APPROVED

MINUTES
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
August 27, 2019
CITY HALL
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto, California

Commissioners Present: Anne Cribbs, Jeff LaMere, Ryan McCauley (arrived at 7:12 p.m.), Don McDougall, David Moss, and Keith Reckdahl (arrived at 7:46 p.m.)

Commissioners Absent: Jeff Greenfield

Others Present: Council Member Cormack

Staff Present: Daren Anderson, Natalie Khwaja

I. ROLL CALL

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS

Chair McDougall: I'd like to ask if there are any Agenda Changes, Requests, Deletions from the published agenda. Do staff or Commissioners have anything that they'd like to suggest?

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chair McDougall: I have no cards for Oral Communications for topics that are not on the agenda.

IV. DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chair McDougall: I'd like to start with welcoming Daren Anderson and the Department Report.

Daren Anderson: Good evening. Daren Anderson. Thanks so much. I'll give you a couple of brief items. The first one's about the Black and White Ball. Just a reminder it's Friday, October 4, 7:00 p.m. to midnight, at Lucie Stern. Tickets are still available. They're $150 each and available online. There's an ice cream social at Hoover Park. This is the 25th

annual Midtown Ice Cream Social on Sunday, September 15, from 1:00 to 4:00 at Hoover Park. So far, Chair McDougall and I are signed up to staff a table and provide information on parks and open space and recreation.

Commissioner Cribbs: (inaudible)

Mr. Anderson: And Anne Cribbs, wonderful. I hadn't heard that yet. That's terrific. Thank you. Commissioner Greenfield had asked about some lighting issues at two of our parks. A couple of bulbs were out at El Camino Park and Stanford/Palo Alto. At El Camino Park, they were replaced on Monday and today. We're back up and running. We're getting a price quote for a little electrical fire we had on an outlet that powered a few of the lights at Stanford/Palo Alto. We're getting a price quote on that, and we'll get it fixed promptly. An update on the Cubberley track and field project. It's progressing well, and we're still on track. About a third of the field has the new pad and the new synthetic turf down. The turf crew that's working on this will be out next week to finish the field installation. Anticipated total turf installation should be done by September 18, and then they'll address the track, which should be completed by September 30, and wrapping up the whole project on October 4. An update on the 3350 Birch Street or AT&T property. On August 19, Council authorized the City Manager to finalize the purchase of the vacant lot at 3350 Birch Street. The City Manager will provide the seller with a written notice to proceed with the sale by August 30, and closing is scheduled to take place 15 days after that. Subsequent steps I envision will be park dedication for the property and community outreach to figure out what the community would like to do with the land. Pickleball, I've got good news. We received our final permit for approval. I think I notified the Commission via email. The work is underway, and the project is anticipated to be completed by November 15. The Cubberley Master Plan, unfortunately I don't have a lot of details. Kristen's planning to get more information and hopefully update you either by email in the interim or perhaps at our next staff meeting. The draft Master Plan is complete. It's under internal review right now. A Commissioner had asked about review on behalf of the Commission, and Kristen says she's coordinating with the City Manager and PAUSD on this issue to make sure we're in alignment about the release of the plan. More information to come. Also good news on the Arastradero Community Garden. This is our newest community garden. Staff's been putting in the irrigation and clearing out a little debris and building the plots. That'll be about 35 plots, which should be ready for gardeners to start using in about one month from now. We already have nine people on our waiting list, which is exciting. People are geared up to start moving in once we're ready. I also had a question about Bol Park and a project Public Works had been looking at for GSI or underground water storage at that site. Several months ago, they had investigated the possibility of putting an underground reservoir there and GSI features. The community had weighed in not in favor by and large. We asked about the current status, and Public Works informed me that that was just the preliminary look, and they're not currently looking at it any longer. Their GSI plan has other, higher-priority sites for GSI improvements. Bol Park's not on their agenda

or calendar. I also received a question about some recent surveys at the Baylands. Save the Bay, who is our primary partner for restoration at that site, is out doing some vegetation monitoring around the marsh along Byxbee. This is just part of their regular efforts. They're out there removing invasive weeds and planting a tremendous number of native plants. They monitor those areas regularly. We also had Team Spartina. This is a team dedicated to one specific invasive plant called the invasive spartina plant. We have it at the Baylands and have had it for quite some time. They've tracked it over the years, and they did an annual pretreatment survey of it. The good news is our infestation is down about 90 percent from its peak in 2006, and now we have approximately 0.14 acres. We're just continually whittling it down with ongoing sustained efforts. I also had a question about sea level rise, just kind of what's next, keeping that fresh and relevant. The next step, I think, is going to be Public Works will be bringing the horizontal levee project for the Commission to discuss in October, tentatively. That concludes the Department Report.

Chair McDougall: Before I ask the Commission whether they have any questions for staff, I would like to remind everybody to make sure you're using the mic and you're speaking into the mic. Apparently, we've recently lost some of the extremely valuable conversations that we've had, and they haven't been sufficiently recorded. That's just disastrous. Please plan on speaking up. I will ask if anybody has any questions for staff at this point. Anne.

Commissioner Cribbs: Just two comments. One, great news on the pickleball. I'm sure that the community will be very excited about that, and I hope we're going to plan a celebration. That's just great. I was so happy to see that come. For the track and for the field at Cubberley, are you doing something to publicize all that?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, I think we'll probably get a ribbon cutting.

Chair McDougall: Does anybody else have any questions? I would like to echo the pickleball excitement. On Bol Park, that was something that GSI decided was a good project. Do we have any understanding of what citizen objections were to that project?

Mr. Anderson: I don't think they got a fair chance to hear a lot about it. I don't think there was a public presentation on it. I'm probably not the right one to give all the details, but I'll ask Public Works to come back at some point. I think they'll be here in November, for sure, and maybe they give a litany of updates, and that could be one of them, where we're at with GSI.

Chair McDougall: That would be good because they were pretty passionate about GSI and the things they could do. It would be worth understanding what citizen objections were. On the Baylands, spartina is a kind of cordgrass, right?

Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

Chair McDougall: Does that mean that all cordgrass is bad or all the rest of the cordgrass that we have there is good cordgrass?

Mr. Anderson: Very good question. It's really tricky, especially at our site. There's an East Coast variety, spartina alterniflora, and it was introduced on accident in the East Bay. It migrated all through San Francisco Bay. You could tell differences until it hybridized. We've got a native spartina, native cordgrass, and now we've got this alterniflora, the East Coast variety, and now we have a hybrid. It's really, really difficult to discern the differences. You have to sometimes time it just right in terms of its growth. Sometimes, you have to inspect the roots. It's very, very difficult, and hence this team of specialists that are really, really good. Lots of times we'll take samples and send them to Cornell to have them genetically tested to ensure we're going after the right ones.

Chair McDougall: It sounds exciting, but I'm not sure exciting is the right word. It certainly sounds interesting and impressive. Thank you for that. Unless there are any other questions—David.

Commissioner Moss: Regarding the horizontal levee, there's a demo for the subcommittee this Friday.

Mr. Anderson: A tour to Oro Loma as I understand it.

Commissioner Moss: The AT&T property, that's fantastic news. I hope it proceeds well. We've only had a couple of new additions over the past four years, so this is going to be a big update.

V. BUSINESS

1. Approval of Draft Minutes from the July 23, 2019 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

Commissioner Moss: I wanted to acknowledge that my updates to the Minutes in the form of a memo were added to the record for others to see. I hope we can talk about that later.

Chair McDougall: The same for the comments and the written response from Commissioner Greenfield. Would it be appropriate for us to somehow acknowledge that in that we're approving the amended Minutes or is it just the Minutes as they've been presented to us? Does that make any difference? Natalie, do you have a comment?

Natalie Khwaja: The memos aren't actually added to the Minutes. They're added to the agenda from last meeting. There would be no change to the Minutes. The memos are posted for public record on the agenda.

Approval of the draft July 23, 2019 Minutes was moved by Commissioner Moss and seconded by Commissioner Cribbs. Passed 5-0, Greenfield and Reckdahl absent

Council Member Cormack: Chair McDougall, may I ask a question about the Minutes now that they've been approved?

Chair McDougall: Yes, please.

Council Member Cormack: Mr. Anderson, I noted in the Minutes that there was going to be outreach about Ramos Park in August. Has that been completed or started?

Mr. Anderson: I'm sorry, it has not yet.

Council Member Cormack: Just for my understanding, when you're doing outreach for a park, how broadly do you do? A half-mile perimeter to notify people or how does that work?

Mr. Anderson: Approximately, yeah. It depends sometimes on the layout of the park and what the nearest surrounding neighborhood looks like. If it's residences, we'll try to broaden it out a little bit more. If it's commercial, sometimes less in certain (crosstalk).

Council Member Cormack: The schools, you'll contact the schools, etc.?

Mr. Anderson: Schools and, for sure, the Commission is always sent an email.

2. Informational Presentation on Park Visitation Study

Chair McDougall: If there are no other questions, I'd like to welcome back Jazmin LeBlanc, who has given us interesting presentations and so on before, and invite her to give us an update on the park visitation study that was done in the summer.

Jazmin LeBlanc: Thank you very much. I'm Jazmin LeBlanc from the Community Services Department. I'm here to present an urban park utilization study that our department was able to conduct this summer. We hired a fantastic summer intern. We would have really liked to have her here, but she's already gone back to college. It's Megan Schmiesing. She's a local young person who is entering her senior year of Pitzer College, studying environmental analysis. She was able to work with us on a variety of projects. This was the biggest project that she worked on. The reason that we asked her to do an urban park utilization study is we actually don't have a good sense of how many people are using our urban parks. Open space is something that we've been able to track because there are fewer entry points, but urban parks are a different animal. This was something we thought would be valuable. It does come up. Both Daren and I will get calls somewhat regularly asking how many people use our different types of parks and in what ways. This is the reason behind doing the survey. Megan developed a survey methodology that was—

before I jump into the methodology, the point of this survey is to have a better understanding of how people are using our parks and in what ways and not to base it on anecdotes or other methods like how much trash is accumulating in one park or another. That's a bit of the background for the survey. We only had one person who was working on this survey, so we did have to narrow in on just a few parks. We chose to look at eight parks. The list of parks was developed closely with Daren and his staff to make sure we were getting a good variety of different types of parks, sizes, and locations across the City. We used the survey methodology that was developed by San Diego State University and the Rand Corporation to be able to get a relatively accurate picture of park usage. This was systematic observations of parks just during the summer, so we're looking at summer data only, throughout the day and throughout the week. In addition to doing the surveys or observational study, we also asked Megan to ask a ten-question survey, and she did get a relatively small sample, but it's still valuable information. I wouldn't try to extrapolate it to the entire population of Palo Alto, but it gives us an interesting picture. This is just a brief overview of how she gathered the data. Basically, each park is broken into segments, and she's counting users in each part of the park. There's a possibility that she's double counting people or miscounting people, but overall we felt like this was going to give us a reasonably good data set. Some of the big findings are here. You can look and see how many people are using the eight parks that we surveyed in an average week in the summer. In terms of putting this into a bigger picture, the national average is somewhere in between Eleanor Pardee Park and Juana Briones Park. Pardee Park is about 10 percent more used, if you're looking at people per acre, than the typical park at the national level. You can see some of our parks are significantly above that. When you look at the average across all eight of these parks, we have about twice as many users in Palo Alto parks as we do in the average park in America. We have relatively even distribution of people in parks at different times of day. Obviously, there are some peaks with the most people around the lunchtime hours, but it's pretty even. There are more users on weekends than weekdays across the parks, about 20 percent more on a weekend. It's pretty even distribution if you're looking at it by gender. When you look at age, there are more noticeable differences with the most people in our parks being children and a lot of adults, but when you pull out just adults who appear to be there to observe kids in the park, you get a lot fewer adults. About half of the adults that are in parks are there primarily to watch their children. As we compare the usage of parks with the demographics in Palo Alto, you can see that children are over-represented in parks and seniors are under-represented in parks across Palo Alto. Again, this is what the surveyor observed. She broke out essentially the three larger parks in the survey as regional parks, so Mitchell Park, Greer—actually I think it was Peers and Pardee as well, compared with the smaller parks to see if there were differences in usage. You can see a little bit of difference. We also looked at how people were using the parks and found that quite a few people are engaged in something that is either vigorous exercise or walking or more. This was pretty different than other surveys found. For instance, in LA when they did a similar park survey, they found that about two-thirds of the people in parks were sedentary, relaxing at benches or picnicking, things like that. We have sort of

a flipped image here of people who are pretty active. This is something that other park surveyors have really focused on because physical activity is so important. Looking at particular activities, our surveyor actually separated Magical Bridge from other playground use because it was such a popular activity on its own. Definitely when you add playground use and Magical Bridge, you can see that is a hugely popular thing to do in our urban parks. There's a variety of things that are happening. When you focus on just what was observed among seniors, you get a bit of a different picture where there are definitely more people doing things like walking, sitting, picnicking. Playing pickleball was a very popular activity she observed among seniors, tai chi, etc. We also asked her to focus on dogs at the parks and found that the new Peers Park dog park is very popular. She saw a lot of people with dogs there. The Mitchell Park dog area seemed to also be quite popular. She did observe some dogs in the Greer Park dog run, but a similar number of dogs that were on the fields at Greer Park rather than actually in the dog run and some other dogs off-leash in other parks. I've already said what's on this slide, so I'll move on. We asked her to focus on specific parks in particular. As I've already mentioned, the most common activity at Mitchell Park was using the Magical Bridge playground, using the other playgrounds, picnicking, using the pickleball courts were other popular activities. Because she spent so much of the summer in parks, part of what we asked is, "Can you look for some other observations that you're just picking up by being in our parks for hours and hours all summer and speaking with people?" She identified some potential improvements we could make. I would say there's a consistent pattern that people want to be in the shady spots no matter what. That was some of the things that she heard and observed around dog parks and so on. In looking at Greer Park, this park was more popular in terms of actually playing sports on the fields and then playing at the park and walking or jogging. El Camino Park is a bit different because it is primarily ball fields. What she saw during the summer speaks to that. What she saw appeared to be people in summer camps for particular sports. In the particular time she observed, there were some pretty dramatic differences amongst gender in that park, which is worth noting and worth us keeping an eye on. This really may be a statistical blip because of the nature of whatever the camps were in the given weeks she was there. Peers Park was one that she noted was really utilized to the max, that every inch was well used. That's particularly true now that the dog park is in. Dog park, picnicking, playgrounds, and summer camps were all popular activities she observed. Pardee Park, this is one that I mentioned is about 10 percent above the average in terms of use. What she saw was similar, playgrounds, playing on the fields, walking, people gardening. This was one that she noted had the highest use amongst teenagers, but it's hard to know exactly what was driving that. In the cases where she saw teens there, it was more playing on the fields in formal or informal sports. Juana Briones Park, the playgrounds are popular, and she noted the playground with shade is much more popular than the playground without shade. There's two playgrounds at that park. Scott Park, this is one of the smaller parks. It had a lot more people who were using it as a place to walk through. She did see that the bocce ball courts were used, especially on weekends. Sarah Wallis Park might be the smallest park that we looked at; I think it is. She did see that this park actually does get a

decent amount of use, especially during the lunch hour for people who just want to come for a place to relax. I'll go through the park visitor survey, which does have a small sample size right now of about 40. This is something that we've put up on our City website. We'd like to advertise it a little more to collect more data, find out how people are using our parks a little more. For the people that she surveyed, she found that people are in parks very frequently, daily or several times a week. People are going to parks that are near their home, and they're generally walking or driving to the park. The reason they're coming is kind of what she observed. They're coming to go to the playground, to go for a walk, or to bring their dog somewhere. The reason they chose the park is generally because it's the closest park, but sometimes there's some particular amenity that's drawing them to that park. In general, they feel very safe in our parks and feel that the parks are either very clean or fairly clean and attractive. We did find that about three-fourths of the survey respondents were Palo Alto residents. The conclusions that we drew from this were that Palo Alto parks are being well used, more than twice as much use per acre as we saw in other national surveys. Attractions are a big draw, so having a really great playground. You can see that with Mitchell Park. It's going to pull a lot of people in. Other popular activities are having walking paths for walking or jogging, nice dog parks. Open lawn space for people to play sports or just relax are popular. Organized activities are drawing a lot of people. There was a bit of a bias to having more males than females in the parks. We saw a lot of physical activity, as I mentioned, higher than other surveys. Mitchell Park is very popular. Some of the next steps, we thought it would be interesting to look at the same data at different times of the year to see if we can get a better sense of our annual use in parks. It might be useful to look at some of our other parks. As I mentioned, we still have the survey up. It would be great to get more people to respond to the survey. If we are continuing to find, as we get more data, that we do have some mismatches in terms of demographics, if we only have about a third of our seniors coming into the parks, that's something we may want to really look at as we develop new amenities or new programming. That is the conclusion of this presentation. Thank you.

Chair McDougall: Jazmin, thank you. That was particularly interesting. I'm going to start with Anne because she has her light on already, and then I will go in that direction. I forgot. We do have one speaker card. It's Shani Kleinhaus. You have Item Number 2. Would you like to speak on this?

Shani Kleinhaus: Yes. I wrote some notes on this. Thank you. My name is Shani Kleinhaus. I'm the environmental advocate for Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. I also live in Palo Alto. I like the results of this. It's very informative, the survey, but 5:30 is too early in June and July to see the people who come out in the evening. Having the survey done at 5:30, you're not going to see the seniors, the people that stroll around, the people that walk with their dogs, the people that come out with their little kids. Sunset in those months is after 8:00, and people don't show up until 7:30, 7:00. From my experience, that's when I see people there. That's just a comment. A general comment is that I really

think this shows that we need to plant shade trees and that big shade trees are important, especially oaks if possible. One thing about Mitchell. I saw that there is comments there. One of the things at Mitchell that could be looked at is removing some of those lights. If you drive there at night, there's no people, and there's a lot of light pollution. Maybe dog drinking fountains if you're going to continue developing that park. What was pretty clear is that the very little parks are not very functional. They only have people walking through, 61 percent at Scott Park and 40 percent walking through at Sarah Wallis. It's important to have people go through parks. It makes their day better. The pocket parks should have some kind of attraction like a gathering place. I don't think they're doing that. One of the things I hope you discuss is what makes a gathering place, what's the minimum size for a functional park that actually provides more than a walk-through opportunity. Again, it's not unimportant, but it would be good to know what makes a gathering place. Shade would be good for seniors, but there are other things. My usual pitch, add butterfly gardens, shade, and beauty. Thank you.

Chair McDougall: Thank you. I'll go back to you.

Commissioner Cribbs: I would hope that we would do something in the winter time or the fall or the spring or if we could do it the four seasons. It would be interesting to see the differences. I was interested in the way that maybe she counted. There were more males than females using the park. That seemed different to me somehow. Maybe it's just an assumption on my part. When I think about all the soccer teams and the baseball teams and all of that, I don't know how those were factored in. Just something to think about. On the whole idea of Sarah Wallis Park, that is like a little jewel in California Avenue, and there are so many people in California Avenue right now. We probably should put on some sort of fun promotion to get people to come and have lunch there, take a break, or bring their lunch because it's a lovely place to go and spend some time relaxing.

Commissioner Moss: Thank you very much for doing this survey. Who calls you to know about these statistics and why?

Ms. LeBlanc: The Planning Department will definitely call trying to understand usage or where we might want to put more amenities in some place because it's heavily used or other places they could use more. I've gotten a few calls from planners. Daren could probably add because he's been getting questions longer than I have.

Mr. Anderson: The only thing I would chime in is it's a very commonly tracked statistic that parks should be tracking. We just haven't, and I'm very grateful for this intern and her endeavors. I think it's really valuable. It's absolutely certain that we're going to continue it.

Commissioner Moss: The Planning Department is internal. Do you also get other cities who—do you feed into a national database, for instance?

Mr. Anderson: We get a lot of questions from other park districts. Statewide, I know we've done—I don't recall getting a national survey, but I'm sure it's happened here and there. Oftentimes, we put n/a, not available information. Looking forward to changing that.

Commissioner Moss: As far as the total number, you put the total number estimated for eight parks, but of course we have a lot more parks. That number is really big. I'm amazed. I wanted to make sure that we could extrapolate that to the other parks, and not only to the parks but to like Cubberley field and the field at Page Mill and El Camino, which would skew the activity levels and also the teen percentages as well. I hope you're doing that as well.

Ms. LeBlanc: Yes. We tried to have her consistently follow this methodology that's been developed by academics and statisticians so that we can extrapolate. Our hope is that we can bring her back in her winter break. She's already said she has some time to do winter next. Since she knows what she's doing, she can jump right in without training so that we can get year-round. Eventually, hopefully, we can add more of our parks. This is definitely a good start for us.

Commissioner Moss: I echo the speaker about shaded playgrounds. If you can't grow a tree fast enough, I would put gazebos over sections. I was wondering, if we did add restrooms to the parks, would we track an increase in usage when we add a bathroom. We talked last meeting about adding those super port-a-potties in the interim. I would like to see some follow up along those lines. Also, we have special events at these parks, and they will regularly add a couple hundred people, but they're one-offs. I don't know how you can put that into a survey, but it would be nice to make a footnote for those special events that we have.

Chair McDougall: Ryan, do you have any comments?

Commissioner McCauley: Jazmin, this is great. I share your caution about the limitations on the survey responses because there are so few responses. Her observational information that she has related here is really helpful. I look forward to the next iteration.

Commissioner LaMere: Jazmin, thank you so much for making a preliminary stab at gathering some data about our parks. With Megan coming back in the winter, are there any thoughts to already reaching out and figuring out if we can get a volunteer or add someone to her team to either gather more accurate data or survey additional parks?

Ms. LeBlanc: I hadn't thought about that, but that is an excellent idea. I think we could definitely try to find …

Commissioner LaMere: I don't know if there's any partnerships. It seems like it could be a valuable volunteer opportunity for somebody who's doing something that has to do with

research. I don't know if the junior college is or even some of the high schools. That could be of interest. How have we advertised the survey?

Ms. LeBlanc: We haven't done much advertising yet. I'd like to push that in the next few months.

Commissioner LaMere: Maybe posting something on Nextdoor or something like that might generate some interest from some people in the community. It's great that we're starting to gather some data to help see what we might be able to do or start to inform some of our decisions.

Chair McDougall: Jazmin, when I talked to you briefly before, I said I'd probably follow up with you separately. I too echo everything everybody said. This is fantastic that we're doing it. Jeff's idea on volunteers, I would even suggest that we could contact Environmental Volunteers. They might be a candidate. I also think this is the kind of project where we should be talking to Friends of Palo Alto Recreation to see if they could participate in providing funding for something that would expand this. I would be glad to help with that. I'll run through a whole bunch of stuff, and I don't expect you to answer. Maybe we can have a discussion later. I assume that the survey that was done previously was done with kids and teens and adults and seniors or whatever. I'm not convinced. What the Library did was use a survey method that defined personas. The personas were people that were active. For example, I have friends that are almost my age that play soccer with the teens. I'm not sure how that gets captured here in terms of the way this is done. The idea of personas even within each of the categories as opposed to just simply age groups would be really meaningful. That would better allow us to say, "What should we do about it?" When it's just age groups, I'm not sure that it tells us what to do. You said that our park usage was two times the national average. If you had said 30 percent more or 20 percent more or whatever, that wouldn't have raised a flag. Double says something. It either says we don't have enough parks and so our parks are crowded. I'm not sure what it means, but if that's really a legitimate number, that deserves serious drill down. When you talk about weekdays versus weekends being 20 percent different, that's a little misleading because in fact it's 40/60 when you look at it. Yes, that's a 20-percent difference, but the usage is 40/60. 40/60 isn't far away from 50/50. The numbers are different. When it's presented as it's a huge difference, that's misleading. None of the activities have anything to do with nature. One of the things that we explicitly know is that if you can get people out in parks—the Japanese call it forest bathing, and they go to a local park and forest bathe. That's good for people. We didn't capture any way of saying that. What we tended to say was that person was sitting on a bench. Maybe they were sitting on a bench soaking up nature, and that was not too bad. One of the other things we need to do is survey, for example, Heritage Park. Tuesday night, there's 30 dogs off-leash. We need to know that in this survey. I've recently sent a thing about the green dog program that's in Brookline, Massachusetts, where they have explicitly allowed off-leash dogs in non-fenced park areas

at particular times but only if the dog has a green tag and the owner pays $50 if you're a resident or $100 if you're not a resident to get a green tag. That sounds like an interesting program that could cover an awful lot of sins in terms of costs and whatever else. We should pursue that. I would like to echo what David said about bathrooms. To say we need more programs to get seniors out, I'm not so sure we don't need more bathrooms to get seniors out. The gathering place, the concept of gathering places, for the last ten years I've convinced myself that I need to write a blog that's all about gatherings, whether it's animals or people or whatever. If we want to talk about how do we encourage more, it's not so much the activities as facilitating gatherings. It's a really, really good term. With that, I'll give you a call. What you've done and had Meghan do is spectacular. Before we start doing an online survey, think about what are the questions we want to ask to make them relevant. Council Member Cormack, I didn't give you an opportunity before I jumped in. I will now.

Council Member Cormack: Thank you, Chair McDougall. Ms. LeBlanc, thank you so much for this. Please extend our thanks to Ms. Schmiesing. It occurs to me that we had a number of interns this summer in the City. Perhaps the Mayor's message in the next month might want to highlight interns. If you get there first, perhaps the Mayor's message would highlight this particular intern and her work. This is the kind of thing that a lot of people would be interested in. I'm grateful that Commissioner LaMere already mentioned Nextdoor. That'd be helpful. This is more than just a survey. It was also a work experience for someone who sounds like is a former student in our own community. I just wanted to offer that suggestion. Curiosity. Where is the horseshoe area at Mitchell Park? How is there something in Mitchell Park I don't know where it is?

Ms. LeBlanc: In between the bowl and the parking lot, there's a horseshoe area.

Council Member Cormack: Is that that thing that's covered with like wisteria? Is that horseshoe?

Mr. Anderson: Between that and the grass.

Council Member Cormack: I'll look more carefully the next time I walk my dog in Mitchell Park, on-leash I might point out. I do want to emphasize the discussion around more of our senior citizens being able to use our parks, whether it's programming or bathrooms or what have you. I think it is a fruitful one. Please do extend our thanks to Ms. Schmiesing.

Commissioner Moss: There was a specific recommendation about parking, especially at Mitchell Park. There is just no way we're going to add more parking. That ought to be noted that that may actually discourage additional attendance. There's a lot of other things that we could do to mitigate that. I just want to make a note of that. What Anne said about promotions to get special events in some of these smaller parks to get the public to know that they're there is a really good idea that we should see if we can deal with.

Chair McDougall: Keith, we've just had a very interesting presentation by Jazmin relative to the survey. That was sent out ahead of time. If you have any observations or questions you'd like to add, please feel free.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I'll put in my two cents. I noticed in the write up you mentioned about shade and how that's attractive. When I walk through Bol Park during the lunch time, if it's a shady bench, it's full. If it's a sunny bench, it's not. Although, on winter days, that's flipped. Most of the time, the shade is preferred. The other thing was seniors walking. I had relatives in town, and they were walking through the park. They were not very mobile, and it was hard for them to go from one bench to the next. If we can add benches, that would be appropriate. Very interesting report.

Chair McDougall: If there are no other questions? Jazmin, thank you very much. I'm always glad when you bring controversy and discussion and numbers to our meeting. It's always, always enlightening.

3. Draft Plan for the 7.7-acre area at Foothills Park

Chair McDougall: The next item on the agenda is the draft plan for the 7.7 acres.

Mr. Anderson: Good evening. Daren Anderson with Community Services here tonight to talk about this draft plan for the 7.7-acre area at Foothills Park. My presentation will include a very brief background on the area and then walk through the draft plan. It's important to note that this draft plan is really just a starting place in our conversation with the community and stakeholders about how to use the land. Staff plans on hosting a community meeting soon to discuss the draft plan and collect their feedback. A little on the background. The 7.7-acre parcel was a gift from the Lee family to the City in 1981. The Lee family retained an estate on the property until 1996. Between 1996 and 2005, the City leased the land to a private resident who owns the adjacent property. In 2014, Council passed an ordinance dedicating the parcel as parkland and directed the Commission to work with the community and develop ideas on how to use it. Staff hosted a community meeting at the park to collect feedback on what to do with this and gathered a variety of different feedback, some of which focused on recreational activities, potentially a dog park, additional camping, picnic areas. The vast majority of the feedback really focused on different restoration opportunities for the site and wanted to see improved habitat. In January 2015, the issue came to the Commission, and we discussed the possible uses for the 7.7-acre area. The Commission recommended at that time that we complete the Buckeye Creek hydrology study before we program out and decide how to use this land. Staff did complete the study, and it was reviewed by the Commission in January 2018. The study incorporates recommendations for various improvements to these key issues of Buckeye Creek, mainly erosion and sedimentation. It had three options to consider. One was upstream in Wildhorse Valley. Another was in the middle section in Las Trampas, and the third in the 7.7-acre area. The Commission reviewed that along with staff and came

up with a recommendation of focusing on the upper section. This is the Wildhorse Valley section. That ultimately went as an informational recommendation to City Council. With that said, I want to say the draft we're going to discuss momentarily is not in conflict. If the City ever did want to pursue that option of improving the 7.7-acre area of Buckeye Creek, what we're proposing in this plan, this draft plan, would not be problematic or interfering with that if the City ever did want to pursue it. I should note the 7.7 acres was open to the public on November 10, 2018. Since that time, the Rangers have not been closely monitoring but keeping an eye on how many people are using it. It's fairly small, about ten people a day. Typically, it's just a stroll through, in and out, with one of the key features being to stop and look at the native plant nursery and expressing interest in that area. The Foothills Park ad hoc committee and staff worked with Grassroots Ecology, the City's restoration stewardship partner, to create this draft plan. I'm extremely grateful for Grassroots graciously sharing their expertise and time to create the draft plan. They did a wonderful job. Grassroots Ecology maintains the native plant nursery on the site and has been conducting restoration in Foothill since 2013. They've engaged with thousands of volunteers to remove invasive species and plant native plants and provide hands-on education for all members of our community. Their staff and volunteers have worked on the 7.7-acre area controlling invasive weeds and installing willow stakes in Buckeye Creek to help with the erosion and to create habitat. They've also experimented with test plots in anticipation of this day. When we started talking about what to do, we wanted to know what's possible, and staff worked with Grassroots to say, "Let's try some." We know that the soil medium is compromised. There's approximately 5 feet of over-burden, which is material that came from the adjacent quarry. Prior to the City taking ownership, it had been spread across the hillside and the valley floor of the 7.7-acre area. When we talked to Mr. Arrillaga's caretaker, who had done planting on that area, he talked about how challenging it was. He talked about the trees being difficult to establish, but it was possible when he added lots of compost and mulch. Eventually, he was able to establish some trees that did make it. Likewise, we learned from Grassroots' experiments on that area, and those lessons were incorporated into this draft plan. While this plan does focus on restoration, there are other elements, a very simple loop trail that carries people through this little area, some basic park amenities, a park bench, an interpretive sign, a drinking fountain, that are in keeping with the rest of Foothills Park. The plan's broken into phases. It gets a little complex when we talk about how long each phase would be because in truth when we get to restoration, some phases never end. If we talk about addressing invasive weeds, in truth that will always be part just like it is for the rest of Foothills Park. We continually have volunteers go out into the park and address invasive weeds. I guess the one caveat is don't get too hung up with one specific item and one specific phase because some of them will be carrying on indefinitely, if that makes sense. The game plan would be to start with building on what Grassroots has already been doing, which is controlling the invasive weeds in those areas. We would also propose to remove eucalyptus trees and add compost and mulch to restoration area A. That's this area over here. Here's Buckeye Creek. Let me quickly show you just a few of the major features. This is the City's maintenance shop,

the entrance to the 7.7-acre area, and a new pollinator garden that Grassroots built. This is the Grassroots Ecology nursery. The creek flows right through the property and out of the property. This red line is the emergency evacuation route that we've got to maintain. We've created these different habitat areas, restoration areas. Phase 1 prepares restoration area A by putting in those soil amendments that we talked about. This area would get that compost put onto it during that first phase to try to prep it and get it ready, hopefully soften up some of the soil, control some of the weeds, and make for a happier place for these plants that we intend on putting in there and the trees we intend on planting. Other things in phase 1 that we want to do is plant some native plants along the perimeter fencing—that's this area—to try to screen a little bit. There's already a fairly established tree section in there that the caretaker had planted or was already onsite. We want to supplement that with just a little more shrubs to help screen and provide a little privacy for the neighbors. Then, plant some groupings of native trees that would help mitigate that removal of eucalyptus that we talked about. In addition to that, we would establish those park benches, the interpretive sign, and that trail, a very simple loop trail that you can see highlighted here that just goes around this section. Phase 2, we're going to plant native plants in that restoration area. This area here. Now, it would have about a year or so with that soil amendment in the ground, hopefully softening it up a little bit and preparing it for these plants to come in. Area B would get the treatment. We'd put the compost and mulch down there to prep that for the next year's planting, if that makes sense. And so on for area C. We would use acorns, oaks, and shrubs to be planted in little natural groupings and then do a second phase of eucalyptus removal. You can see on this map we've got the first phase of eucalyptus removal and then the second phase. We take any tree removal very seriously in Palo Alto. It should never be done—even when it's a non-native tree, it should always be done cautiously and with thought and planning. Even the invasive ones do cause harm. When we talked to our experts at Grassroots Ecology and our Fire Safe Council that we work with on fire hazards, it's best to remove them for a multitude of reasons. Fire safety and environmental benefit is one. We recognize even invasive trees and plants sometimes serve as habitat, and we want to be sensitive to that. They key would to (a) phase it and (b) make sure we're planting right away to try to help make up for that. Hopefully that in addition to all the other native plantings would supply a good balance of habitat improvement. Also, in speaking with Grassroots Ecology, they've seen eucalyptus removals from areas like this, very similar, and explained to me that oftentimes when you take out that eucalyptus, you'll see the surrounding vegetation, often native oaks and other species, that is under the canopy thrive and grow and bounce back. We're looking forward to that, but they also have some restoration and planting plans up here as well, in those gaps where the eucalyptus are removed. In phase 3, native plants, particularly pollinators, would be planted in strategic spots to help create a little added beauty and lure in additional pollinators. We could put in additional benches and a picnic table at that time and then finalize the arrangement of where that trail is. I think we should look at the trail as being flexible depending on how the restoration goes. If for some reason we hit a good patch of soil and the plants are doing great, then let's move the trail out of that area, and we'll put

people to the side. We've been thinking of a very simple rope to delineate where those sections are to keep people from trampling plants but able to walk next to them. Next steps. Of course, we'll welcome your feedback and questions. The next step would be for staff to hold that community meeting, meet with our stakeholders and community members, and give them a chance to weigh in on the plan as well as maybe other ideas that we haven't considered that may be even better. That concludes the staff presentation. I want to recognize two representatives from Grassroots Ecology. I've got Alex von Feldt, who's the Executive Director, and Kristen Williams, the Habitat Restoration Director, here tonight to address any specific questions you might have for them.

Chair McDougall: Welcome, visitors. Do you have any comments that you would like to make to add to what Daren has said before we go to questions?

Alex von Feldt: Maybe I'll say a few words. First of all, thank you very much, Commissioners, for your time in reviewing this as well as the other work that you do. Probably this has been at least four if not five years of discussions with the City and Parks and Rec Commission and also residents about what could happen at this site and getting lots of opinions and feedback. We're excited that there's actually some movement forward. The only thing that I would add is that if you were to show us the whole 1,400 acres of Foothills Park and say, "Where's the one area you want to restore," this would probably not be it because there are so many other areas of Foothills Park with just amazing native vegetation and biodiversity and things like that. We understand just from a usage standpoint the reason to improve what it looks like right now, which has really been a neglected plot. What we went for is basically what was a really cost-effective way to try to expand the natural assets of the site, such as the creek, and also use it as a way to showcase some habitat restoration techniques. We already have the native plant nursery there. When I asked them, "Who's coming by and looking at the site," they say it tends to be elderly people that like to walk on the flat, and they like to stop by and visit with our staff and volunteers working at the nursery. Building on that, we're hoping to have more examples throughout this area to show habitat restoration, different techniques. Also as things progress, hopefully people can see the long-term process of healing our land and what that's like.

Commissioner McCauley: Could you comment quickly on the point that Daren was discussing, on removal of the eucalyptus and the transition period to oaks and other native vegetation?

Ms. von Feldt: For the reasons that Daren mentioned, eucalyptus are often suggested for removal. Not only is it a fire concern, it's also a safety concern in that they do tend to drop limbs. Kristen just informed me when we were talking about this that this past few weeks we've seen two major limbs drop back there. It is a concern when you're having volunteers and things like that, the safety aspect of it. For the most part, we're recommending removal

because of the habitat value. There are so many wonderful native species and trees in there. It's not really a shading issue; it's that they drop all this debris and leaves, and it actually kills other plants. Once you remove them, everything that has been struggling can really come back quite strongly. It's not just our opinion about that. It's a generally accepted restoration practice. The San Francisco Estuary Institute has really been promoting more oaks in Silicon Valley. They keep talking about re-oaking, re-oaking or planting new oaks. What's nice here is there are so many other really strong ones that, once the eucalyptus are removed, you're going to see an amazing growth of those trees.

Chair McDougall: Before I go to the rest of the Commission, I do have a card on this topic. Shani, would you like to comment?

Ms. Kleinhaus: Thank you. Shani Kleinhaus with the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and resident. First, I want to thank you, staff, for keeping low key and not looking to put campgrounds and barbecues and dog parks and all these other things near the creek in such a sensitive area. I hope that the community, which supported low key and not a lot of strong, active crowds making noise and so on, will allow it to remain this way. About the trees, I want to look more into that before I speak about it because eucalyptus does have value for birds, specific species as well. I'm going to look a little more into that before I form an opinion about this issue. It would be something we'll probably come back to. Thank you.

Chair McDougall: Thank you. Who were the ad hoc members who have worked on this? Jeff and Ryan. I'll let you guys speak first then.

Commissioner LaMere: Thank you to Daren and the staff for preparing this and Grassroots Ecology. It can be such a great space. The mention of it being flat and how we have this great nature of Foothills Park, but not everything is accessible to everyone. One of the things that we talked about on the trail were putting some benches, which also seems to go with the theme of mobility and accessibility. To have that is a very good idea. The explanation on the eucalyptus trees was also very helpful as we are sensitive to the habitat removal as well as removal of trees. To know that other oaks and other native species can come in there is exciting as well. Excited to see this plan, if we can get it through, and the restoration. The increased use of that area is very exciting. Daren, thank you very much.

Commissioner McCauley: I will echo Jeff's comments. Daren, thank you for spearheading this. Thank you to our partners at Grassroots Ecology. Well done. Let me make one quick clarification; I think it's a clarification on the Buckeye Creek hydrology study. There definitely is a recommended course of action to do some additional remediation of the creek in this area. As Daren was saying, number one, this plan is consistent with the Buckeye Creek hydrology recommendation. In addition to that, as you think about the bang for the buck in doing any of the work on Buckeye Creek, the most significant impact is going to be on the upper reach of Buckeye Creek. Probably the least significant impact

is going to be on this portion of Buckeye Creek. It makes total sense to move forward with a plan of the sort that Daren and Grassroots Ecology have come up with here. It makes a lot of sense that this would be something we'd put into action.

Commissioner Reckdahl: It was a good report. Thank you for the help. We appreciate that. With regard to the eucalyptus removal, can we front load the tree planting and get them started now? When we eventually remove the trees, we'll have something there.

Mr. Anderson: Yes, we can.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Are we planning to do that or is that …

Mr. Anderson: It's actually in the plan. It talks about the need to start right away.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Alex mentioned the areas needing restoration, that there'd be other places in the park. Can you name those off the top of your head?

Ms. von Feldt: I might be passing this on to Kristen because she's been overseeing what we've been doing at the park. The biodiversity is quite phenomenal there. There's a listed species, (inaudible) occidentale. There's some invasive species like yellow star that's in the habitat. As you probably know, the Friends of Foothill have been working for decades on that. We've been augmenting their help. When we're talking about stewarding the whole park, that's where we spend a lot of our time to remove the invasives and allow natural recruitment. If you wanted to keep getting volunteers out and really have a habitat effect, that would probably be the best. There's a lot of reasons why you do projects like this. A lot of it too is to make sure that the community is able to engage with nature in a meaningful way so that they're more activated to protect it. This project is still in line with that goal.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Your areas of restoration are mostly invasive weed species taken out. Were there any erosion areas or anything, plantings where we'd want to put things?

Ms. von Feldt: This Buckeye Creek idea, we are fully behind. We started talking with Daren about it years ago because that's what we see as really the big restoration impact that you could have there because right now the creek is so channelized that if you could reconnect it to its historic floodplain, that would be amazing. We really support that, but it is a long and very expensive project. We realize that that's what would be great to have in the future, but it's nice to have these interim steps along the way.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Thank you. Daren, with regard to restoration, do we keep a wish list of places that, if we had money, in any of the open spaces we would do restoration first and rank them?

Mr. Anderson: Yes. I should qualify this that we've got a list that are achievable with existing resources. We address that with our operating budget as it is, with our capital budget as it is, and with our volunteer base as it is. That partnership with Grassroots is an excellent one. We've done amazing work at restoring large areas of Pearson-Arastradero Preserve, in Foothills Park. We're talking 25 years of the Friends of Foothills Park working up there and restoring it. We prioritize spots. Along with staff, those volunteers have made good headway. I would say the same at the Baylands. We've had 20 years of partnership with Save the Bay and restored significant sections of San Francisquito Creek and other areas in the Baylands. There's that kind, and we prioritize areas. There's a bigger kind like the new ITT marsh area. That's not going to be done or restored without a big capital endeavor. I think Buckeye Creek falls into that same category. Those two standout really high as important areas. Others are identified in the Baylands Master Plan, and these are fill areas that were filled when they first established the park. They are called out as areas that the fill should be removed and restored. One of those sites is where we want to put the horizontal levee so it essentially meets that. Those are three examples of those large capital expenditure waiting projects that are really important and just waiting for the funding source.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The willows, I like that idea of planting the willows in the streams. Like 200 years ago, would the stream have had willows in it?

Mr. Anderson: Yes, very commonly.

Commissioner Reckdahl: What about upper and middle, would we consider planting willows there at all? Would that be useful at all?

Mr. Anderson: Luckily the Buckeye Creek study gave us a good recommendation for—the upper stretch they talk about rerouting it, so we put it through that meadow. In that area, they call out a bunch of techniques, one of which is to plant some native trees that would help slow the water and create a more natural flow.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The Buckeye Creek plan did have some willows in it?

Mr. Anderson: Mm hmm.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I did not remember that. That would be good both for habitat and also slowing down the water. It's a win-win. That's it.

Commissioner Moss: This is a really terrific plan. When you look at the whole thing, it seems daunting. When you break it up into smaller pieces, each one is somewhat manageable. Also, it's a lower cost to deal with so you don't have these huge projects like Buckeye Creek. You can bite off a little bit every year. That is a great way to go. One thing I was trying to figure out is—maybe this is a question for you or for Grassroots. The

existing Buckeye Creek channel is very narrow. Is there a plan or a suggestion to widen it like we were thinking of doing for Buckeye Creek? In other words, get some of the benefit of the Buckeye Creek project, which is $9 million, do it here, widen it out, take a little bit of those other two areas, and get some of the benefit short term.

Mr. Anderson: Great question. As I mentioned, there were three spots recommended in the Buckeye Creek study. This was the third, the least impactful. If you went from the creek's edge, it created a widened floodplain that stretches into this restoration area here, which is why in our plan we don't call for planting any trees in that spot. If that day came where we wanted to remove—what that looks like is at the base of the creek, you would remove fill and widen the floodplain as you're talking about. We have a price estimate. I want to say it was like $1.2 million to do the 7.7-acre stretch. What we're proposing is in the third phase, the last phase. We would eventually plant that area too. If the plants had to go, if we try the upper creek technique and for some reason it's not successful and we have to do the middle and perhaps the lower stretch to really resolve the Buckeye Creek problems, all you've had to do is get rid of some native plants. We wouldn't have oaks there, that kind of thing. If we didn't do anything at all, you'd still have plants there. It would just be grown in with weeds. All the better to have viable habitat in the interim. It may not even be necessary once we address that upper stretch.

Commissioner Moss: What I was just suggesting is that maybe you think of phase 3 as phase 1, switch them for a short-term benefit. I don't know if that's possible, but just something to think about. One other thing is that the soil, you said, was of such a consistency that the water would not pool very easily there. It would sink pretty quickly. Are you thinking that you would want—in order to get willows, for instance, it has to be wetter and it has to be cooler. You would have to do something to the soil to make it stay wetter longer. I was wondering what would you do in that case.

Mr. Anderson: I probably didn't explain myself well. The majority of the 7.7 acres is highly compacted over-burden, so it doesn't percolate well at all. The water would pool, and it wouldn't absorb or soak in. The intent of that mulch and compost would be to break down that soil and allow a little bit more penetration. The willow planting would primarily be in the creek and on the banks of the creek where it does have access to water and do well.

Ms. von Feldt: The first comment you had about doing phase 3 first, I asked the same thing. I thought let's start down here if this is where the interest is, but then other people with more expertise informed me that you typically want to start at the top of the watershed and then go down because of the head cuts and things. You could do some stuff down below, but it really wouldn't fix the problem because you still have this constraint above. That was what the hydrologists said. I'm going to ask Kristen to come up and talk about

the willowing that we've been doing in the creek for the past few years and some of the amazing things we've actually seen just in the current part of the creek on this site.

Kristen Williams: We actually started doing some willow installation this past winter in the 7.7. We did a mix of willow stakes as well as willow bundles to help catch sediment as it's either coming down the creek bank or down the creek. It's a lot more successful than we expected, which is really exciting. We have probably about 20-30 feet along the creek that now has willows that are about 3-4 feet tall. They are collecting a lot of sediment already. It is not a huge change to the floodplain area, but it is having some impact already. Like how our nursery was doing test plots in the upland area, we're also doing this little testing closer to the creek. We're figuring out what's the right technique when we really put this project into play.

Commissioner Cribbs: Thank you very much. Daren, thank you for this report and the staff. Thank you all from Grassroots. It's really fun to see the excitement about what's going on down there. It sounds like we need to publicize the fact that people can make a donation on behalf of their family for benches, both in the parks and also up at Foothills. Maybe we could resurface that. I love the phasing. Are you able at this point, Daren, to put a price tag? Where does this money come from to do this and how is it parceled out over the years?

Mr. Anderson: Not yet. We started a preliminary look at a price estimate, and I thought, "Let's do the public outreach first and find out a little bit more of what the scope really might look like." Sometimes through that process, it alters so much that what I originally propose doesn't always look the same. I figured we'd do the public outreach and then start digging into this. We're keeping an eye on trying to keep the cost modest, working with a lot of volunteers. For example, that compost and mulch might very well come from City resources. All the mulch we'd need would come from the tree department for free, for example. We've got a great partner that has a native plant nursery. We can work together to get the plants and try to do this as cost effectively as possible. That said, depending on how it shapes out, it might be a CIP request for a certain amount. I think we'll play it by ear. As the scope develops, I'll put together a meaningful cost estimate and share it with you at that time.

Council Member Cormack: I always love a staff report. I always learn a new word, and allelopathic was one I had to look up earlier today. You always learn so much about trees. If you haven't read *The Overstory*, I do recommend that by Richard Powers. The only point I wanted to emphasize was the one that Commissioner LaMere made about accessibility. I think it was introduced by the Executive Director as well. Am I right that this is the only part of Foothills Park that's really flat in terms of a trail?

Mr. Anderson: I think that's fair to say.

Council Member Cormack: That's an important reason to make it accessible for our increasing senior population and for the significant number of people in the community who have temporary or permanent mobility disabilities. That's a benefit of working on this area that I probably didn't appreciate it when we first started talking about it.

Chair McDougall: Alex and Kristen, thank you for being here. The fact that you guys tend to agree that something could grow there—I think every time I've been there on any of our things, all I got was there's 5 feet of over-burden here and nothing ever is going to grow here. Some of those squared-off plots didn't look like—it looked like it was proving that nothing was going to grow there. I'm glad to hear you're optimistic. That's great. The thing we do say and the thing I've been hearing all along is we're saying native plants. With climate change and whatnot, we know that where native plants are is moving. I would be interested in if we looked at this as climate sensitive or climate appropriate or whatever. What we do there doesn't have to be absolutely native if there's something that's better. The railings that you talked about, I would really encourage that. You've been talking about the trails and the fact that that's a flat area. I suggest we start now talking about it being an ADA trail instead of just talking about, as this map shows, the trail going around the 7.7 acres. The parking is the other side of the construction shed. I would say that the trail needs to be planned right from the start to be an ADA trail that goes from the parking lot as part of the whole process because it's no good if you can't get to the trail. I would really like to encourage that. There was some conversation, Alex said, about showcasing habitat. At some level, this is a research opportunity to see what's going on. I would really encourage that we do everything we possibly can to establish what the baseline is today. If this is going to be good for habitat, are there six birds there today and, if we do this right, we'll have 12? Are there deer there or what kind of plants are there or not there? Working between what you do and what the City does to establish a baseline so that we would understand are we really making an improvement, particularly relative to even the eucalyptus. I hate eucalyptus, but they're there. Maybe they don't need to be removed in all of those spots. I was struck not by this map but the other one that showed where the eucalyptus were, that they were circled in different areas. It seemed to me that it might be an opportunity to, in one case, maybe divide that off and that some of the eucalyptus might be left. We could measure what happens there versus what happens where we take them out. Particularly if we're looking at the opportunity to show what restoration can be, anything we can do to say, "We took these trees out, and now look what's happening. Overnight, we have a 20-foot oak tree that we didn't have before." Simply making sure that we understand that. I'm struck by the number of times that volunteers get mentioned. We've had this conversation before briefly relative to other activities. I doubt that, if I looked at the Palo Alto recreation catalog, one of the potential recreation opportunities is to volunteer for the 7.7 acres or any other part of Foothill or whatever. My guess is there's lots more clever ways that we're not taking advantage of. Again, we've had this conversation about does the City need a volunteer coordinator or even Parks and Rec. Do they deliberately need somebody maybe not totally dedicated to it but actively interested

in promoting volunteers? The benches, I don't know if it's in the Park regulations part or whatever. I did get stopped on Byxbee the other day. I guess you get a ten-year lease on a bench naming or whatever. The question is at the end of the ten years, are you going to give me a new bench or are you going to charge me again even though the bench is now deteriorated. Will I get a new plaque? It was a reasonable question. I certainly don't know the answer or don't even know where I could find the answer. It would seem to me the regulations might be a place to look for that. Although I've said let's make sure it's an ADA trail that goes through there, I would still be interested in the previous conversation, was there a way, even if it was just a tail, to connect to at least one of the other paths in the park. That's my rant for the moment on that subject.

Commissioner Cribbs: Is there a comprehensive list of all the volunteers who do all this wonderful stuff?

Mr. Anderson: We do track all our volunteer hours.

Commissioner Cribbs: Not the hours but the names of people.

Mr. Anderson: Of every volunteer?

Commissioner Cribbs: Yeah, that are associated with all the Friends of this and the Friends of that and Grassroots and all that.

Mr. Anderson: Our Friends, yes, we have all that.

Commissioner Cribbs; Maybe I don't know this, but wouldn't it be fun for the Recreation Commission to have a big party to get everybody together and say thank you very much for everything that you do?

Chair McDougall: Great idea.

Mr. Anderson: Sounds good. I'll reach out to the groups.

Ms. von Feldt: Just a few points of data that you might be interested to know about the volunteers. I was just checking with Kristen, and I said, "How often are our volunteer workdays full?" She said, "90-100 percent of the time." We have at least 30 workdays per year at Foothills. We have another 75 workdays at Arastradero. About 80 percent of the people that come to the workdays are teens. If they're not in the City parks, I guess they're all out pulling weeds in the open spaces. It's great that we have so many people. A volunteer appreciation party would be lovely. The list of names would be about 3,000 or so from our side, but a lot of them are teenagers. They repeat from Friends of Foothill, and we have dedicated volunteers as well both at the nursery and other places. That's a smaller number.

Commissioner Cribbs: That would be a great celebration and a great focus on how much we have from volunteers.

Chair McDougall: I agree.

Commissioner Moss: Chair McDougall reminded me that just three weeks ago Midpeninsula Open Space opened their brand new Bear Creek Open Space Preserve. They completed an ADA-compliant pathway at the entrance. It's about the 7.5 acres that we're dealing with. I encourage staff and the subcommittee to visit it. It's a beautiful park, and it's just brand new.

Chair McDougall: Are there any other additional questions or comments? I see lights on, but I suspect the lights don't mean anything. Alex or Kristen, would you like to add any final comments? I would just like to thank you both for coming and spending the time with us and answering the questions and giving us confidence that we're doing the right thing here. Daren, thanks again for everything you're doing here.

4. Update of the Parks and Open Space Regulations

Chair McDougall: Which allows us to move on to the next item, Item Number 4, which is the Open Space and Parks Regulation discussion.

Mr. Anderson: Hello, Commissioners. Daren Anderson again, Community Services, here now to discuss the updates to the Park and Open Space regulations. The Commission's ad hoc committee and staff have reviewed the regulations and recommend the Commission discuss the proposed changes that were in the staff report and the attachment. The changes are suggested in order to keep the regulations relevant and reflective of current City policies. Some of the revisions are new regulations to address emerging issues, and it's designed to make the regulations a little easier to understand. References to the Municipal Code show the connection between the regulations and the Muni Code. Wording changes reflect that current City policy. In the staff report, I highlighted several of the significant changes, and some of the updates are self-evident and explanatory, but a few of them I'd like to go over now and explain just a little bit of the context. Of course, if you have any questions along the way, we'll revisit any and all of them. The first one I'd like to highlight is R1-21. This is the one about commercial photography and filming. This was edited to allow an exception for small photo and film events consisting of a single photographer or videographer with a group size of no more than 24. The intent of this edit was to allow small photo or film activity that would have little or no impact on park visitors or park resources to be able to come to the park and take those photos. I did receive some feedback from one community member with some suggested edits to this regulation. This gentleman sent an email to the Commission, so you probably have seen some of the suggested edits to that. With a few minor edits, the ad hoc committee and staff have reviewed his proposed change and find it acceptable. I look forward to hearing your feedback on that. Another

regulation that was updated is R1-30(D). This one's about pets in parks. This was edited to require that pets must be kept on a leash that can be extended no further than 6 feet while in open space lands. The reason for this one is Park Rangers have observed people with long, extended leashes where oftentimes dogs are going way off trail into areas where there is habitat, where there is wildlife. You can see the wildlife get flushed out. It's been an issue. We didn't feel it was necessary to do this in our urban parks. Notably, this just pertains to open space. We thought in urban parks it is far more appropriate and less problematic. R1-31 is about nuisance dogs. It was edited to require people with leashed pets in playgrounds to ensure that their pets don't impact children's use of the playground and to add a caveat that they're required to remove the dog if someone else is using the playground and asks them to. The reason we've edited this one is because park staff has received requests from playground users to prohibit dogs in the playground. This edit is trying to balance the need for people who come to a playground with their child and their dog and maybe there are very few people in there and the dog causes no problem. They want both the dog and the child to be in the playground with folks who just don't want to be around dogs in playgrounds. That's an attempt to balance it. The ad hoc was very helpful in trying to reach this compromise position. R1-39 was added to ensure people using exercise equipment in playgrounds do not inhibit children from using the playgrounds or damage the equipment. The reason for this one is we're increasingly seeing our playgrounds in parks used as gyms. We talked a little bit earlier about how active our community is in our park system, which is wonderful and something we want to encourage, but we want to make sure it doesn't impinge on children using playgrounds or harm the equipment. Oftentimes, people are working out with dumbbells or straps, and they're slung over swings. R1-39 was an attempt to balance that without stopping people from being active. R1-40 was the one that pertained to community gardens. The vast majority of the bullet points in R1-40 were just merely about details of how the garden program functions. The ad hoc and staff have created the draft of a new document, the Community Garden Guidelines, that will house those kind of details about how the program works. These guidelines would be sent to all participants in the City community garden program as well as be part of the licensing process. They would all get essentially these guidelines as they join the program. They are currently being reviewed by the City Attorney's Office and will come to the Commission for review soon. The remaining community garden regulations that end up in this update do pertain to the general public and are far more appropriate for this one. That concludes the staff presentation. Thanks again to the ad hoc who was so helpful in looking at so many iterations.

Chair McDougall: Would ad hoc members like to speak first?

Commissioner McCauley: Thank you to Daren for his patience. We definitely looked at many, many iterations. Where we've ended up with this document is actually a pretty good place. Don, I would wonder whether you had some specific comments. One of them, I think, is a big organizational threshold question. It maybe would be beneficial if you

wanted to pose that so that Daren would be able to respond. It might actually inform the conversation a little bit. I definitely look forward to the Commissioners' input on this and letting us know if there are other things that we should be tweaking and revising. As a general matter, the idea was not to wholesale revise these regulations but rather do a fairly modest revision of things that needed some attention. Don had suggested an organizational change, which may not be necessarily substantive in some respects but definitely an organizational change that would be a more significant revision. Don, do you maybe want to mention that and then other Commissioners would be able to weigh in on it as we continue the discussion?

Chair McDougall: Is that okay, Daren? I went through and sent a bunch of notes back more in the Comprehensive Plan approach than going through a list here. Before I start, I'd like to say I really thank you, both you and the ad hoc, for what is really good work. I found in many places it was confusing whether I was talking about dog parks or cattle or Foothills or parks. I really felt that it might be useful if there were two documents, one that dealt with the open space, both Foothills and Baylands, and one that dealt with the parks. I feel that the users and the use cases are quite different. The kind of people that go to those places are different. The document's become such that if somebody wanted to object to somebody with dumbbells in the park, it would be very hard to find. Maybe an officer could find it or maybe we could find it, but a general citizen wouldn't. I briefly discussed that in the note that I sent. I did discuss it again with Daren as he walked in. Daren's modification to that, I might as well mention, is maybe we could look at this as one document but with a general section and then a parks and then a Foothills section in some way that outlined it more briefly. I agree that this isn't substantive relative to any of the particular rules and regulations. It is important relative to the usability of the rules and regulations. Does that cover it? Is there anybody else on the ad hoc who would like to comment? By the way, I appreciate that the goal here was to update it, not to totally redo it. I would point out that this document was written in 2004, modified in '04, '05, '06, '08, '11, '12, and '13. Basically every other year or every year, it has been modified until, between '13 to '18, for five years it wasn't looked at. The other thing I would encourage is that maybe it does deserve a more complete look and some commitment that it not be another five years before it gets looked at again. My other thing is, if we're having discussions about access to parks and if we're having discussion about dog parks and other things like that, it would be much easier to deal with all of those things in separate sections and the modifications that might ensue rather than in a single, total document. With that, I'll start back on the far end. Jeff, do you have any comments?

Commissioner LaMere: Thank you so much both to the ad hoc committee and Daren for looking at these rules and regulations and providing an update. As you went through this, were there things you were able to pick up that may change the way we look at the parks or change what is in the parks? One thing I'm looking at is R1-39, for example. Does this mean that we need to look at—this is about people using the exercise equipment in the

playgrounds. Should we start thinking about can we put a separate pull-up bar that can also be used to throw their TRX straps over, that they can use what they want to use and make it more multiuse where it's not necessarily impacting the children but also seeing that we do have a need?

Mr. Anderson: That's an excellent point, and something we have been talking about. We're addressing it, for example, at Cubberley. With that track and field, we're trying to put in a place for adult exercise or multigenerational exercise, where you'd have gym equipment there. I envision that being extremely popular, seeing other communities with those outdoor gyms. I see seniors active, I see kids active, and I see exercise groups there. I think it has a lot of potential. To your other point, we can't have those everywhere. We don't have space for that kind of thing everywhere, so it needs to be perhaps incorporated in those playgrounds where we see that happening. We tried that at the Magical Bridge, for example, where right on the periphery of the playground you'll see adult exercise equipment like aerobic exercise, for example. I think you're right that maybe we need to start addressing it. If we see people using the swing set for the TRX cables, then maybe they need an appropriate piece of equipment to do that in that area. I think it's wise.

Commissioner McCauley: Forgive me. I'm going to jump in again. Daren, I was wondering if you had a response to Don's comment that you wanted to share with the entire Commission.

Mr. Anderson: On that topic of separating the parks from the open space regulations, I can certainly see what you mean, Chair McDougall. There's an opportunity to maybe group them up. In my opinion, it just seems that the overlap is so significant it warrants having one document to me. Maybe I'm naive, but I'm one of those people who see that people who are going to go to open space are probably going to be at a park eventually and vice versa. Having knowledge about what the rules are there would behoove them, and have one place to go. I worry sometimes about having split documents. Somehow they get confused and can't find the open space one; they can only find the parks one. Lastly, it's consistent with the way we have structured our Palo Alto Municipal Code. We have Section 22 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code that has all our Muni Codes relating to parks and open space, and it's housed in one area. It would be consistent with that. That was my thoughts on separating out the two sections.

Commissioner McCauley: I will offer one other thought on this. Just as a practical matter in terms of trying to track what the changes are that are being made, if we're dramatically changing the organization, it would be a little more difficult to understand and comprehend just what we're doing in terms of edits. The flip side of that is it may make it more difficult for the City Council to comprehend and understand what we've done here. Right now, these look like, at least from my perspective, relatively modest edits. If we were to entirely rewrite this, even if we didn't change the substance much but reorganized it significantly,

understandably both members of the public and the City Council Members might have a lot more questions about it. For whatever that's worth, not to say that it shouldn't be done if it's the right thing to be done. I'm sure the ad hoc would be excited to jump into that. We look forward to the rest of the group's direction on that.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I'd like to thank the ad hoc. This was a very tedious edit, I'm sure. I appreciate you going through here with a fine-toothed comb. That's a lot of work, but it has to be done. Echoing Jeff's comment, you get better compliance if, instead of saying don't do this, you say do it here. I agree with that. On the swimming part, it said dogs and cats and other animals not permitted on the pool deck, but we don't have an exception for service dogs. Was that intentional?

Mr. Anderson: That might be an omission. Likewise, Chair McDougall caught one on our restrooms, who could be there with children with special needs. He questioned whether that should be updated. I think it should. It didn't rise to my attention as we reviewed the document. Maybe the one you just mentioned about service dogs too. I'd be glad to look into it.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I would assume we don't get a lot of service dogs on the pool deck, but it's conceivable. Let's just be consistent. The other thing was about Lytton Plaza and the open flames. Can you refresh my memory? What is the regulation both in City parks and open space for gas grills? If I want to bring my Weber to the park, if I have a picnic area, can I bring my own gas grill and put it in there or can you only use the built-in grills?

Mr. Anderson: We've got a no portable barbecue rule that was instituted in the parks. It was because of what happens when people bring their own barbecues. All the other amenities that need to come with a barbecue, like tables, chairs, trash cans, recycling, and compost, aren't there to support because other people are already using the existing tables and barbecues and have the right number of trash cans. That's why that rule got put in, prohibiting that.

Commissioner Reckdahl: The same with Foothills Park?

Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

Commissioner Reckdahl: Foothills Park, you can only use charcoal, right, no wood?

Mr. Anderson: That's correct.

Commissioner McCauley: Again, forgive me for jumping in. We actually had a little bit …

Chair McDougall: Sure, Ryan. Is there anything you'd like to say?

Commissioner McCauley: … of back and forth on the portable grill question. My understanding is that propane grills are actually preferred, particularly in open space areas, because they pose a far lower fire hazard than charcoal. Notwithstanding that, this is not being changed at the moment, but this is something that Daren was checking with his partners at the Fire Department on. Daren, was there any further feedback on that?

Mr. Anderson: The one part I didn't explain is it is allowed with camping. They are allowed to use the propane grills when they're camping, but not for picnics. Again, it ties back into that issue of are they going to exceed the capacity of our existing facilities. I'd be glad to reach out to them and talk to the Fire Department about that option and see what other alternatives we can work out.

Commissioner Reckdahl: From a fire standpoint, we might want to consider allowing gas grills at Foothills Park if it can be done some way where we don't stretch the facilities. I don't know.

Commissioner Cribbs: What is the process after these rules get updated? How do people know about them and what kind of community outreach? Is that necessary? Just as the changes happen.

Mr. Anderson: Very good question. This would be a recommendation from the Commission to Council to make the change. In terms of publicizing it, we don't do a lot of outreach. The typical way it's done is for a special event or maybe a user group was having some sort of gathering, we'll send them the revised and updated rules and regulations. Oftentimes, we'll pull out salient pieces. If you're having a run event, maybe I'll find two or three that are really important for them to be aware of. If there's a new one, of course I'll add that to it. That's the predominant way. Our website and every once in a while we'll get calls from folks, and that's when we share.

Commissioner Cribbs: How does the enforcement, if at all, happen?

Mr. Anderson: There's two ways. One is the Municipal Code, which has a lot of these but not all of them. That has a mechanism for citations. The rules and regs also have it, but typically at a far lower rate. The bail amount that you get cited for a regulation violation is less. It's not very frequently cited. Most of these are the kind of thing where—although not a current regulation now, if we saw people with leashes and they're harassing wildlife, which is a separate regulation violation, a Municipal Code violation. I was a Ranger for over a decade, and I don't think I cited a single person for it. Everyone was usually compliant. It's almost always compliant-based, but for those who are repeat offenders, it's very nice to have the tool to write a citation if you need to.

Commissioner Cribbs: The King Plaza has no alcohol allowed, is that right?

Mr. Anderson: I'd have to double check. I don't have it handy, but I'd get back to you on that.

Commissioner Cribbs: A little history on that. Many years ago we had a concert series on the Plaza that was the Friday night series. It served wine and beer. We, staff, didn't realize that we needed to have a special something or other, so there was an ordinance passed that we could do alcohol on King Plaza. It got probably changed around. That was a gathering place kind of thing, Don.

Chair McDougall: Always an attractive way to arrange a gathering and to make a gathering civil, of course. Jeff, would you like to make any comments?

Jeff Conrad: Hi. I'm Jeff Conrad. I'm from Palo Alto. Maybe I should start here by saying that if you people have read my email, I think it covers everything that I would have to say. If it's clearly conveyed in there, I'd just as soon save everybody's time and not repeat it. If you wish, I'd also be glad to make a few comments here.

Chair McDougall: Jeff, I know that Daren has read the email, and I know the ad hoc has. I believe that they've actually made some modifications to the regulation as it was originally drafted based on your comments. We appreciate that very much. We also appreciate your willingness not to repeat them here. Thank you.

Mr. Conrad: Thank you.

Chair McDougall: Thank you for getting involved in the process. We really appreciate that kind of participation.

Mr. Conrad: I apologize for missing it in 2004. If I knew there was such a thing as administrative regulations, I'd have commented, but I didn't (inaudible).

Chair McDougall: I have no real additional comments except to thank Daren and the ad hoc. My proposal, by the way, is not to do anything different than what you've currently done with this particular iteration. I would have left it alone except the use case that you just responded to Anne with, which is how people find out about the regulation, is they're going to do something in a park or they're going to do something in the Foothills, and then you send them the document or whatever. Now, they have to go through the whole document to find the relevant piece. I really like the idea that there's one document, but maybe there's two separate headings where particularly relevant things specific to the open space or specific to the parks can be pulled out. I know dogs are mentioned at least three different places. It would be much easier if it was called—it was easy to find the dog parks. I'm not proposing that for this ad hoc or this iteration. I am proposing that we should encourage that it not be another five years, and the next iteration might benefit from restructure. I'll give Council Member Cormack an opportunity to comment.

Council Member Cormack: Mr. Anderson, I'm just curious if you would characterize the proposed changes as minor, moderate, or major.

Mr. Anderson: Relative to the previous changes, where they were really specific to—maybe it was a dog park change, so it was just one or two. I would say this is moderate compared to the previous ones I've been involved with.

Chair McDougall: I think we've completed that discussion. I am going to suggest a slight change in the agenda if everybody would agree. Number 7 on here is the Hike to the Sea attachment, and I'd like to give David a few minutes to comment on that at this point before we get into the rest of the ad hoc unless anybody's got any major objections. David.

[The Commission moved to Agenda Item Number VII before proceeding with Agenda Item V.5.]

5. Other Ad Hoc Committee and Liaison Updates

Chair McDougall: This month we've had an extremely good job of people submitting all of the reports, so we don't have to go through it in great detail. Personally, part of my reaction to looking at this whole list is the 10.5 acres. It sounds to me like sometime in the next couple of months we might want to bring that forward from the ad hoc to the full Commission. The Foothills Park access, there's obviously work going on, on that. That's sort of a continuing update. I don't know if David wanted to comment on his memo or if Ryan wanted to make a comment.

Commissioner McCauley: We've got a pretty solid draft ready. I met with Jeff Greenfield yesterday. I think we're anticipating that that will be back before the Commission in September for discussion and further public input. Based on that discussion, there would be an action item sometime later in the fall for the Commission to consider.

Chair McDougall: I did see in some of the correspondence relative to the agenda, Daren, that Kathleen is now starting to collect information on how many rolls of toilet paper are used and various other ways of indirectly measuring the use of the park. I would encourage other Commission members to think of things that ought to be measured. Too often we don't think of what we want to measure, the same with the 7.7 acres. How will we know when we've had success or we've had failure? One thing that wasn't on that list was any kind of incident report. Was there an encounter with a guest or a visitor who had a problem or an issue? We need to make sure we're recording that too because that could be one of the things that becomes—as it was noted, one of the potential issues is safety. If we're not recording that now, then we won't have a benchmark for it. Is there any other comments on any of the ad hocs? David.

Commissioner Moss: Going back to the one about Foothills Park, I will not be at the meeting in September. Without violating the Brown Act, is there some way that you would give me feedback on some of the items that I mentioned in the memo that I sent afterwards, things that may or may not jive with what you're planning to do? I don't know how to address that. Was there anything that was particularly an issue, primarily to do with limits, primarily to do with student groups, primarily to do with volunteer groups, primarily to do with barbecues in the wrong place, and fire protection and maintenance with a larger volume of people?

Commissioner McCauley: The draft that we have is fairly detailed, and it will probably answer a lot of the questions. Without going into too much detail about what that draft is, your comments are consistent with that draft generally. We're incorporating that feedback.

Chair McDougall: Is it fair to say that you have a different draft today than the one that was floated at the last meeting? There is a potential update from what Commissioner Moss would have referred to?

Commissioner McCauley: Absolutely. The draft is much more detailed. Previously, it was sort of a menu of options. Now, it's one particular proposal.

Commissioner Moss: I had a comment about the Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan. I mentioned earlier that they are reviewing the horizontal levee project this coming Friday. That will be a very important impact on the Baylands and the City. I will be coming up with a response after I've seen that presentation. That has to do with a smooth transition, not a sheer drop-off. No matter what the sea level rise is, it'll still be a smooth transition.

Chair McDougall: When you say presentation, you mean the tour that's being offered?

Commissioner Moss: That's right, a tour. Daren and I have talked with Commissioner Greenfield about, with all of the projects being worked on north of us by SFPUC and the Dumbarton Rail project and also the Ravenswood Open Space District working on the San Francisco Bay Trail, there will be increased pressure on Palo Alto to make improvements on our portion of the Bay Trail north of the Baylands in what's called the Faber-Laumeister Tract. Right now, there's one intransigent homeowner/landowner who the City is trying to work with to allow us to make improvements to that trail. It's not going well. Hopefully, you can continue to push forward with that, but that is an open issue.

Chair McDougall: We can ask that in a future staff report that we get an update on that. Would that be fair?

Mr. Anderson: I think so. We'll just have to be cautious that it doesn't turn into an agendized kind of discussion.

Chair McDougall: That's why I'm suggesting a future staff report. If there are no other comments …

Commissioner Moss: I'm so excited about the pickleball court development and the tremendous response that the City made to the pickleball community to move them during this fairly long break in the action. It's at least six to eight weeks, something like that. You were able to move them to another part of Mitchell Park. I think some of the tennis players who were there are moving over to Cubberley. I'm not sure how that worked. Thank you so much for accommodating that very large and very vocal community during this upheaval. One other thing about the pickleball. I don't think that they contribute a dime to the City for anything we're doing for them. I'm a little concerned about that. I wonder if we're able to charge fees to groups to help with maintenance and some of the upgrades. This is coming out of CIP, I think. No, I think it's coming out of maintenance.

Mr. Anderson: It was CIP funding to build the new courts.

Commissioner Moss: I don't know what staff can do about that.

Chair McDougall: Commissioner Moss, I would think the ad hoc involved in recreation should probably take that up, and we don't discuss that further.

Commissioner Moss: That would be great.

Chair McDougall: Do you have something else you want to add?

Commissioner Moss: On the turf management with the Cubberley field, they needed to remove at least six or so redwood trees. I was surprised at that, but they were not in good health. Will those be replaced or anything like that?

Mr. Anderson: I believe six were removed. Three were already dead, and three were still living. Yes, we will have replacements, not necessarily redwoods but perhaps a different species that may be more appropriate and might do better there.

Chair McDougall: Council Member Cormack, do you have any last questions or comments that you'd like to add?

VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 24, 2019 MEETING

Chair McDougall: Is there any topics that Commission members would like to recommend for future meetings?

Commissioner Moss: I don't know if it's parks and facility use or park rules, but I notice a proliferation of advertising signs where the soccer teams play and tennis classes are given,

big, big, big signs and multiple ones. They stay up a lot longer than the event they're advertising. Is that advertising something they pay for?

Chair McDougall: Once again, I'll submit that to staff as an update on that at the next meeting. It sounds like a reasonable question. Rather than discussing it now, we'll put it as a request for a staff update at the next meeting.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I received an email today about the recycled water plan for the north county. Are we going to get a purple session? Is that in the works?

Chair McDougall: That's a good idea. We did have that as an agenda item sometime. I'm not sure it showed up, but let's put that on the list as a potential topic.

Mr. Anderson: Commissioner Reckdahl had forwarded me a number of those kinds of things. I sent it to Public Works, and they said they'd be interested in coming in November to talk about that and maybe a couple of other items, GSI, etc.

Commissioner Reckdahl: I don't see any particular rush, but we should get it.

Commissioner McCauley: Don, I was just going to echo your comment. It'd be great to have an update on the 10.5 acres at Baylands in the not too distant future.

Chair McDougall: Specifically for the September meeting, we do have an update on the Foothills access. Anybody have anything else?

Commissioner Cribbs: The timing might be off on this for our meetings. I wondered if we should have any kind of information about what's going on with the Stanford GUP. We mentioned it last meeting. There's some implications for recreation possibly and that kind of thing. Maybe it's just enough to get information off the website and listen to the Council meeting.

Chair McDougall: Council Member Cormack might have a comment on that.

Council Member Cormack: Council Member DuBois and I are the ad hoc committee for the Stanford GUP. We provided an update at the end of last week's meeting, could have been the week before, just indicating that we anticipate there being a series of meetings starting in the fall in San Jose and potentially one up here. Attendance at that will be welcome. There's no other additional information that we have to share. I'm not quite sure what an action item or a discussion would look like. At this point, that's where we are.

Commissioner Cribbs: It's good to know that you have that ad hoc committee. I was thinking, "Wouldn't it be great for you to make a presentation from Palo Alto's perspective?" If there's nothing to share …

Council Member Cormack: There isn't really anything. The Planning Commission has recommended its (inaudible). Everything is out in the public. We're waiting until the next series of meetings.

Commissioner Reckdahl: With Rancho San Antonio closed because of mountain lions, do we have any evidence of mountain lions in Foothills Park?

Mr. Anderson: We've always had evidence of them. We have wildlife cameras that occasionally pick them up. We take notes on where they're at and monitor behaviors when we observe them or have park visitors' observations. Right now, we don't have any threats or concerns.

Commissioner LaMere: I have one question about setting dates for November and December meetings. Just wondering if there's any discussion of that in the near future.

Chair McDougall: We haven't had discussion. We'll make sure that we have that discussion in preparation. For the September meeting, we'll lay out the rest of the year appropriately.

VII. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Moss: On August 14, the Midpeninsula Open Space District Board of Directors had a very unusual meeting that I was allowed to be part of. I did not represent the City of Palo Alto, but I did talk about the inspiration of the Parks Master Plan to finding routes from our open spaces to other open spaces, other regional trails from Palo Alto to the sea. It was very well received. The amazing thing was the meeting itself. There were seven other organizations that had something to do with regional trails through Midpeninsula Open Space lands. What was amazing is that many of them touched Palo Alto. That was not lost on the Board nor was it lost on the other participants. For instance, one of the partners was San Francisco Bay Trail, which certainly runs through our Baylands, and they have major changes that they're making. The Bay Area Ridge Trail, which we connect to at the top, and the SFPUC and the Dumbarton Rail Corridor, which are going to be integral to moving people and commuters and recreational bike riders and walkers from Dumbarton Bridge and from all points north to all points south. They are doing major changes. They also talked about San Mateo County parks is creating the Ohlone-Portola Historical Trail, which ends up at El Palo Alto, which I didn't know. It's going to span all the way north almost to San Mateo. All of these regional trails touch Palo Alto in some way. They were very receptive to changing their priorities to help this Palo Alto to the Sea Trail because they have one major project that they need to do with the Cloverdale Ranch, which is at the very end of the trail, that they would like to move up to allow this regional trail to be more useful. That's all I really want to say right now. It was very well received.

Chair McDougall: In the planning meeting we had for this meeting, when we talked about it, Commissioner Greenfield, who went to the meeting with you, was extremely complimentary about the presentation that you did, the reaction you got. Although you weren't representing the City, as you say, you did do a good job of representing the City. Thank you very much. I don't know if anybody has any particular questions for David on that. With that, I'd like to go to the ad hoc committee update.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned on motion by Commissioner Reckdahl and second by Commissioner Cribbs at 9:15 p.m.