



City/School Liaison Committee Regular Meeting Minutes



Regular Meeting
November 20, 2014

The City School Liaison Committee held a Regular Meeting at the Downtown Library, 270 Forest Avenue, Conference Room.

The meeting was called to order at 8:38 A.M.

Present: City of Palo Alto Representatives
Greg Schmid, Council Member
Khashayar Alaei, Senior Management Analyst

Palo Alto Unified School District Representatives
Heidi Emberling, Board Member
Dana Tom, Board Member
Cathy Mak, District Chief Business Officer

Absent: Liz Kniss

1. Oral Communications

None

2. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Board Member Emberling moved, seconded by Chair Schmid that the City School Liaison Committee approve the minutes of October 16, 2014 as presented.

MOTION PASSED: 3-0 Kniss absent

3. Review Recent City Council / PAUSD Board Meetings.

Heidi Emberling, Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD), School Board Member noted there was a goodbye celebration for Barbara Mitchell and Dana Tom who were leaving the School Board. Community members shared their experiences and the benefits of Mr. Tom and Ms. Mitchell. The PAUSD

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Board meeting of December 9, 2014 was the last meeting with Mr. Tom and Ms. Mitchell. The California School Board Conference was going to happen the next weekend; the new School Board Members were going to get a full day of orientation on governance. Recently, the School Board voted on the Cubberley lease agreement, which passed.

Chair Schmid wanted follow up on the demographic report.

Cathy Mak, Palo Alto Unified School District, District Chief Business Officer replied that the demographers report was going to be presented at the next School Board meeting on December 9, 2014.

Chair Schmid confirmed that it was going to be available online.

Ms. Emberling replied yes, for the December 9, 2014 meeting.

Chair Schmid was reading through the old report and wanted a wider context.

Ms. Emberling reported that the School Board discussed Student Achievement Testing (SAT), American College Testing (ACT) results, and the Alumni Survey. She noted that PAUSD schools were in the 75th percentile statewide. The School District wanted students to know how well they were doing.

Dana Tom, Palo Alto Unified School District, School Board Member remarked that California and the Nation had almost identical SAT performance levels.

Ms. Emberling noted that the Alumni Survey indicated that students felt prepared for college but wanted more preparation in technical writing and in science lab report writing; these were skills that were emphasized more in the Common Core State standards. There was going to be a big shift as Common Core was more fully integrated throughout the pre-kindergarten through 12th grade system.

Chair Schmid recalled that the most dramatic report he saw when serving on the School Board was grade level reading capability.

Ms. Emberling noted that the School Board was going to be looking at, with regard to the new Minority Achievement and Talent Development Task Force (MATDTF), racial discrepancy in conjunction with how many Advanced

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Placement (AP) classes a student took and whether students were scoring as high as other ethnic groups. The MATDTF was now staffed and the group was going to start meeting in December, 2014; they were going to meet every other Tuesday for the year.

Chair Schmid noted that the Council approved the Cubberley agreement. This was a five year agreement that gave PAUSD time to assess their needs, as well as give the current users time to assess their needs. Capital expenditures were avoided on the Cubberley site for a long time, but there was a fund now that allowed the City to upgrade in order to maintain the aging infrastructure. The Council was sensitive about Foothill College leaving because that took a lot out of the rent for the facility. Council discussed the Comprehensive Plan update; there were some discussions on zoning, parking, and traffic. The key piece of the Comprehensive Plan was: how fast did the City grow and what part of town had growth. Additionally, the Council passed the Housing Element and about half of the new sites identified were on the south end of El Camino Real. There was a footnote inserted that said: as Council went through the Comprehensive Plan, the identified housing sites may be adjusted to be in downtown and the California Avenue area so denser housing could be located where more services were available.

Mr. Tom confirmed the housing sites were going to be more toward the downtown area.

Ms. Emberling added the housing sites were going to be near transit hubs; smaller units were going to be built near services.

Mr. Tom noted that might lessen the predominate growth in the south end of town; the growth was more in the south and some in the west end of town.

Ms. Emberling questioned when the new Council Members were going to begin.

Chair Schmid answered that their first meeting was January 5, 2015. There was a debate about the new Council Members starting in December but the celebratory meeting at the beginning of the year was a good time to start the new year.

Ms. Emberling wanted to know if that was when the Committee Assignments changed.

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Chair Schmid said yes.

Ms. Emberling inquired whether one of the current City School Liaison Committee (Committee) members was going to stay on the Committee.

Chair Schmid explained that the swearing in took place at the first meeting, the Mayor was appointed at that meeting, and then the Mayor made the selection of Committee's.

Mr. Tom clarified whether the meeting on January 5, 2015 was going to be with the new Council Members and wanted to know what the last meeting was with the current Council.

Chair Schmid said the last meetings were: December 1st, 8th, and 15th, 2014.

Mr. Tom wanted to see the current Council Members off.

Chair Schmid clarified that at the first meeting in January, 2015 was a swearing in of the new Council, then the new Council Members joined the meeting at that time; the current Council continued through December 31, 2014. The first January meeting was meant to thank the leaving Council Members.

4. District/City Sustainability Programs: Presentation by City and District staff regarding Sustainability programs and services.

Sarah Moe, Management Specialist noted that she would be working with Gil Friend, Chief Sustainability Officer on finance for Climate Action implementation.

Rebecca Navarro, Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD), Energy Specialist discussed the goals of the Sustainability Program, how the program was doing, how they knew how they were doing, and where it was hoped the program would go after the final year. The program objective was to try to create sustainability around sustainability. For example, she questioned whether it was possible to have sustainability around a School District where people came and went and if they were still able to conserve across the three utility types; natural gas, electricity, and water. Everyone took ownership in conserving energy and this empowered people to reduce consumption; this was the primary goal. Staff wanted to create a learning

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environment that allowed people to continue on with excellence. There was nothing to be gained by taking anything away from students and staff's workspaces, but any time buildings were unoccupied was a good opportunity to look for ways to conserve energy. There were many opportunities to look for ways to use less energy. For example, PAUSD looked in areas where they were overusing, and as a result, they would spend less on utilities. In the first year, everyone decided there was a value around conserving energy. In the second year there was a lot of work done with Energy Star, an environmental protection agency, to help achieve that goal. The School District put all school sites through a building certification process. In the third and fourth years of the program, PAUSD made bigger changes that made a big savings; they shifted to running exterior lights just around staff schedules, specifically custodial schedules. There were a lot of changes made to cooling and heating equipment; they changed from a schedule to a staff demand driven model, which reduced natural gas by 40 percent, district wide. Staff hoped to participate in the benchmarking process for all the sites by 2015. The School District used software called Energy Cost Avoidance Program throughout the entire process; staff had a base year of 2010, which they used to compare their success. They looked at what had been reduced since 2011. The software made a similar type comparison, for example, it looked at differences in weather, occupancy, and mechanical equipment and how all of that was accounted for. Once staff had the data, they were able to look at how they were conserving, compared to when they started this process; savings meant the difference between expected energy use, multiplied by current energy costs and actual energy costs. She looked at the most recent 12 month consumption data for the City of Palo Alto and the Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) and the Stanford water utility bills; her data included up through the beginning of this current school year. Looking at the utility bills from two years ago, there was a totally different distribution. For example, the natural gas consumption used to be pretty level with the electricity in terms of what was being used, but now it was less than a quarter of what was being consumed. Regarding water utilities, there were a lot of things that were in place to manage the drought condition; completely eliminating irrigation for the athletic fields was not realistic though.

Dana Tom, Palo Alto Unified School District, School Board Member inquired whether the breakdown included both savings and the difference in price increases between the different utilities.

Ms. Navarro remarked that right now, she was just discussing raw billing data.

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Mr. Tom inquired about when the data was compared with the past, if electricity rates went up more than gas rates, because electricity would be a larger slice of the pie chart.

Ms. Navarro said yes.

Gil Friend, Chief Sustainability Officer noted that Ms. Navarro was indicating a big reduction in natural gas, but he questioned how much of that was a change in rates versus a reduction of natural gas use. He wanted to know how that was done.

Ms. Navarro indicated that when the reports were written around savings, it was an apples to apples comparison; they were always looking at the rate increases and normalizing them out so a fair comparison could be done with the past. The reduction came mostly from switching the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system to a schedule of 7:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. to an "on demand" model. That meant staff set the HVAC to pre-heat or pre-cool, whichever applicable to the classrooms. Then at 9:30 A.M. the thermostat could be changed by the staff, depending on what the weather was like. Allowing the staff to access the thermostat for occupancy patterns and weather changes was what staff did to generate the reduction.

Chair Schmid noted there was a major change in the City utilities 18 months ago because the City used to program their use of natural gas to a three to four year level pace, which showed little change in the consumer billfold. The City realized they were paying about 10 percent for purchasing gas 3 to 18 months ahead of time; now the City purchased on a month by month basis. This led to a variation on prices, but the long term average was 10 percent lower than what it was.

Ms. Navarro stated that the savings, since this program started was \$1,259,570 or 14 percent. She noted that it was thanks to the people at the sites because they were generating the savings.

Mr. Friend noted that was about 5 percent per year, which was an impressive number; the City was saving 2 to 3 percent per year.

Ms. Navarro relayed that it was hard to capture water data, since the City and the schools had a partnership with regard to irrigation and maintenance. The schools had only a few irrigation meters, and the rest were domestic irrigation; there were some cases where the City was making the decision

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about how much water to put in the fields. She felt cautious about including that in her data.

Mr. Tom inquired whether some of the expected growth was connected to enrollment growth.

Ms. Navarro said yes and added that technology was becoming more and more important, which led to plugging in more devices.

Mr. Tom wanted to clarify that was the main driver of the expected increase: enrollment growth and more classrooms.

Khashayar Alaei, Senior Management Analyst added that it was not stagnant.

Ms. Navarro relayed that it was possible to see how much electricity and natural gas was saved, or was avoided in consumption. This savings were equal to removing 446 cars from the freeway for a year or the benefit from growing 55,000 trees for ten years. She noted that 3 solid years of rain was needed to undo the damage of the drought. Although it was raining now, she was concerned that people might gain the mindset that they did not have to conserve water; drought conservation measures needed to continue for another three years for people to be back in the safe zone. Her and her staff were working on how to best utilize the Proposition 39 funds, the authorization of school bonds. Staff and the California Conservation Corp (CCC) were able to figure out which projects were the best use of those funds after auditing all the sites.

Heidi Emberling, Palo Alto Unified School District, School Board Member clarified that CCC was California Conservation Corp.

Ms. Navarro answered yes and said the CCC included Proposition 39 free statewide auditing service. She noted that unoccupied buildings were a good time for saving; she planned on inspecting the buildings to look for ways to save energy. A goal of hers was to look for ways to keep the program fresh; she suggested involving students. When students modeled behavior, staff was very receptive and they felt especially obligated to make the same effort. She began working with high school students to educate them on the program.

Ms. Emberling noted that there were Green Teams at all the elementary schools.

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Ms. Navarro relayed that the Green Teams spent a lot of their time on waste sorting.

Mr. Friend clarified that these were student Green Teams.

Ms. Emberling replied yes and said they had a teacher sponsor.

Ms. Navarro explained that most of the sites had them.

Sarah Moe, Management Specialist inquired whether information was sent home with the students.

Ms. Emberling was not sure but said students brought information about reducing, reusing, and recycling.

Mr. Tom thought it was interesting that students learned about conservation; he thought they brought that information home. He suggested doing a data analysis and looking at a home savings in the district versus the rest of the population to see if the education was coming home.

Chair Schmid thought that was a good point because students encouraged people to do better.

Mr. Tom thought it was important to show that it made a difference.

Ms. Navarro relayed that there was a group of students at Palo Alto High School that took on an energy conservation project; they made videos, and shared the videos with the staff. This group of students felt they were carrying the behaviors home and sharing them with their friends, which had a big ripple effect.

Chair Schmid felt that home savings ideas would pay off by getting sustainability information into the school curriculum.

Mr. Tom said that broadened the impact.

Ms. Emberling said her second grader learned about turning off lights after she left a room, and now she turns off all lights at home.

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Mr. Friend remarked that these lessons all dealt with science, mathematics, and civic curriculum.

Ms. Navarro noted that students were still learning their habits, not resisting change yet.

Mr. Tom inquired about the amount of construction over the last few years and wondered how Ms. Navarro's program related to new construction.

Ms. Navarro replied construction was a noble reason to waste energy. There was a lot of gratuitous energy at the construction sites because it was a process that needed to move quickly.

Mr. Friend inquired about the efficiency level.

Ms. Navarro noted that it was pretty high.

Mr. Friend asked if solar panels were being put on the roofs.

Cathy Mak, District Chief Business Officer said it was not being put up yet but they were talking about it. The PAUSD architect was working on a visibility study.

Mr. Friend noted that the Council had a goal of increasing solar from .7 percent to 4 percent.

Ms. Mak said they were looking into it.

Ms. Navarro needed to learn all the new construction buildings. There were many new systems that were energy efficient but operated differently from the current system.

Chair Schmid understood the City took responsibility for the field upkeep.

Ms. Mak explained that was correct and said PAUSD cut back at least 15 percent.

Chair Schmid clarified that the numbers given for water reflected City payments rather than school payments.

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Ms. Mak noted that the City and PAUSD shared half the cost.

Chair Schmid remarked that the key point was that it was a cooperative venture.

Mr. Alae added that it included the middle schools.

Ms. Mak said yes, but not the high schools.

Chair Schmid noted that during the last election campaign there were many people passing out information about asthma in the schools. He inquired whether that was associated with the HVAC savings.

Ms. Navarro thought the standard still existed for the room to be ventilated but the main concern was during occupancy. Situations where there was asthma or allergies was a good time to use mechanical ventilation; passive ventilation was safe for most people during occupied times.

Chair Schmid felt some of the greatest energy saving came from getting students to and from school and noted the number of parents that walked their students to and from school; that savings was substantial and probably did not show up in the presentation numbers.

Ms. Emberling noted that the choice programs encouraged more driving.

Mr. Tom noticed that any choice program school had a lot more traffic.

Ms. Emberling recalled a survey that was being done about walking versus riding.

Chair Schmid suggested that PAUSD have that as part of their presentation and that they be aware of the savings.

Mr. Friend inquired about the percentage of students that drove versus walked or rode their bike.

Mr. Alae thought it was about 1/3 of people not using vehicles.

Mr. Tom remarked that other communities were astounded by amount of students that biked or walked.

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Ms. Moe noted that students were aware that riding or walking to school woke them up in the morning; this was tied to sustainability and quality of life.

Chair Schmid relayed that students going to school in the morning coincided with the morning commute, he wanted to make sure that it was safe for students to walk or ride their bikes. Regarding the City responsibility for the fields, one consequence was that fields were opened over the weekends; from a neighborhood perspective, that was less people getting in their cars because people were able to walk to park.

Ms. Emberling wanted to discuss whether the City Council planned on expanding the shuttle service as an effort toward limiting cars.

Mr. Alae recalled that was going to the Council in December, 2014.

Chair Schmid thought there was an awareness at the schools because about 1/3 of the shuttle users were students.

Mr. Friend noted that Copenhagen, Denmark had a goal of 75 percent bike commuting. Copenhagen streets had a dedicated bike lane with a small curb; on main streets there was a profound separation.

Ms. Emberling added there was a curb separation on Homer Avenue that she liked.

Mr. Friend noted that as Chief of Sustainability, he was trying to bring some strategy and focus to sustainability. There was a survey done across city agencies that showed there were at least 154 sustainability initiatives. He liked to ask people what they could do to improve the quality of life in Palo Alto, but also to have Palo Alto be an example. A goal was how to perform sustainability in a way that improved the quality of life, built prosperity, and caused resilience in the community. A question people asked: was sustainability done in a way that built biological health. The design commitment was to be better on every front. He discussed the combined greenhouse gas (GHG) emission for the City and the community and noted there was a noticeable drop since 2005 and a reduction of 34 percent since 1990; a major cause was the City's change to carbon neutral electricity. The data made it clear that 60 percent of the problem was related to transportation and 30 percent was as a result of natural gas. He brought attention to the City's Climate Action Plan, as the previous Climate Action Plan goals were accomplished. The Zero Waste programs were contributing

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to the reduction in that number. There was some amazing progress since 1990s, but Palo Alto was a long way away from the California goal of an 80 percent reduction in emissions by the year 2050. In the Climate Action Plan, Staff asked their consultants to look at three strategies: 1) to meet the Climate Action Plan goal; 2) to meet the goal by 2030 instead of 2050; and 3) the California Moon Shot, which was the goal of being climate neutral in 10 years or less. Asking the question was an innovation driver and Staff was able to see opportunities they had not looked at, had they been setting their goal to 2050. There was a Study Session scheduled with the City Council for December 8, 2014. As Staff looked at natural gas and transportation strategies, they were able to depict five to ten strategies that could bend the curve of the goal. Staff built a tool that helped them to see projections if certain changes were made, like bio-gas, fuel switching, or using electrical space heating. If the changes were adopted at a rate of 10 percent per year, Palo Alto might hit their goal by 2025. People had to be motivated to make the changes, to see why it was a benefit; changes had to be made easy for people. There were three domain actions, like the flow of resources, such as energy, water, and materials. Money, data, and people were a factor, and so was the system or the structures that people built, like buildings and roads, information systems, and social systems, which dealt with behaviors. The engineering was the easy part but human's changing their habits was the hard part. Some of the actions that were taken so far were things like the Bicycle Boulevard, and some of the things Staff was thinking of doing were implementing the Climate Neutral Utility, as opposed to Climate Neutral Electricity. He questioned whether it was possible to eliminate natural gas through fuel switching or eliminate the impacts of natural gas through off-sets of some kind; customers might volunteer to do off-sets of their gas consumption. The money that Palo Alto spent effected the procurement of the City, which also sent a signal to the market place. Presently there was a policy for Environmental Purchasing, Palo Alto offered a lot of green choices, but sometimes the choices took a lot of effort. He questioned whether it was possible to make the green choices the default, so they were easier to assess and would become the normal procedure. He proposed leading by example. There was a world class Green Building Ordinance that was coming to the Council in January, 2015; City buildings were not the best performers in the City, but City Staff should lead by example, not just by exhortation and regulation. If there was a good idea, it should be adopted. If changes were to be made economically, then changes should be made, and if it was not possible to make changes economically, then other people should not be expected to make those changes. He noted that 60 percent of Palo Alto's carbon footprint was related to transforming and transportation. He suggested a car free City and questioned whether there was a pilot program to learn from. He questioned whether it was possible to not ban cars, but create situations where people would not want

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to use their cars, not making it convenient anymore. In a cyclical economy, which was another term for zero waste, accomplishing the goals in a way that was open, transparent, and streamlined was done by having on-time, real-time available data for people to see, people were able to track their performance. His experience in sustainability strategies was always: how do people change. One of the most powerful tools was showing people how they were doing in relation to their goals and building that data into the energy software. A lot of the conversations he had in Palo Alto were about energy and climate, and what was critically important was water; he suggested thinking about changes that might have a low likelihood but may have a very high impact. Thinking about biological resources, fertility, the tree canopy, and how they contributed to the City and the common wealth were good. He wanted to discuss sustainability in a way that did not damage availability and needs for future generations and wanted to know what that would look like against policy, and how it could be tested. He was trying to develop some simple criteria for people to adopt these changes so any person would be able to make the change and would be able to say it was the right thing. Some questions he had for the Committee dealt with solar power. Staff was going to be looking for funding and financing opportunities. He suggested that the City and the School District move together with regard to transportation, having a green City Fleet Program. He questioned how to channel the School District with the rest of the community and how this could be used to engage the community in a more broad fashion. He talked about how zero waste and how it began with the things that people bought and how that determined the things that were generated. The City and the School District were able to learn from each other and to coordinate purchasing opportunities to get a more economic advantage. He said there was sustainability everywhere, not just in the school curriculum. For example, students were seeing the solar panels, which was a science lesson. He wanted to look more into the areas where the City and PAUSD could collaborate. A lot of these goals were not going to be solved just with Palo Alto; Menlo Park, Mountain View, and other surrounding cities needed to be involved.

Ms. Emberling wanted to hear about potential partnerships. For example, finding out how a person was doing in comparison with their neighbor.

Mr. Friend questioned whether that made a difference.

Ms. Emberling answered yes; people had a sense of competition.

Mr. Friend noted that research said that putting the data on the utility bill caused a 16 percent reduction.

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Ms. Navarro heard that just having the real-time information available caused a four to five percent reduction in use. When other people were used as a reference, the percentage went up.

Mr. Friend related this information to consumer disclosure information.

Ms. Emberling thought the information would be good to see in comparison against other schools, having the elementary schools competing in efficiency.

Mr. Friend relayed that it could be an intermural efficiency league.

Ms. Moe suggested getting the neighborhoods involved in competition as a tool for efficiency.

Mr. Friend worked with the City Zero Waste team to pull data from City departments; some work groups were at 90 percent efficiency, some were at 10 percent. This information was brought to the Executive Leadership Team and they all paid attention. It was important to discuss how people did better and what the learning process was.

Ms. Navarro thought that seeing the data caused a strong burst of emotion for people. The groups that had room for improvement wanted to know what the other team did to improve; this made them feel empowered.

Mr. Tom felt like the hardest thing for him to do as a personal consumer was to get the most for his money. He did not want to spend a lot of time for just a .1 percent savings. He questioned what the total environmental impact was.

Mr. Friend said the simple answer was to drive less if it was easier for people to get places by foot or bike, then by car.

Ms. Emberling saw a lot of private shuttle companies being used for the after school students. Some of the shuttles had applications for parents to see when their child was picked up and dropped off by the shuttle.

Mr. Friend recalled that some cities were able to order shuttles and have them routed via an application.

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Ms. Emberling explained that the after school activities had to provide transportation because that was often the limiting factor in taking an afterschool activity.

Chair Schmid relayed that under the 2007 Zero Waste goals there was a target of version technology that disappeared from the purview.

Mr. Friend mentioned that the goal was to be zero by the year 2021.

Chair Schmid did not see that as part of the presentation.

Mr. Friend explained that part of his problem was how to communicate the vast range of activity in a way that was compact and easy for people to grasp.

Chair Schmid thanked the School District and said there was a lot that the City and PAUSD could work together on.

Mr. Friend suggested having presentations more often, to advance the word on their work.

Ms. Emberling suggested having a one page executive summary, so that when her staff presented to the School Board, they would have some information to hand out, with key points.

Mr. Alae agreed and said Staff would work on that.

Chair Schmid agreed and suggested including the demography and finance information.

Mr. Alae said he would make an effort to let the School Board know when the Climate Action Plan came before the Council.

Ms. Emberling suggested that when Ms. Navarro presented to the School Board, she could have some slides on what the City was doing and how they could partner. When Mr. Friend presented to the Council, he could have some information on what the School District was doing.

Chair Schmid suggested the City and the School District have a little competition on who can do better.

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Ms. Emberling thought this would help with the big vision that was emphasized.

Future Meetings And Agendas

Khashayar Alae, Senior Management Analyst reminded the City School Liaison Committee (Committee) that their next meeting was going to be at Mitchell Park Library and Community Center.

Chair Schmid reiterated that the next Committee meeting was going to be on December 18, 2014.

Mr. Alae said they were going to discuss library collaboration and Teen Program collaboration and wondered if that was too much to discuss at the next meeting; he wanted to know if there was something specific the Committee wanted discuss.

Heidi Emberling, Palo Alto Unified School District, School Board Member said they will need to be a one-time interim School Board Member to come to next meeting.

Mr. Alae noted that Council Member Schmid and Vice Mayor Kniss made a quorum.

Dana Tom, Palo Alto Unified School District, School Board Member explained that one of the three might be out of town.

Mr. Alae relayed that the next meeting was going to be on the Community Center side of the building.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 A.M.