

**SCHOOL/CITY LIAISON COMMITTEE
PALO ALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
CITY OF PALO ALTO**

DATE: February 14, 2013

MINUTES FOR MEETING OF February 14, 2013

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 8:30 a.m.

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

Palo Alto Unified School District Representatives:

Melissa Baten Caswell, Board Member, Committee Chair

Heidi Emberling, Board Member

Cathy Mak, Chief Business Officer

City of Palo Alto Representatives:

Gail Price, Council Member

Liz Kniss, Council Member

Pamela Antil, Assistant City Manager

Approval of Minutes –
December 20, 2012

MOTION: Caswell moved to approve the minutes from the December 20, 2013, meeting. Seconded.
Minutes were approved 4-0.

Review of Recent City
Council/PAUSD Board
Meetings

City Council: Price said the City Council retreat was in early February; there were three focus points: the future of downtown at California Avenue, technology and the Connected City, and infrastructure planning strategy and funding. The City anticipates, but they are still deliberating on having a bond measure. Caswell encourages the City to maintain the District informed on any potential bond measure plans. Price said some of these items, in particular the Connected City are potential Committee agenda items. They have two new Council members, Liz Kniss and Mark Berman. There is also ongoing engagement in Project Safety Net. There are also major projects as it relates to housing, traffic circulation, and Mitchell Park which continues to be a major focus. There has been a lot of work underway due to the correction of some construction issues but they anticipate it opening in the fall. Gail serves as a liaison to the Mitchell Park Library Advisory Group. Caswell suggested Mitchell Park as a future agenda item.

District: Emberling said the District received an anonymous donation for a new state of the art gym at Paly. Caswell suggested taking a tour of new District facilities to those interested; recent projects include the two classroom buildings at Gunn. Both Paly and Gunn are getting new classroom buildings, the athletic fields have also been updated at both high schools. Kniss asked what use would the public have on these new facilities? Caswell suggested placing this as a future agenda to return with information and discuss.

Emberling said they had a staff report presentation on the Palo Alto Reality Check survey and the California Healthy Kids survey, and the Sources of Strengths survey. They also spoke briefly about the Office of Civil Rights issue; in particular bullying and generating a comprehensive program and staff training. Brenda Carillo is the District liaison with Project Safety Net and will be presenting a bullying policy at the next Board meeting. Caswell said there is an agreement with the Office of Civil Rights that has steps the District needs to follow, not only follow, but check in with staff to ensure they are being followed. Gail said she would like a copy of the agreement. Mak will email the link the group. Caswell said the District will be refreshing their Strategic Plan. As part of that they do focus groups and interviews that will then roll into the content of the survey that will be sent to all parents, students, teachers, and other staff. The result of that survey will indicate what the Strategic Plan needs to focus on.

Emberling said the District adopted a resolution to support the gun buyback event that will be held in East Palo Alto on February 23. Emberling said they have setup the summer schools, middle school

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District/City Budget Updates

summer school will be at Gunn and the high school summer school will be at Paly. Emberling said they also signed a resolution in support of the Jerry Hill and others State Constitutional Amendment. Caswell said the District will be selling \$70 million in bonds which should last a little more than a year.

District budget: Mak said the financial picture has improved for the current year. They will have a little extra money to do some program additions.

Kniss asked what the annual budget was last year? Mak said about \$160 million. Caswell suggested Mak send the most recent budget update to the group.

Kniss asked where is the extra money coming from? Mak said every year they need to adopt a budget by July 1 so since then, the passing of Prop 30 alleviated some worries, reducing state cuts and property tax growth went up to a little over 5%. Based on the December report there is \$4 million in surplus. Caswell said even though they have \$4 million in surplus, that doesn't put the District back whole since \$10 million was cut out of the budget over the last five years. As a community funded District they receive very little money from the State; most of their money is coming from property tax, parcel tax, and PiE. Also, some categoricals have been bolted together and they still have some mandates they have to do. The behavioral mental health responsibility has been transferred to the school district and is not fully funded. Kniss asked if this item could be on a future agenda. Price asked where she could find a quick overview of the District's budget? Mak will send the link to the budget book. Mak said another area is technology; they have purchased a lot of new devices and implemented new programs.

Mak said they recently solicited input from stakeholders, PTA, PiE, their two unions, and principals and came up with a recommendation that will probably go to the Board in March. The common theme was lower class sizes, more teachers, more support for teachers, and professional development.

Kniss asked about how much is spent on personnel? Mak said about 83%.

Caswell said for next year's budget, the Governor is proposing that educational funding be more equitable saying that poverty kids need more money than Palo Alto or Piedmont kids. There are a lot of problems with this proposal. Emberling said the program is called LCFF, Local Funding Control Formula; everybody receives a base grant and poverty districts get extra.

City budget: Antil said Council is really taking a look at retirement and health care funding. They are trying to make changes. Lalo Perez, Director of Administrative Services will have a better update next month of where they are at budget to date. Updates from finance and human resources to Council show that even with the changes they made with the second tier in retirement and changes the Governor's office put through back in January, it's really for future employees so they still have the liability for present employees and those that have retired. They talked to employees about adapting a cafeteria plan for health insurance and making changes that will have more of an effect to the employees they have now. Their unions are really fighting against it. They are still in the process of trying to make changes that will provide some reduction in the cost. This year, each employee received a statement of not just the cash value of their salary, but also a full statement of the entire cost the City invests on their behalf for health, dental insurance, and retirement. They did receive some feedback from union and non-union with questions as to why this was sent out and why it was being shown to their union members. Antil said Perez can provide more detail on this next month.

Mak said there is a funding shortage for the State retirement plans. PERS has the ability to adjust their rate every year but STERS needs legislature to make the change. STERS released a statement with recommended options and they know this will have a potential impact on the District's budget. Price said it would be good to have a future discussion on the common challenges of Medicare and

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healthcare and it would be interesting to know what other districts and cities are doing.

Antil said they are also trying to stay in touch with the legislator in terms of trying to make some changes. They have folks participating in the League of Cities and the National League of Cities. They have Council members involved at the State level and they feel they have some traction to make some suggested changes. Kniss asked for health and retirements benefits to be placed on a future agenda.

City Relationships with Foreign Cities

Tom Fehrenbach, City Economic Development Manager is the liaison to City Council and the program. Fehrenbach said they have six sister cities in Palo Alto and various programs that they do with them. They have also been approached by other cities interested in certain aspects of Palo Alto, mostly innovation driven and economic development, but also energy, sustainability programs and community engagement.

The area of interest for the City is the Yong Poo District of Shanghai in China, mainly because of the relationship they have with the Bay Area Council who really sponsored and secured that relationship. At the December meeting, they were directed to explore a three year relationship with Young Poo with a cultural basis, but also with some components to the relationship that would be measurable exchanges of value and benefit. They were also directed to come back the first half of the year with an overall strategy for international relations as well as some metrics that define what a successful relationship looks like with their current sister cities and any future ones. They are in the process of developing that strategy and would like the District to be a part of that discussion along with other community partners. Vice Mayor Shepherd has taken the lead on the City side. The Bay Area Council a business sponsored, public advocacy organization who also has a foundation and is really focused on partnering with government, philanthropy, business to make sure the bay area continues to be a vital and competitive place. They also have a close tie with Hillary Clinton's 100,000 Strong initiative, where they have 100,000 U.S. students travel to China for opportunities to learn the language, meet with companies, etc. Dr. Skelly and Board Member Tom connected them to the Instructional Supervisor for Foreign Language, Kevin Duffy at Paly and he helped put together an informational program and invite parents with children in the Mandarin Immersion program. They held their meeting a week ago, 30 parents attended, 20 parents signed up to help develop a student internship program with the City's support. It is conceptual right now but they are beginning to flush out what the partnerships would look like; companies like VMware, Finnegan might be involved. This has been a direct outcome of the youth forums that took place. Next steps would include working with the Parents' Steering Committee, Bay Area Council, Yong Poo District, as well as interested companies. They are also keeping Stanford updated on activities from both the youth program and Chinese trade interests of the Bay Area Council. They are also exploring a Smart Cities Conference with Yong Poo where they would share best practices in different areas and would like the District to also be a part of. The conference is tentatively scheduled for September in China.

Caswell asked if this will be more of an exchange program? Fehrenbach said it will most likely be more of an exchange program where they have a day or a couple of days of training of what it's like to do business in China. Caswell suggested looking into Castalleja's program since they have a program in place that is done in Shanghai. Caswell will connect Fehrenbach to the person managing this program at Castilleja.

Oral Communications

Community member, Trish Malvey would like the Committee to include sustainability on a future agenda. She has been involved with the Sustainable Schools Committee for a year. She attended their Green Team Conference where they had detailed recommendations. She would like the Committee to have an overview of the State requirements for recyclable and compostable efforts. Since the City is planning to hire a sustainability person, she would like that person to come to the School City Committee to share sustainability efforts.

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2013 School City Agendas

- District Budget w/Per Pupil Funding Model
- Public Use of All School Facilities
- District Strategic Plan
- Mental Health Services
- City Budget Update
- Common Challenges on Medical Benefits
- Sustainability Practices and Programs
- Mitchell Park Library
- Tour of New District Facilities
- Introduction of City's Chief of Sustainability Officer

Future Meetings and
Agendas
Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 29, 2013 at 8:30 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.