

MINUTES FOR MEETING OF January 26, 2011

Opening

The School/City Committee held a special meeting in the District Conference Room A at 25 Churchill Ave, Palo Alto. The meeting was called to order at 8:20 a.m.

* All handouts can be viewed in the Business Services Office 25 Churchill Ave.

Palo Alto Unified School District Representatives Present:

Dana Tom, Board Member, Committee Chair
 Cathy Mak, CBO
 Bob Golton, CBO and Bond Program Manager
 Amy Drolette, Student Services Coordinator

City of Palo Alto Representatives Present:

Nancy Shepherd, Council Member
 Yiaway Yeh, Council Member
 Steve Emslie, Deputy City Manager
 Rob De Geus, Community Services Division Manager of Recreation
 Curtis Williams, Director of Planning & Community Environment
 Mike Edman, Acting City Auditor
 Ian Hagerman, Senior Performance Auditor

Oral Communications

John Elman said he wanted to bring the Arastradero, Maybell Ave., George Ave., Georgia, and Donald area (during 7:20 a.m. – 8:20 a.m.) to the Committee's attention. He said there are cars dodging the students, students on bikes dodging the cars, skateboarders, it is bumper to bumper from Foothill to El Camino and from El Camino to Foothill. Elman said the Terman kids are going the opposite direction, kind of a cross current. He said the solution must reside in this Liaison Committee because it involves the City and the District. He said eight or ten people, primarily one person got behind this nonsense to change Arastradero and in the process all the side streets are impacted. He said it is nonsense that is being created by this experiment and it has got to be changed.

Student Mental Health:

Maria Elena Meneza said hearing from parents and students some of students do not have a first period so not all the students received the information. She is a track watcher and on that day her kids told her that there was a death at the tracks so she tried to get some clarification. There was confusion about there being two deaths at the tracks (one student from Gunn and one from Paly). She went to Paly and walked in during the ceremony for the student and it was like walking into a funeral. She feels that they were sensationalizing and it seemed like too much. She would also like to know if it is a weekend, how fast can Dr. Skelly get the information; does he have access, and if he is not available who can receive the information because those minutes are very important. She said they need to improve the fencing by the tracks and the bushes need to be cut down.

Approval of Minutes – December 8, 2010

MOTION: Tom moved to approve the minutes from the December 8, 2010, meeting. Shepherd seconded. Minutes were approved 4-0.

Review of Recent City Council/PAUSD Board Meetings

City: Shepherd said the City had their retreat. They are maintaining their five priorities for 2011 and they have a list of action items that staff is starting to organize, one being Project Safety Net. Yeh said the upcoming Council meeting will focus on the Stanford development.

PAUSD: Klausner said the Board policy on open enrollment was approved at the last meeting and it has to do with the new state laws about schools that are failing, students at those schools can

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transfer across district lines for a higher performing school but there are a set of complicated regulations at the state level so they were making sure they were adapting them and had them in their goals. Our State Senator, Joe Simitian helped to clarify that if any incoming students have an impact on the school district, including if your facilities are being fully utilized, then the district may reject any application for intradistrict transfer. She is hoping there is complete clarity on that and it will not become an issue for PAUSD. Tom said it is parent choice to apply to any school in the State if all the requirements are met.

City of Palo Alto Zoning

Emslie said this has come up at this Committee regarding the zoning and the potential sale of the property at 525 San Antonio; it has been a long standing private preschool/kindergarten school. The owner placed the property on the market and the property is in contract by a housing developer. Emslie said the question came up on the zoning and he relied on his memory and said it was a zone PF (public facilities) which all private and public schools, churches, and parks are. That was incorrect, it is zone R1. He said the question came up how zoning might affect value? The property's potential use is factored into the market value of the property, but it is not the only determining factor. Owners will often assume that they can build something different than the zoning will allow and the potential to change the zoning is also factored into the use. Emslie said this is something the City struggles with in their land use plan, especially in the Palo Alto community where it is changing from one use to another; commercial to residential is a common dynamic the City has seen. The City has taken steps to prevent or at least limit conversions from happening because they are concerned about reduction in their income producing zoning and moving that to residential since it is a burden on the City and the District. Shepherd said she has been hearing questions from the community, do we have enough public facility zones, what are the community's needs, what can they stop or block now as opposed to allowing the randomness of the individuals request process and allow the City and District to manage their own interest. She said this might be a good year for the Committee to understand zoning, understand where there are remaining PF zones that are not fully utilized. Tom asked if Shepherd was suggesting an overview of what PF zoning exist today across the City? Shepherd said that would be helpful. Klausner said they have a Property Committee Study Session scheduled for March 8th in the morning to look at an overview of their enrollment picture, their enrollment demographic projections, and their current facilities capacity and to take that time to look into zoning and what it looks like and what can they attempt to work with in terms of assumptions. Williams said he could provide the Committee with a map of all the PF properties and an overview of what that zoning district allows and doesn't allow. Tom said he suggest putting this back on a future agenda to review PF zoning and discuss instances where PF zoning has been converted to something else or what it takes for another zone type to convert to PF. Klausner said she would like some history to better understand this issue of up zoning; how often does the City do that and when does it happen? She said just a general history because to some extent it is relevant to the District since they are always trying to predict their enrollment growth. She said also the overall planning and comprehensive plan process so at what point in time are critical decisions made on zoning or planning decisions, key dates that they should be aware of. Emslie said they would be happy to address that.

Update on Teen Mental Health and Trackwatch

De Gues said January was a very difficult month; they had two teen suicides so they had a crisis response and a Project Safety Net (PSN) meeting last week. Drolette said the night of the death by suicide of the Paly student, January 13, PAUSD immediately activated their crisis response. On January 14 the I.D. of the individual had not been released by the authorities due to confidentiality laws. Dr. Skelly verified the information with the PA police late Thursday; they immediately convened their district and site teams; Skelly and Davis notified administrators by e-mail; throughout the day Secondary Administrator, Debra Lindo check in with site administrators. She said the student was a student at Paly and Gunn. Phil Winston and Katya Villalobos sent out a message to staff by e-mail and an emergency staff meeting that was convened on the morning of January 14; students were notified first period by teachers. Prior to Friday, Drolette and Holly Wade, Special Education Director ensured that there were support services at both high schools; school psychologists were dispersed to the two sites, KARA counseling, and ACS. They wanted to make sure they had enough support services for students and staff. She said Skelly prepared a letter to parents by e-mail. He also

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reached out to the local media. Drolette said throughout the day they processed referrals at each site for students identified as at risk, friends of, or those who may have a difficult time with the grieving process; there was 55 students at Gunn and 70 at Paly. There were some students that were not on campus so support staff made it a priority to contact the parents of those students. They are also keeping a close watch on those staff members that are close to the students. Drolette said at the conclusion of the day both staffs did a last minute check in given the three day weekend. They are looking at their priorities for this year and looking at community peer counseling, how do they empower students to support one another. PAUSD has an MOU with PSN to do gatekeeper training for staff, but the next question is how do they do gatekeeper training site prevention for students so they have that as a resource on how to support a friend. Secondary staff will be trained by the end of February. Drolette said the other thing they struggle with is the social network. How do they provide information to students so there isn't non-confirmed information that causes a higher level of anxiety? She said some districts and universities have a social site such as Facebook where information is posted so that is another thing they are looking at possibly doing. She said support services were split; they had some in the counseling area and they also designated a few counselors, school psychologists, and KARA to that area. De Geus said it is really difficult and what they learned this last year is students need to express themselves and grieve and so they surrounded them with the support. Shepherd said some parents knew only because their kids would tell them. Is there a way they can make that a part of the PSN protocol so they can get that message out to parents? Drolette said absolutely, she has had that conversation with Skelly and Cabinet will have a reassessment of the protocol. Yeh asked if there is a base of students that are in a good position and what are the thoughts about moving forward? Drolette said there is an organization called "Sources of Strength" and they have been in communication with Gunn especially the Rock group, they would be the ideal group to begin the student to student peer counseling, but for the actual student gatekeeper training, the youth forum would also be an ideal group to pilot the training. They have identified that this is a priority and they would like to roll it out this next academic year. Yeh asked what the goals would be on moving forward on some kind of initiative of understanding the social network? Drolette said the objective would not just be for crisis response, it would be multipurpose. There is a lot of detail that has to be addressed before this becomes a reliable resource for the students to go to. De Geus said they are working with their PA Teen Council and the Teen Advisory Board on this because it is really challenging. Shepherd said they struggled with this last year and they do have a protocol so the District may want to take a look at the protocol because there was a lot of research done and they do get news out that way. Klausner asked if the summer camp counselors that had training were adults or students? De Geus said they were adults. Klausner said the Rock group had some peer counseling so how does that relate to the additional training they might get? Drolette said the Rock group is a small group of students and QPR training is intended to reach all students. Shepherd was does QPR stand for? Drolette said it is Question, Persuade, Refer. She said the idea is to reach all students.

Report on Parade

Degeus said the parade was one of the best events he has been of part of; there was great collaboration with staff, the City, and the District. He would like to thank Cash, Records Supervisor with the City who took the lead on this and worked over the winter break, but there were many others. It was a memorable experience for kids and just celebrating and demonstrated that youth is important. Tom said it was a wonderful event and last night at the Board they had a lovely letter and DVD of the event. De Geus said it is really an outstanding community. Klausner asked is there a way that they can keep it ongoing between the City and the District and think of other opportunities to do some work/celebrations? Emslie said he believes that was the charm of the event that it was scheduled quickly and there was a sense of urgency in getting it done; it creates some kind of a momentum. Shepherd heard positive feedback from kids at both high schools. She said it's not that they don't have their eye on trying to continue those celebrations it is just finding those moments.

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City of Palo Alto Service Efforts and Accomplishments (SEA) Report

Mike Edman, Acting City of Palo Alto Auditor and Ian Hagerman, Senior Performance Auditor presented the City of Palo Alto Service Efforts and Accomplishments (SEA) Report. Hagerman said the purpose of the SEA report is to provide information about City governments. They have been doing this for nine years. Their report provides information on all City departments: spending levels, staffing levels, workload output, five year historical comparisons, comparison to surrounding jurisdictions, residents' survey, policy questions, and they benchmark those to about 500 jurisdictions to see where they stand. Hagerman said the SEA report has an executive summary, a management discussion, and analysis that will be required by all jurisdictions next year. They asked the City Manager to provide information on what happened last year, what were some of the successes of the City and some of the challenges looking forward. There is brief background section that provides demographic information on the City; the first chapters contain staffing, key resident perceptions, five Council priorities for the last year and this year; chapters 2-9 are department chapters; the last chapter is administrative and strategic support services. The first appendix is the national citizens' survey results from the national research center and they also have a benchmark report that includes all the benchmarks discussed. They issue two reports in conjunction with the SEA report, one is a geographic and comparisons report where they break down City results by four zip codes and included 2009-10 data. This is the eighth year they do a National Citizens' Survey; it contains a lot historical data and is sent out late August, early September. This year they sent out 1800 surveys; they have about a 36% response rate which is pretty good. He said of the 90 benchmarks, Palo Alto is much above in 55 of those. Edman walked the Committee through a few slides of the quality of life survey results which included: how Palo Alto compares to other jurisdictions, composite scores for 2009 and 2010, results by zip code: 94301, 94503, 94506, community characteristics, quality of new development, resident behaviors, use of Palo Alto Library, community services, city parks, recreation programs or classes, recreation centers or facilities, services to seniors, and services to youth. Edman said the scores have increased from the previous year in Palo Alto is a place to live, Palo Alto is a place to raise children; scores are much above the benchmark. The residents overall feel good about the government services and also feel strongly about the value of the taxes they pay to Palo Alto. One last area they looked into was the community's interest if the City were to pursue revenue sources for specific projects and the support was 85% said they would somewhat support or strongly support. Hagerman said the general fund expenses have increased 15% over 5 years. The per capita cost for residents is about \$1,645 dollars per resident, which is an increase of 3% from last year. Staffing levels have been pretty much unchanged. The report also includes the citizens' perception on the five Council priorities and the citizens' centric report which includes the City's organization, progress for the fiscal year, expenditure information, and the City's economic outlook. The complete SEA report is available on the City's website. Shepherd said if the District would like to include a question in this report they may contact the City Auditor.

Future Meetings and Agendas

The Committee agreed to change the meetings to the fourth Thursday of the month; upcoming meeting dates: February 24, March 24, April 28, May 26, and June 23. They will come up with a schedule for the fall at the June meeting. Agenda items for the February 24 meeting are: Teen Mental Health, Update on Stanford Hospital Project, PAUSD Demographic Report, and Agenda Items for 2011. The March agenda will include traffic.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:49 a.m.