

Regular Meeting
February 11, 2003

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ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m. 11

Chairperson Burch called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. in the Council Conference Room, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California.

Present: Burch, Lytle, Ojakian
Absent: Kleinberg

1. Oral Communications

None.

2. Youth Master Plan Report

Assistant to the City Manager Chris Mogensen said the idea for a Youth Master Plan (YMP) originated at a joint study session between the Council and the Palo Alto Youth Council (PAYC) in March 2000. The goal was to develop a focused and organized approach to the delivery of programs and services to youth and their families. Staff had worked along with the YMP steering committee, PAYC, and members of the community to ultimately produce the YMP.

Director of Community Services Paul Thiltgen said because of staffing changes and the death of a City staff member involved in the YMP, the project had taken time to complete. Praise was given to Dawn Calvert, Superintendent of Recreation, who put the final document together, having done most of the writing and document finalization. The effort was greatly appreciated. The PAYC was thanked for providing the input and impetus for the project.

Superintendent of Recreation Dawn Calvert said the YMP was created by teens for all teens in Palo Alto. The YMP included a report about the challenging process through which the YMP went, beginning in March 2000. The YMP steering committee had a vested interest in the community's youth. The work of the committee was outlined in the staff report (CMR:148:03). Recreation staff recommended the Policy and Services (P&S) Committee accept the YMP report as presented. Nick Way, Jessica Lee, and other Palo Alto Youth Council members were introduced.

Youth Council Member Nick Way provided background on the purpose of the YMP, which resulted from a joint study session between the PAYC and Council in March 2000. The YMP was defined as a process focusing on an organized approach to the delivery of programs and services for youth and their families.

Youth Council Member Jessica Lee said the YMP steering committee was comprised of 40 members representing organizations such as City Council Members, school officials, Police Department employees, teens from the

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community, and various non-profits. The vision statement was, "That all youth in Palo Alto will have safe, healthy, and positive experiences that support them in the development of behaviors, skills, attitudes, knowledge, and values necessary to realize their potential."

Youth Council Member Way said the purpose or mission statement of the YMP steering committee was, "To engage and support the Palo Alto community's middle and high school youth and their families." It was determined that a YMP would benefit the Palo Alto community by: 1) determining existing services and overlaps in teen services; 2) identifying service gaps, addressing the needs of all youth and teens in the community; and 3) evaluating the developmental assets and skills needed by youth to grow into health adults.

Youth Council Member Lee said members of the YMP steering committee, the PAYC, teen advisory boards, and other community members came together to unite on common goals in order to support the youth and teens in the community. The objectives initiated by the youth included: 1) to encourage and continue to provide opportunities for youth participation; 2) to improve communication and awareness of youth recreational and social programs; and 3) to ensure ongoing collaborative process that coordinated, supported and monitored youth programs and services.

Youth Council Member Way said once the objectives were defined, the goals were developed by youth focus groups to address the objectives. The goals were broken down into three action steps: 1) action steps completed; 2) short-term action steps; and 3) long-term action steps. The first goal was to encourage and continue to provide support for youth participation. Young people needed safe, healthy, and fun activities to engage in positive behavior and grow into healthy adults. A few of the action steps completed thus far included a youth drop-in center at Mitchell Park Community Center created by teen recreation staff for which City staff coordinated a shuttle service for after-school transportation at Gunn and Palo Alto High Schools. City staff also created and implemented teen band nights. A few of the short-term action steps included a video documentary by PAYC describing the top ten fun things for teens to do in Palo Alto. City staff also would evaluate the fee waiver program. In the long-term, innovative marketing strategies would be developed to target teens. The second goal was to improve communication and awareness of youth programs. Many youth and families were not using available resources due to communication barriers. A few of the action steps taken so far included creation of a website by the *Palo Alto Weekly* and the PAYC for teen activities on "Palo Alto On-Line." Teen members of the YMP marketing committee wrote articles to recognize peer accomplishments in a local newspaper. A few of the short-term action steps included collaboration by

City staff with local agencies to obtain information on services that were of interest to teens. In the long-term, a Palo Alto youth would be appointed to every commission related to issues and activities for the age group.

Youth Council Member Lee said the third goal was to ensure ongoing collaboration to support youth programs and services. The YMP would be evaluated by teen councils and appropriate City commissions as needed. The action steps already completed included implementation by City staff of a summer survivor camp for middle school students in collaboration with the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) and collaboration with Mitchell Park Library and Community Center to offer an after school drop-in program. The short-term action steps included reviewing existing programs to create an approach in designing new youth programs. In the long-term, collaboration would occur between community agencies. An annual review of the YMP would occur in order to implement the projects related to the goals by the PAYC. To achieve the goals, Recreation staff recommended the City continue to provide: 1) encouragement to continue to provide opportunities for youth participation in the community; 2) improve communication and awareness of youth recreational and social programs; and 3) ensure ongoing and collaborative processes that coordinated, supported, and monitored youth programs and services. The youth groups recommended: 1) continuing to provide adequate and current staff support for planning and implementing the goals; 2) providing opportunities for teens to meet with City Council Members and City commissions regularly; and 3) continuing to provide youth development programs that were regularly evaluated for effectiveness.

Youth Council Member Way said the PAYC would refer to the YMP annually and implement new projects related to the goals in the plan. City recreation staff would continue to collaborate with agencies serving youth and teens in the community. Biannually, the PAYC would evaluate the YMP to determine the overall effectiveness of the action items identified in the YMP and make adjustments based upon current trends and issues involving teens in the community.

Chairperson Burch thanked the PAYC members for their presentation and the work that went into the YMP.

Council Member Ojakian thanked staff and his colleagues. He asked what the PAYC considered the key value of the YMP.

Youth Council Member Way said the most important aspect of the YMP was the fact that it was not just a short-term solution, but addressed both short and long-term needs affecting teens in the community. The YMP was designed to

act as a guideline to help deal with teen issues. The YMP was merely a starting point on which the City could build.

Council Member Ojakian asked whether anything was missing from the YMP.

Youth Council Member Lee said the YMP took a long time because so many different teens were affected. Finding just one document to address the needs of a variety of teens was difficult, but the YMP was a good start.

Council Member Ojakian said from the beginning, the desire was for the YMP to be a youth-driven process, not just another document put together by adults for adults. He hoped younger members of the PAYC and others in the community were given an opportunity to make the document a living document. The idea for the document had come from a 1992 study at the League of California Cities (LCC) and was put together by several other cities in the State. A Council Member who had been on the 1992 LCC committee put the document from Inglewood together. The Inglewood process was a good document because the youth of that city had helped put together the action items. He thought the names of some of the youth on Palo Alto's committee should be included in the document, not just the adults. The youth committee was comprised of a cross-section of the community from a variety of different backgrounds, all of who deserved credit and recognition. He appreciated the fact that Debbie Moore's name was included in the document, since she spent a lot of time on the document during its first year. Unfortunately, she passed away, but she deserved a lot of credit. The structure of the document was very good. The whole idea was to have goals and include action items. Some of the thinking that went behind the document and which he hoped his colleagues bought into, was that in the current world, youth centered their lives around the contemporary theme of the time. Besides dances, youth were involved in computers and science. For everyone to have an enriched experience, it was important to provide activities and for the youth to communicate about things that added to their experience. It was important to have youth involved in different committees such as the Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) or the Human Relations Commission (HRC), etc. Youth groups should also become involved in community activities. He was very impressed with Hampton, Virginia, where a youth committee created a bicycle boulevard layout. The town realized the heaviest bicycle users were the youth. His ultimate goal was for people from the community's youth to be involved in community activities. The result was an over-all enrichment. He hoped some of the action items would include measurable results in order to determine whether things were working. In terms of funding, he assumed some, if not all, was coming from what was done in the Downtown garage room. The room would be leased. A portion of the proceeds would help pay the debt and the rest would be tied into youth programs. He agreed with the need for continued staff involvement.

Mr. Thiltgen said funding was tied into longer-term funding. The Downtown garage had yet to be completed.

Council Member Lytle thanked staff and the youth participants. The YMP was outstanding. She also liked the format and layout, which was very action-oriented. She was glad to see the youth had already taken steps and gotten things done. She hoped the PAYC of 2000 could share the product of their original leading. The document was something to be proud of, since the youth demanded the City enter into the exercise. The youth would be its own best advocates and should be kept involved in the processes. One way of accomplishing involvement was to have youth breathe some life into some of the traditional adult events; for example, the Black and White Ball was failing to attract the type of participation that was hoped. If a youth tent were set up, parents would come. Another event was the May Fete Parade. The more partners that were brought in, the bigger it would become. The youth could become the bridge. Within the goal of finding the youth healthful and safe activities was the inventory that resulted in identifying organizations and places in town for having fun. Over time, the space for such activities was shrinking as land values increased. School properties were lost in the 1970s and, although fields were preserved, space for youth was lost. The YMP, in tandem with the City's Field Advisory Report, put the picture into focus for the City and youth. Many properties were threatened such as the Palo Alto Bowl, which was one of the two big recreation sites that was clearly an under-utilized piece of property that would eventually redevelop. Whether the City could maintain some type of recreational use or replace it as the property redeveloped was unknown. She did not see people coming up with solutions for creating new space and opportunity for youth, particularly since the population was increasing. Signs of stress were being seen throughout the community. Palo Alto High School had seen many examples of youth needing more fun in their lives. The more that could be done to draw attention to the issue of space needs, the better. As properties like the Elks Club came on the market, people needed to think about a complex. Adult advocates for athletic centers and recreational needs were needed. Other cities were finding ways of building new parkland and creating land use for recreation purposes. The responsible adult community needed to become aware of the need to pick up some sites and find benefactors to help with recreational needs. The more alternatives there were, the better. The Palo Alto High School campus formerly had 20 acres of field space, which was being covered with portables, etc. Although the economy was not amenable to land purchases, the City did have a source of funding in the development impact fees, which covered community recreation facilities and parklands that would begin to accumulate. There were people in town who would be willing to help with youth activity fields, including the people who put together the field study for the leagues, etc.

Chairperson Burch asked how Gunn High School was involved.

Youth Council Member Lee said the group was comprised of half Palo Alto High School students and half from Gunn High School students. The teen advisory board was primarily from Gunn High School.

Chairperson Burch agreed with the suggestion to include a list of all of the youth participants to show representation from all of the schools.

Ms. Calvert said an addendum to Youth Master Plan document to insert Youth Council names would be included.

Youth Council Member Way said three teen organizations were involved in the PAYC including the Teen Advisory Board, which handled more of the teen activities, and the Junior Advisory Board, which was comprised of middle school students. An attempt was made to include a full range of teens from different schools, ages, and backgrounds.

Chairperson Burch asked whether the PAYC wanted to ask the P&S Committee anything or make a comment.

Youth Council Member Lee found it interesting that the P&S Committee would mention the need for more space. Advertising events was one way to increase attendance at some of the places because if people stopped attending, the activities would cease.

Chairperson Burch said all three of his grandchildren were different. He had been in the advertising and marketing business and understood how impossible it was to be all things to all people. Some youth would never be reached with the program. A determination needed to be made about who exactly the target audience was and what that group wanted. Another target audience could then be found. Some youth loved dances and some would not.

Youth Council Member Way said when the Council approved the request for the space; a survey was conducted of teens from different schools in the district. An overwhelming majority indicated a preference for more programs as opposed to the space. A small minority really liked the teen center and used it every day. The PAYC went with what it thought was right at the time, which seemed to have been the right decision. When doing more work with the YMP, more surveys would be taken of teens because surveys were important factor. There was no way anyone could know without actually taking surveys about what the youth wanted.

Chairperson Burch said although the Council was very interested in the PAYC at the current time, things went in cycles and there were times when the youth was forgotten. Not only did the Council need to find ways to involve the youth, but also the youth needed to push on the Council. Council and the youth needed to work together. It was particularly important for the youth to be present when there was an agenda item involving the youth.

Council Member Lytle agreed. A formal relationship between the Youth Council and the City Council was important but was impossible when the meetings were held on the same evening.

Council Member Ojakian agreed. However, if the Youth Council meetings could not be changed from Monday nights, a Special Meeting could be created.

Council Member Lytle suggested youth internship programs be created by which youth could work with Council Members on issues. She had personally worked with youth who helped her track information, facilitate meetings for outreach processes, etc. It put her in touch with youth issues and helped her see on a regular basis where youth came into the picture.

Youth Council Member Elizabeth Falcon said there were many opportunities for youth and many projects. She thought the youth's main focus should be to work with organizations already providing opportunities, consolidating, and making sure there was collaboration between the organizations. Another section was working with the City on issues separate from simply creating programs. Many teens complained that the media image in the City was not good for teens and when teens went into stores, they were harassed. The PAYC thought meeting with City Council or the Chamber of Commerce might be helpful. More communications would also be helpful because of the many concerns expressed by teens.

Council Member Ojakian said any time an activity was being presented; the best way to get people involved was word of mouth. A significant part of business was obtained through word of mouth; therefore, information about some of the activities should to be passed along by the youth itself.

Chairperson Burch had never seen a copy of the Campanile or a copy of Fairday delivered to the Council. The youth needed to make itself known by delivering such materials to the Council and the Chambers and the *Palo Alto Weekly*.

MOTION: Council Member Ojakian moved, seconded by Lytle, that the Policy and Services Committee recommend to the City Council acceptance of the Youth Master Plan (YMP) report, including a commitment to provide adequate

staff support for planning and implementing the goals; opportunities for youth to meet with City Council members and commissions regularly; youth development programs which are regularly evaluated for their effectiveness; and opportunities for addressing emerging and existing teen needs. Further, to: 1) ensure or reinforce that funding from the Downtown garage was forthcoming for the youth; 2) consider opportunities for youth involvement in various committees and community groups; 3) schedule regular annual meetings with City Council; 4) annually update and review the Youth Master Plan; 5) provide some measurements by which success of the document could be realized.

Mr. Thiltgen said the discussion had sparked some ideas for further youth involvement and internships that would be further explored.

Chairperson Burch asked how soon the video would be completed.

Council Member Lytle asked about the ten top activities.

Ms. Falcon said the top activities included the Peninsula Creamery, Disco Bowling at the Palo Alto Bowl, the Stanford Theater, Pizza my Heart, Spankenberg Theater at Gunn, Break Dancing, Skate Bowl at Greer Park, Band Nights, and Happy Donuts. There were approximately eight activities.

Chairperson Burch expressed an interest in seeing the video when it was completed.

MOTION PASSED 3-0, Kleinberg absent.

Mr. Thiltgen asked whether the same presentation should be made to the full Council.

Chairperson Burch said yes.

Parks and Recreation Commissioner Richard Beckwith was part of the steering committee for the organization. He was pleased with the outcome. The youth had done an excellent job. The presentation to the PARC was unanimously approved.

Council Member Lytle suggested the PAYC present the video to the Palo Alto Rotary and other service clubs.

3. Proposed Policy Regarding Requests for Continuances of Public Hearings
Assistant to the City Manager Chris Mogensen said the Council asked staff to return with a proposal to the Policy and Services (P&S) Committee to consider how requests for continuances were handled.

Director of Planning and Community Development Steve Emslie said when the item came forth as a Council request; he mentioned to the City Manager's Office that he had gone through a similar process in another community where the city had no policy regarding continuances. There was some perceived abuse of the use of requests for continuances, particularly for applications. He, therefore, was given the assignment. The proposal was a draft. The basic premise was that things happened unexpectedly and should be acknowledged but also should be handled even-handedly when there were two sides to an issue. Many times when dealing with a land use question with two distinct decisions, each position should be given one inadvertent continuance, after which the item moved forward unless there were extreme circumstances in the position and view of the appropriate viewing body. The policy worked in Saratoga, where the policy was put into place and was essentially the same language being recommended for Palo Alto.

Council Member Lytle thought the informal policy in Palo Alto was the same. The reason it came up recently was because the informal policy was not honored.

Council Member Ojakian thought there were two or three situations, but the one that jumped out was when an applicant asked for a delay on a hearing for the project because it turned out one or two Council Members were not going to be present.

Council Member Lytle could not recall, but remembered the Council was not being fair about something. The proposed policy reflected what the City generally observed. Continuances sometimes occurred because of a staff error, which would not count. Then there were extraordinary circumstances, especially with the applicant. It was difficult to proceed on a land use application with someone's property if, for example, there was a death in the family, etc.

Chairperson Burch asked how the City slipped the previous evening.

Mr. Emslie said the individual process was a two-step process. Staff was instructed to inform all parties and not assume everyone knew. There was no requirement because it had not gotten to the public hearing. It was the meeting before the public hearing.

MOTION: Council Member Ojakian moved, seconded by Lytle, that the Policy and Services Committee accept the proposed policy in the staff report (CMR: 163:03) regarding requests for continuances of development application hearings and recommend its adoption by the City Council.

MOTION PASSED: 3-0, Kleinberg absent.

Chairperson Burch thought the item could go on the Consent Calendar.

4. Discussion for Future Meeting Schedules and Agendas

Assistant to the City Manager Chris Mogensen said the next Policy and Services Committee meeting would be held on March 11, 2003. Three items were scheduled for the meeting: 1) Audit of the Code Enforcement; 2) Historic Resources Board Recommendation regarding a Moratorium on the Death Penalty; and 3) Anti-Discrimination Ordinance on Weight and Physical Appearance as a Protected Group.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

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