



City/School Liaison Committee Minutes



Regular Meeting
February 18, 2016

The City School Liaison Committee met in the Council Conference Room at this date at 8:08 A.M, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California.

Present: City of Palo Alto
Tom DuBois, Council Member, Committee (Chair)
Cory Wolbach, Council Member
Khashayar "Cash" Alaei, City Manager's Office

Palo Alto Unified School District
Terry Godfrey, Vice President
Melissa Baten Caswell, Board Member
Cathy Mak, District Chief Business Officer

Absent:

1. Welcome and Introductions.
2. Oral Communications.

None

3. Approval of Minutes- November 19, 2015 and December 17, 2015.

MOTION: Chair DuBois moved, seconded by School Board Member Godfrey to approve the November 19th and December 17th, 2015 minutes.

MOTION PASSED: 4-0

Chair DuBois requested City Staff provide the School Board Members with meeting information packets in advance via email.

4. Discussion Regarding Purpose of the Committee.

Melissa Baten Caswell, School Board Member, expressed in the past both parties provided a brief update on the items occurring in their respective

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arenas that may have an effect on the other parties consideration for projects.

Chair DuBois agreed that was a positive beginning to the meetings.

Ms. Baten Caswell discussed items that had occurred at the recent School Board Meetings. The first was a new School Board Policy regarding non-service dogs on campus during school hours. The new policy was easily distributed to the parents; although, there was difficulty reaching the rest of the community.

Chair DuBois asked if the policy was a change or recently enforced.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated it was a change; there were different policies in place for different areas.

Chair DuBois asked if there was an after hour's policy.

Ms. Baten Caswell noted after school hours the fields were on City Policy enforcement. On a separate matter there was a lawsuit presented to the Office of Education that was recently determined. The outcome was that the Morgan Hill Concerned Parents Association was going to be provided privacy information pertaining to more than ten million students unless their parents completed an Opt Out form by April 1, 2016. The lawsuit included any student in a public school from 2008 to present; name, social security number. Unfortunately, for those students who have left the system the District has no manner in which to contact them.

Terry Godfrey, School Board Member, stated the notices went out to the parents of Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) parents Wednesday, February 17th. She noted the PAUSD was not a party to the lawsuit.

Ms. Baten Caswell reiterated the CDE (The California Department of Education) has the information so whether or not the PAUSD was or was not a party in the lawsuit, the CDE will send the information.

Chair DuBois asked what information was requested other than the aforementioned items.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated student grades, test scores, and if there was an IEP or a 504 on file all of the details would be released.

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Chair DuBois asked if there was an injunction in the process.

Ms. Baten Caswell said it was not clear although the PAUSD was encouraging parents to complete the Opt Out form by April 1st.

Ms. Godfrey mentioned there were a couple of School Board Committees. There was a Stanford/PAUSD meeting on the 17th where the new housing units were discussed. The result affecting the City was the possibility of discussions regarding the intersection of Serra Street and El Camino Real.

Ms. Baten Caswell explained the PAUSD had several community committees being formed. To date the official committees were; Jordon School Renaming Committee, discussions of a Cubberley Committee are in the works. Interested parties should apply directly to the Superintendent.

Chair DuBois announced the City was working on a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Comprehensive Plan Update which was released on February 5th. There was 90 days for public comment; part of the EIR was an impact on public schools. There were four scenarios provided and the end goal was for the City to select elements of each scenario to create the ultimate one. One scenario was on public growth which indicated no impact in public schools. During the next Agenda Item he wanted to include the determination of demographics.

Ms. Baten Caswell felt it would be beneficial for the City to review the County demographic report which reflected growth in Santa Clara and San Mateo County's but not growth in school age children.

Council Member Wolbach asked which scenario in the Comprehensive Plan Update was reflective of the unrestrained group.

Chair DuBois stated the 4th scenario.

Ms. Baten Caswell agreed the Comprehensive Plan Update should be included as a topic for discussion in the next Agenda Item. She mentioned the PAUSD was in discussions regarding expanding Addison School.

Chair DuBois said a series of parking permit discussions were occurring and the outcome may impact schools; including expansion of the Downtown Parking and possibly South Gate Neighborhoods.

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Kathy Mak, District Chief Business Officer, asked for clarification on what the areas would be expanded.

Chair DuBois noted the Downtown South Gate Neighborhood areas were requesting to be a part of the parking permit program.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated the South Gate neighborhood was close to Palo Alto High School (PALY) and with the reduction in available parking due to construction there had been a noted increase in students parking in that neighborhood.

Chair DuBois affirmed that processing was just beginning and could take up to a year for completion.

Ms. Baten Caswell declared the construction was anticipated to be completed within that timeframe.

Chair DuBois mentioned the Evergreen Park neighborhood was being impacted by the California Avenue and Stanford parking issues. Crescent Park neighborhood was being impacted by the Downtown parking issues.

Ms. Baten Caswell asked how the permit parking program was going to impact Addison.

Ms. Mak stated the PAUSD purchased approximately 70 permits for staff and visitors; they were requesting exemption with the next phase.

Chair DuBois clarified exemption from paying.

Ms. Mak replied yes.

Chair DuBois asked which City Staff person the PAUSD was discussing the matter with.

Ms. Mak said Josh Mello from the Transportation Division of Planning.

Ms. Godfrey mentioned there was no impact around the Escondido School when the College Terrace neighborhood parking permit program went into effect.

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Ms. Baten Caswell noted there was ample parking in that area. She believed the parking matter was a discussion for the Agenda; if for nothing more than to maintain an update.

Council Member Wolbach asked for an update on the matter of housing for teachers.

Ms. Baten Caswell noted there were negotiations currently in the works and that matter could not be discussed at this time.

Council Member Wolbach understood but wanted to mention there were potential topics of discussion around the City through the Housing Element.

Ms. Baten Caswell asked if the Staff was reviewing surrounding communities because the School District was finding similar issues with surround cities school districts.

Council Member Wolbach stated yes, Staff was communicating with other areas. He mentioned the City was in discussions with the County on a regional effort for a Ballot Measure to fund transportation.

Ms. Godfrey felt the grade separation issue was not a matter of funding as much as the people who lived in the affected areas.

Chair DuBois asked if the School Board was aware of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) / California Energy Commission (CEC) meeting next week.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated yes and noted there was a meeting later on this evening and on February 23rd where they will be talking to community groups.

Ms. Godfrey asked to discuss the time of the meetings; the Agenda reflected 8:00 to 10:00 am. She believed the meetings were 8:00 to 9:30 am.

Chair DuBois agreed there was a general understanding of a 9:30 am end time but he would have Staff change the Agenda to reflect that.

Chair DuBois believed the Committee began historically when the City and Schools really needed to work together when the PAUSD was closing school sites. The Committee seemingly evolved from an active group to information

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sharing. He was interested in returning the ideals to a more productive Committee.

Ms. Godfrey asked what productive looked like to the Chair.

Chair DuBois shared there was information in the Comprehensive Plan Update where it denotes maximizing the use of the Committee and to promote collaboration between the City and the PAUSD.

Ms. Baten Caswell informed the Committee the other committees she and Ms. Godfrey sat on did not make decisions; they shared information.

Chair DuBois was hoping the Board Members would return to the School Board and make recommendations on policy matters pertaining to relations between the Schools and the City. The City/School Liaison Committee would be in an advisory capacity.

Ms. Godfrey asked what the Committee looked like when Chair DuBois felt it played a different role.

Chair DuBois suggested not planning the Agenda for the entire year but rather having topics for discussion and thus allowing room for change.

Ms. Godfrey asked for specific clarification on what the Committee looked like before now.

Ms. Baten Caswell reiterated a productive committee was difficult when the School Board Members were prohibited from making decisions or recommendations. Their role was to gather information and return it to the rest of the Board.

Chair DuBois wanted this Committee to serve a more in-depth capacity being able to discuss, for example; traffic issues, come up with a resolution and bring that back to the Committees respective bodies.

Ms. Godfrey announced the PAUSD did have a Committee where there were decisions made but that was the only one. Her expectation when she joined this Committee was to dive into a topic of mutual interest, surface the issues and request staff to pursue them with the School Board or the City Council.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated the Committee in the past had been constrained by the fixed subject matter of the Agenda. Not being able to discuss matters until their time on the Agenda, which was not effective.

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Council Member Wolbach believed there was a great deal of nexus between the two entities. In order to direct City Staff to perform work that would take longer than an hour's time the direction needed to come directly from the full Council.

Chair DuBois clarified Staff would be presenting at the Committee level and therefore, they will be made aware of these issues.

Ms. Baten Caswell explained the proposal was not that the Committee would have a solution the Staff discusses but rather to declare it was an important enough issue for both bodies to be aware of the need.

Council Member Wolbach stated that in itself would be a recommendation to the full Council; having Staff present an issue and the Committee determining there was a real need. The Chair and I would recommend to the full Council that Staff be directed to spend more time vetting the issue and adopting a resolution.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated from the PAUSD side Ms. Mak was attending the Committee meetings as the senior staff member who would bring the matters she felt were in the best interest of the District to the Superintendent for further vetting.

Council Member Wolbach felt listening to all of the conversations regarding the aspiration to have a more useful Committee is that it is desired by both parties. Even if it was to stay as an information sharing Committee, being able to share more detailed information would be beneficial.

Ms. Baten Caswell wanted to be certain the Committee was flexible. There needs to be a process of information sharing for the community. The PAUSD has access to the school community but not the greater community, while the City has access to the greater community but not the school community.

Chair DuBois had the thought of rather than Staff on either side presenting a broad topic; present the specific issue that pertains to both entities; South Gate Neighborhood crossing. The Committee could have a proactive discussion on a specific resolution to present to their respective bodies.

Ms. Baten Caswell agreed although reiterated it would not be herself or Ms. Godfrey with the ability to bring the matter forward but their senior staff person.

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Ms. Godfrey agreed staff attended the meetings and were aware of the issues or needs. The question was having the ability to have a discussion when needed and the flexibility with the Agenda process.

Ms. Baten Caswell asked how flexible the Agenda could be. Meaning if a month out from the meeting there was an issue which needed attention could staff be notified to prepare and bring it forward.

Chair DuBois stated asking was always an option.

Richard Hackmann, Management Analyst, stated from a Staff's perspective in the vein of making the Committee a recommendation policy body, there was an understanding the School Board Members would need to return to their body before any official action could be taken as would the Council Members. An example was the school being interested in a waiver from the parking permit program costs. When Staff presented the matter to the Council they would be asked the reasoning behind why the PAUSD was requesting a waiver, what the fiscal impact on the PAUSD would be and the number of spaces being requested to be waived. If a policy discussion had taken place at the Committee level, Staff would be better able to explain the request and a policy implementation from the Council.

Ms. Baten Caswell noted that would be a difficult scenario for them as the City/School Liaison Committee was a liaison role.

Chair DuBois clarified the School Board Members were on several committees jointly with the City.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated yes; although, as with this Committee they were not part of making any decisions or policy, they strictly returned information to the PAUSD.

Ms. Godfrey noted the discussion seemed to be circling. Her expectation in joining the Committee was having a flexible agenda process and inviting items to the agenda on an update of issues that had been previously brought to the respective bodies. If an item arises during the update that the Committee felt needed further discussion or review that could be brought to the attention of the parties' official bodies for further direction of staff.

Chair DuBois announced the more detailed the information a sub-Committee provided the smoother the Council Meeting or School Board Meeting could run.

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Ms. Baten Caswell recalled in prior years on the Committee they attempted to create a more dynamic approach and when the senior staff member brought the subject forward to the Board they were told there were specific people they would select to be on that type of committee. Therefore, the liaison representatives of the City/School Committee were not seen as more than information gathering.

Council Member Wolbach wanted to have the authority to make recommendations to the respective bodies with the understanding the members of this Committee did not have the authority to make direction.

Ms. Godfrey stated given there was no formal definition of the Committee if the Committee members agreed amongst themselves to have a more flexible agenda process, to discuss items more fully and that the process be vetted after a few months to see if there were changes necessary.

Ms. Baten Caswell wanted to add open communication to the list. If either party had information they needed to be disseminated through their respective constituencies that could be done in a timely manner; she was confirmable bringing that type of issue back to the Board.

Chair DuBois requested any information from the PAUSD be received ahead of time rather than at the meeting. That would provide more time to review and be better prepared such as staff presentations or background information. He asked the Committee Members if they felt a 3-month lead time was sufficient for items.

Ms. Baten Caswell agreed that would be ample time.

Council Member Wolbach agreed there should be more dialogue and less time spent on presentations.

5. Discussion of 2016 Committee Meeting Agenda Items.

Chair DuBois provided a potential list of topics for the agenda discussion.

Terry Godfrey, School Board Member, noticed middle school athletics was listed twice.

Chair DuBois stated yes but for two different schools. He reviewed lists presented by Staff and found the list of topics for 2013 and 2014 were similar.

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Melissa Baten Caswell, School Board Member, expressed concern over the routine style of the meetings which was where the desire for a more flexible agenda process arose from.

Chair DuBois suggested each member select their top three priorities.

Ms. Godfrey asked if there was a topic on the agenda that had been discussed previously but the current Committee was in need of a brief closure. Staff was not needed for a full disclosure but rather a brief update on the resolution and the final outcome of the projects from prior years.

Chair DuBois agreed.

Council Member Wolbach said the role of the Committee was not articulated. If there was a discussion amongst the City Manager and the Superintendent regarding a subject that involved both entities they could request Staff vet the matter through the City/School Committee and then Staff would present the recommendation to the full Council or School Board for approval.

Ms. Baten Caswell agreed staff could present the matter and the Committee could vet it then senior staff could bring the recommendation to the Superintendent who could present the matter the School Board. She was not certain how the School Board would react to the two liaisons having that type of authority.

Council Member Wolbach felt it was simply a different style of how the bodies preferred to receive information.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated having staff come to the Committee to bounce information or ideas through them was a good idea, it was simply the next steps would be different.

Council Member Wolbach expressed the need for a description from the School Board and the full Council on the expectation of the Committee.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated the ideal goal was a better flow of information from the Committee.

Ms. Godfrey asked if there was a mechanism that informed the rest of the Council Members of resolved items such as the Weekly; a weekly paper produced Superintendent on the complete goings on throughout the District.

Ms. Baten Caswell asked if there was a weekly newsletter that was produced.

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Chair DuBois said no, there was a month-in-review by the City Manager. Different departments provided informational items in the Council packet.

Council Member Wolbach noted at the City Council meetings the City Manager provided comments on matters throughout the City.

Ms. Baten Caswell selected her priorities for the Committee to discuss as: 1) middle school athletics, 2) school transportation and traffic around school sites, 3) construction and boundary planning needed to be a separate items, 4) upcoming ballot initiatives, and 5) regular updates on the Cubberley Plan.

Chair DuBois asked if there were particular initiatives on the ballot this November that impacted the schools.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated there were state level initiatives around schools but there were not local initiatives.

Council Member Wolbach mentioned the County transportation Sales Tax could have an impact on schools.

Ms. Baten Caswell felt state and county ballot initiatives should be discussed since they may impact either the City or schools.

Ms. Godfrey provided her priorities list as; 1) middle school athletics.

Chair DuBois interrupted and asked what the issue was since it was a priority for both of School Board Members.

Ms. Baten Caswell mentioned there was a lot of community input on there not being enough bandwidth for all of the student interest and the City managed that program.

Ms. Godfrey felt the resolution was difficult because the City could not hire coaching staff.

Chair DuBois agreed middle school athletics was a priority but for different reasons. He wanted to be sure the City and schools were abiding by the recent change in the state law of not denying participation based on funding.

Ms. Baten Caswell was aware of that situation and agreed there were matters that needed to be further discussed for a better understanding.

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Ms. Godfrey continued with her priority list; 2) the school impacts from the Comprehensive Plan draft, 3) summer school programs but she requested more details.

Chair DuBois referred to the cutback in the summer school programs from four or five years ago. The City summer programs were full and it seemed like a similar subject matter.

Ms. Godfrey agreed. The Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) was adding summer school programs back and communication around coordination was important. She mentioned the possibility of work experience programs.

Ms. Baten Caswell mentioned the City backfilled programs when the PAUSD shortened theirs. She neglected to mention communication outreach process in her list of priorities.

Council Member Wolbach provided his list of priorities as; 1) Comprehensive Plan and school impacts, 2) communication strategy, 3) middle school athletic programs, 4) Cubberley updates, 5) transportation, 6) summer school programs, 7) ballot initiatives, and 8) Project Safety Net. He felt continued and regular updates on how the Project Safety Net Program was working would be beneficial to both parties.

Ms. Baten Caswell agreed and said especially since the program had recently hired a Director.

Chair DuBois clarified his top three priorities would be; 1) Cubberley, 2) Project Safety Net/teen programs, and 3) school transportation/traffic around school sites. He noted the three lesser priorities would be; 1) middle school athletics, 2) summer programs, and 3) child care/early child care services.

Ms. Baten Caswell asked for clarification on the last topic of child care and if it was in reference to after school care.

Chair DuBois stated child care in general. He noted most of the child care services were concentrated at Ventura School and there was a great deal of demand that far exceeded the capacity.

Ms. Baten Caswell did not understand the City's priority at Cubberley. She would like to understand how the community services support would be beneficial to both parties.

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Chair DuBois was asking if the PAUSD was looking into more child care services at more locations.

Ms. Baten Caswell noted the discussions had been around kinder and pre-k ages. The PAUSD was under discussions on possibly changing the process of kindergarten. Currently each site had a different schedule.

Chair DuBois stated in reference to the priority topics there were five or six subjects that were agreed upon.

Ms. Baten Caswell agreed and clarified the middle school athletics was mentioned by all parties, summer programs; if there was a possibility of getting a head start on that topic it needed to be discussed soon.

Ms. Mak noted the discussions could be around the 2017 summer programs.

Ms. Baten Caswell said yes, although there did need to be communications regarding the 2016 summer; so if there were gaps that needed to be filled in for 2017, both parties were aware of them now.

Chair DuBois agreed and added that could be part of the communication strategy discussion. He continued the top priority list where Cubberley was mentioned by most.

Ms. Godfrey added the Comprehensive Plan was mentioned by three parties.

Ms. Baten Caswell requested the Committee have regular updates as to the status and changes to Cubberley.

Ms. Godfrey stated providing Staff a several month lead time should be sufficient.

Chair DuBois mentioned the Draft EIR of the Comprehensive Plan had a section on school impacts; outside of that section would the PAUSD be interested in information.

Ms. Baten Caswell declared the impacts on enrollment and transportation would be of interest to the PAUSD. She felt transportation and impacts around school sites was a matter she wished to visit early on.

Chair DuBois asked if parking should be added to the transportation element.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated yes, as well as school construction.

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Chair DuBois asked the senior staff members if they felt they could return with a report on middle school athletics in March.

Ms. Baten Caswell asked to add the summer school programs on the March agenda; knowing the schedule could not be changed but receiving the information and determining the gaps would be beneficial for the planning of the 2017 programs.

Ms. Godfrey agreed with the summer school programs and although middle school athletics was an important, the issues were already known. The more important goal would be to get behind the summer school program issues before they become greater.

Council Member Wolbach asked if goal was to change the structure of the programs.

Ms. Baten Caswell noted that was a more significant discussion which was why they requested it be on the agenda sooner.

Chair DuBois reviewed the proposed agenda items for the upcoming few months. Summer Programs and communications for the March agenda, middle school discussions in April, and Cubberley in May.

Ms. Baten Caswell asked if the idea behind combining summer programs and communications was if the Committee could achieve a positive outcome with the summer programs the communications strategy could be worked out across the board.

Chair DuBois felt the communications strategy would return as a topic. Because the summer programs schedules were set, adding the communications element to the agenda item would be more on how to communicate to the different communities. He continued with the agenda discussion as May being transportation and parking.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated that would be a good way for the PAUSD to prepare for the upcoming school year.

Council Member Wolbach asked if the Comprehensive Plan should be on an earlier agenda. He felt the middle school athletics topic was less time sensitive than the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Baten Caswell asked whether the Comprehensive Plan was time sensitive to the PAUSD.

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Chair DuBois noted a number of the elements in the Comprehensive Plan had not been drafted so in order to add it to an earlier agenda there would need to be specific subject matters.

Ms. Baten Caswell noted in the past years the Comprehensive Plan did not have much impact on the PAUSD.

Chair DuBois stated it was more of a review and comment.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated if there was review and comment to be made it would not be by Ms. Godfrey or herself. She asked who would provide the document to the PAUSD for review.

Council Member Wolbach stated it was available on the City website.

Ms. Baten Caswell noted that was part of the communication issues needing to be discussed; the PAUSD staff was not regularly visiting the City website to see what was updated. She did not believe City Staff was visiting the PAUSD website.

Council Member Wolbach requested Staff send the Comprehensive Plan URL to the PAUSD members.

Chair DuBois mentioned talking about teacher housing around the Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Baten Caswell reiterated any discussions regarding teacher housing would occur after negotiations had closed.

Chair DuBois asked when the negotiations were anticipated to be closed.

Ms. Baten Caswell was unaware of a closure time.

Chair DuBois reiterated the upcoming agenda schedule; Summer Programs in March, Middle School Athletics in April, Cubberley in May, and Transportation and Parking in June.

Ms. Baten Caswell asked if the Communications item could be added before June.

Chair DuBois clarified the next four months were agendized so he suggested making a potential list for the months of five through ten. The Committee

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could revisit the agenda list items monthly and see if there needed to be a reprioritizing. Communications could be “on-deck” for July.

Ms. Baten Caswell asked if there was a way to have more than one topic on an agenda. For example the PAUSD had the new dog on campus policy; how could that be disseminated to the entire community.

Council Member Wolbach asked if there was a way in which Staff could assist with that matter.

Ms. Baten Caswell mentioned the PAUSD had a new communications position and possibly they could speak with Claudia Keith, the City’s Communications Manager.

Chair DuBois asked Staff if the Community Services Division had newsletters they distributed.

Richard Hackmann, Management Analyst, stated there was a monthly Mayor’s Letter and Animal Services Division had a newsletter; although, the scope was limited. He requested the proper person he should contact to receive a statement that would go into a newsletter.

Ms. Baten Caswell provided the name of the new Communications Manager for the PAUSD.

Ms. Mak requested the City reiterate the City Ordinance on dogs on school grounds along with the new PAUSD policy.

Chair DuBois asked for input on the items “on-desk” for the agenda after June.

Ms. Godfrey stated communication strategy, summer teen programs/work experience programs.

Council Member Wolbach mentioned the Valley Transportation Authority had a ballot measure coming up in November. Should that be discussed and tied in to the Transportation/Parking discussion in June.

Ms. Godfrey asked what was meant by “teen programs” on the potential list of topics.

Chair DuBois clarified the Teen Drop-In at Mitchell Park Community Center.

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Ms. Baten Caswell asked if the Committee was aware the Art Center had a Teen Drop-In Center as well. The City had a number of teen programs that the PAUSD did not see.

Council Member Wolbach noted that was why the need for the discussion.

Chair DuBois asked if there were items the PAUSD had that the City was unaware of.

Ms. Baten Caswell stated there were individual clubs at the High Schools that ran camps. Unfortunately those types of events were done organically.

Ms. Godfrey asked when the dates were for the upcoming meetings.

Chair DuBois stated the Committee met the third Thursday of each month from 8:00 A.M. to 9:30 A.M.

Ms. Baten Caswell suggested hearing Transportation and Parking in May and Cubberley in June.

Adjournment: This meeting was adjourned at 9:32 A.M.