines needed in a tree preservation report are listed point-by-point in
24 the Tree Technical Manual and will be in the new Tree and Landscape Technical
25 Manual.

26 Commissioner Brown commented on the workload data graph provided and wanted to
27 see more performance measures incorporated into the report about efficiency, response
28 times or how many service calls were responded to in order to establish a goal on
29 effectiveness and how those targets were met.

30 Mr. Gollinger stated they were discussing finding better ways to track efficiency.

31 Commissioner Freeman asked if the 220,000 protected trees were all on public land.

1 Mr. Gollinger answered they were on both public and private land. All trees over 15
2 inches were protected under the Ordinance unless they are high-water users or invasive
3 and there was a selection of native species protected at 11½ inches and greater. The
4 inventory was an estimate based on sampling strategies. He detailed the process for
5 deciding if a tree needed to be removed.

6 Chair Greenfield asked for a link for the public to request tree removal or concern about
7 tree removal.

8 Mr. Gollinger agreed to include links to forms, phone numbers and emails for that
9 information.

10 Chair Greenfield asked for an elaboration about the evolution of the project managers on
11 his team and how it has changed with the update of the Tree Protection Ordinance.

12 Mr. Gollinger stated there were previously two project managers in the Urban Forestry
13 section. One focused primarily on the maintenance of street trees and the contract that
14 goes with that, tree fencing inspections and management of the in-house crew and the
15 other manager focused on electric line clearance and other projects such as the Canopy
16 contract or technology improvement. With the passing of the Tree Protection Ordinance
17 and expected workload, an additional project manager was recommended to focus on
18 implementation of the Tree Ordinance and Master Plan and to help with development
19 review and fencing inspections to take some load off the other two positions. They will
20 be cross-trained to share the load but will primarily focus on those three areas. He stated
21 there was content being reviewed to be placed on their website and sent to tree
22 contractors updating the changes.

23 Chair Greenfield asked if they expect an increase in calls about tree problems, how many
24 they have gotten in the past and if that has changed since the Tree Ordinance has been
25 updated.

26 Mr. Gollinger said there is not enough data to track that. They will begin to be included
27 in a separate call sheet due to the post card mailers for notification for protected tree
28 removals that allow them to track when feedback is received. That format will be used to
29 track requests for investigations for excessive pruning, tree removals, etc. A maintenance
30 form currently exists that meets the requirements of the new ordinance that a protected
31 tree owner will be required to fill out prior to tree maintenance.

32 Chair Greenfield inquired if there would be a benefit to including a tree pruning list if
33 there is a protected or city tree pruning that has been approved.

1 Mr. Gollinger answered they do update the public when they are entering a new area for
2 street tree maintenance or electric line clearance maintenance. They hope to have a more
3 centralized way to do that with their new system.

4 Commissioner Kleinhaus asked if there is any information to link how many trees were
5 trimmed in correlation to incidents.

6 Mr. Gollinger stated there is no data available on that. He suspected the higher numbers
7 reported in 2017 and 2018 were a combination of the area of the city in which they were
8 working and the contractor doing what they needed to do. They have fine-tuned
9 specifications as far as street-tree maintenance that will allow them to tighten
10 specifications, get better bids, and get more value out of their contracts.

11 Commissioner Kleinhaus asked for details for the experiment on Stone Lane mentioned
12 earlier.

13 Mr. Gollinger said an issue seen in the coming years was that previously trees were
14 planted in blocks, so entire neighborhoods were planted with the same street tree species
15 at the same time. Many of those trees have reached the end of their natural life. Stone
16 Lane has had three failures of those trees. They will be evaluating the health of the
17 remaining trees to come up with a plan for removal and replacement. The plan will be to
18 remove and replant the most hazardous trees in the first wave and in a few years remove
19 the next wave of trees and replant. Over the course of 10 or 15 years, they will have
20 removed all the trees reducing the risks to the residents and maintain canopy. If this
21 strategy works well, it will be expanded to larger neighborhoods.

22 Chair Greenfield asked for details about the philosophy in having a street tree versus
23 diversity.

24 Mr. Gollinger answered they have moved away from block planting. They prefer a
25 variety of species on a given street. The residents of Stone Lane enjoy their fall leaves.
26 They intend to replant with deciduous trees of a similar nature but various species to
27 maintain the character of the neighborhood but diversity.

28 Commissioner Kleinhaus commented it would be interesting to try planting trees
29 together to allow them to grow the way they would in nature.

30 Mr. Gollinger said they have looked into planting trees together but most yards do not
31 have capacity for two trees. They will be exploring the possibility of preplanting a
32 succession tree before removal of the existing tree in certain locations with a large
33 enough space.

34 **6. Ad Hoc Committees and Liaison Updates – Discussion**

1 Commissioner Freeman commented on the progress of the soccer fields and they will
2 hopefully be signed off on in the next 2 weeks. There has been no feedback on the
3 progress with pickleball and tennis.

4 Mr. Anderson stated he will check in with Adam Howard and have an update at the next
5 Commission meeting.

6 Chair Greenfield clarified there will be no policy update until City Council approves it.
7 There was a comment made earlier about the fields at Hoover Park that should be taken
8 to the field liaison.

9 Mr. Freeman stated he made a note to reach out on that.

10 Commissioner Cribbs said they talked about the fundraising development committee and
11 the ad in the Enjoy! catalog for the wintertime. She clarified with Mr. Anderson there
12 was an opportunity to do that on a quarterly basis and stated they should work on that
13 and the website in the near future. Regarding recreational opportunities, they had a good
14 meeting with the skatepark folks who requested information. The other recreational
15 opportunity is the Recreation/Wellness Center. Ad hoc hopes to make a presentation to
16 the Commission on January 24. In the area of aquatics, the pool is being drained in
17 March to replaster and do a couple things.

18 Chair Greenfield commented there will be an annual aquatics and golf report update in
19 January.

20 Commissioner Brown stated the dog park has continued to work with Staff on initial
21 feasibility and locations for a pocket dog park in North Palo Alto and meeting with those
22 stakeholders. She will also meet with a stakeholder from the Barron Park area to get
23 more information on their petition and thoughts for the future. There are no pertinent
24 updates from the school district. An idea for Commissioner Cribbs and the fundraising
25 group is to reach out or do a presentation at Los Altos Hills City Council meeting since
26 they are in close proximity to Foothills Park giving them information on the park with
27 the new entrance fees, policy changes and fundraising opportunities.

28 Commissioner Oche had a meeting with the Institute of Sustainable Infrastructure
29 Director of Education on December 5. Mr. Anderson, Lam Do, and Megha from Public
30 Works were in that meeting. The summary from that discussion was a presentation from
31 the director on using the benefits for the city. She shared the free access the city staff
32 could benefit from using the resources, not necessarily subscribing to anything yet but
33 using the free resources in terms of all the projects the city has planned. She shared the
34 applicability of the criteria that the infrastructure currently uses. The major outcome
35 from that will be for the city staff to go through the checklist, sign up for free and

1 determine interest in pursuing that in the future. She will be open to make a presentation
2 if it is wanted.

3 **COMMISSIONER/BOARD MEMBER QUESTIONS, COMMENTS,**
4 **ANNOUNCEMENTS OR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

5
6 Chair Greenfield commented on the future agenda to include the Wellness/Rec Center
7 discussion and update, aquatics and golf annual reports. First Tee will be folded in with
8 golf given the moderate status update. He asked if it will be good to include the
9 Commissions plans for attendance next month. He stated that is one of the items that was
10 discussed at the Board and Commission meeting training that preceded the current
11 meeting. A link to the presentation will be forwarded to all of the Commission members.
12 He recommended Staff watch that.

13
14 Mr. Anderson stated in addition to the items Chair Greenfield mentioned for January,
15 there is the Cubberley restroom that is going to come to the Commission and the city
16 attorney's office has a representative expressing a willingness to present on the
17 attendance policy and guide them on forming their own at the February meeting.

18
19 Chair Greenfield confirmed covering Wellness Center, aquatics, golf and Cubberley in
20 January.

21
22 Mr. Anderson stated golf or aquatics would be willing to push out to the following
23 month if needed.

24
25 Chair Greenfield said they could project how many speakers they can expect for those
26 items to project how much time it will take.

27
28 Mr. Anderson commented that he needs to work on populating February and March and
29 they need to begin working on the work plan soon.

30 Chair Greenfield stated he has questions on the work plan and wants clarification from
31 the City Clerk's office and also if City Council is looking to update the handbook. He
32 has concerns about the Commission working on a work plan before new members are
33 added at the end of March. He believes they should begin working on that in April when
34 there is a new Chair and Commission. He does not believe it is reasonable to set
35 priorities and establish a work plan before that is in place.

36
37 **ADJOURNMENT**

38
39 Meeting adjourned at 9:07 P.M.