

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

DATE: April 23, 2015

MINUTES FOR MEETING OF April 23, 2015

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 8:04 a.m.

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

Palo Alto Unified School District Representatives:

Camille Townsend, Board Member, Committee Chair

Terry Godfrey, Board Member

Cathy Mak, Chief Business Officer

City of Palo Alto Representatives:

Pat Burt, Council Member

Tom DuBois, Council Member

Khashayar Alaei, Assistant City Manager

Approval of Minutes

The February 26, 2015 and April 2, 2015, minutes were approved.

Oral Communications

No oral communications.

Review of Recent City Council/PAUSD Board Meetings

City Update: Burt reported that at the Buena Vista hearings, Council's narrow purview was to determine if the closure plan met its legal obligations. Council voted to modify the recommendations of the judicial hearing officer and return it to the appraiser to come up with a methodology that included the financial value of public schools and public safety in Palo Alto. The next hearing will take place May 26 where they will presumably have a final vote. In parallel with this, there is an effort led by Supervisor Simitian to come up with public and non-profit funds to make a market based offer for the property.

Burt reported the City also had the opening of the Magical Bridge playground and it far exceeded their expectations; close to 1,000 people showed up, some from as far as Modesto with children who are disabled, for a full access playground. Burt encourages everyone to go there, it is a great playground. Townsend agreed and said that organizers are using this as a catalyst for other playgrounds in California and the U.S.

Townsend asked Keene what is "For The Love of Palo Alto"? Keene said it is a little of the overall concept of "Our Palo Alto" engagement piece of the outreach to connect the community members better. Peter Kageyama wrote a book *"For The Love of Cities"*. The City invited him to do a workshop with Council and a community workshop. It really focused on small things that people can do in their community to build social and emotional capital. De Geus stated he went to a couple of those workshops and they were really good. They reached out to Kageyama to put together a proposal for a workshop for teens and students that the City and District can do together. As soon as they receive the proposal he will share it with the District.

McGee asked who should Kappler-Hurley coordinate for the Mayfete Children's Parade. Keene answered she should work with De Gues but will also coordinate with Claudia Keith.

District Update: Godfrey attended the kick-off meeting for Healthy Cities. Some in attendance were Liz Kniss, Karen Holman, Lucille Packard, Leif Erickson, and Dr. Joshi. The meeting notes will come out soon. They talked about ways to think beyond exercise and good food and think of the important such as connectedness, inclusion, and community.

They had a tenure celebration for about 60 teachers on Tuesday night before the Board meeting.

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There were about 25 speakers at the Board meeting; about 20 were students, most of them were from Gunn. A lot of the theme was around student voice.

Godfrey stated the District's budget is done in iterations as the Governor revises the State budget and so as they receive new news on the District's budget, they make decisions based on that for next year. They also discussed the various bond construction projects.

DuBois mentioned the Gunn music program was down in southern California for five days and they took six or seven first places.

Keene said they have signed a Smart City agreement with the City of Hindenburg, Germany again this year. They have reached out to the City and asked if some students were interested in traveling to Germany for the music program. He believes they fund everything except for the airfare. McGee mentioned they sent the information over to their Music Director, Nancy Coffee. He will check in with her on the subject.

Discussion on Ongoing City-PAUSD Collaboration

McGee expressed his appreciation of the City's ongoing support. The support from the safety aspect is extraordinary; he has never seen relationships like this. The youth officers are incredible and the relationships they have with the students. For example, Officer Dewanza and Paly Principal Diorio visited every senior classroom. Dewanza works so closely with the parent education program so this is really at the top of his list of something incredibly special they have.

They also work together on Safe Routes to School. They are discussing plans for Churchill Avenue.

The art programs for the schools; they have spectra art teachers at the elementary schools. The work with the City really compliments this. He had the opportunity to attend the opening of the Youth Speak Out Exhibit and it was remarkable. Athletics at the middle schools is another great piece. The community wants more sports programs. Education is another important piece. The Junior Museum Outreach program receives such high marks when they survey students, parents, and teachers. There are also the afterschool and childcare programs.

There are few things they are really looking forward to working on together and one of them is Communities That Care. McGee said he first heard from them at the meeting of the Stanford public following. They had a superintendent from Maine talk about their program and they are bringing her back; he believes it will be May 7.

McGee said they have tag teamed well on the Caltrain situation. Keene and McGee have both met independently with Caltrain's Mark Simon.

McGee and Keene discussed Cubberley yesterday and they would like to start work on that pretty quickly.

McGee said the final area they continue to work well in together is the housing and enrollment. The District started an Enrollment Management Advisory Committee and they had their first meeting Monday night. The growth is one issue they need to deal with and new housing developments but also look at where the growth is. They have schools of disperse sizes, students are being overflowed, and they have a couple of really large middle schools. The committee is working on identifying where the issues are and come up with some solutions. They will be looking at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. These are all areas they rely upon the support of the City.

Godfrey asked if the City would be interested in receiving the District's press releases. DuBois said sure. The District will have Kappler-Hurley add them to the distribution list

Burt had a parent ask if the District were to do a third smaller targeted high school or this other school within a school concept, had the District considered moving the District office to Cubberley in the future to find the space for this.

McGee said the Committee discussed a lot of options including high school options but they did not specifically discuss 25 Churchill Avenue. He will bring this back to the Enrollment Management

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Advisory Committee.

Townsend asked if the new Chief Transportation Official had been hired? Keene answered, not yet.

Keene mentioned the Council was very interested in strengthening the role of the School City Liaison Committee this year. The District and the City are involved in so many things together and if they would formalize that a little bit more, it can open up opportunities for collaboration and problem solving.

Keene believes the relationship he and McGee are forging has been really positive. He said there is a tremendous range of things the City does in partnership or in support of education, youth or the district. He would be happy to send something to all that he has sketched out. There are things on the City currently does that they would be doing anyway but they need to acknowledge they do supplement education or recreation. De Geus can speak to this but they have 20 different initiatives just in education and recreation. In the area of education, recreation, social and human services, transportation and safety, adolescent services, Palo Alto child services, youth community services, art is used to enrich, childcare agreements and use of schools and the direct funding, transportation safety, bike safety programs, pedestrian safety education, Safe Routes to School program, aspects of the Palo Alto shuttle, school crossing guards, school resource officer, Palo Alto Fire Department Bike Rodeo, and safe schools/safe sites that they are currently exploring a mapping program with their Officer of Emergency Services. Other collaborations they do such as the new and projected housing development report, he believes they could strengthen their thinking about education and schools. The facilities agreement on maintenance, they will have to work closely with the District on the drought planning.

Keene and McGee have discussed how they can open their minds about resource sharing in a much bigger way. There is no reason to stay compartmentalized. Townsend said that hopefully throughout the rest of this year, they can get a more tangible feel of how their City and District work together.

Townsend asked DuBois in terms of this Committee, what he would like to see from this Committee. DuBois said he would like to see the Committee's role strengthen beyond information sharing and help move things forward.

DuBois said hopefully the State will come through and raise money for Buena Vista but if not, he would like to know if they could work with the schools to provide some intra-district transfer if they moved to Redwood City or somewhere close by. McGee said he would like that but where they will run into an issue is if they move to another revenue funded district; if they move to another basic aid school district, he does not see a problem. Redwood City is not a basic aid school district. There would have to be some intergovernmental agreement with every single one of those districts and that is really up to these other districts. Godfrey said if evictions take place and they are homeless, the district is obligated to provide. Burt said there is very little likelihood they will go to a basic aid school district and if they go to a generally funded district with a reasonable distance, there is still a great challenge to get intra-district transfer agreements and if they did get them, they would have significant transportation problems. One of the things that emerged at the hearing is if they moved, not to other affordable housing but to another trailer park, there is very little capacity in the area so there is a very good chance many of them will be going to greater distances. The reality is they do not stand a good chance of being able to accommodate these students to continue in the district past the first year. Townsend said the question of how the district can accommodate these students continues to come to them. The District has an obligation to give a clear answer and the fact that McGee has clearly researched this so that City Council knows what their rights and obligations are is helpful.

Burt said this points more toward criticality of trying to keep Buena Vista open. There are local and regional benefactors that are willing to help. Some of these benefactors are willing to help, if they are asked. The District leadership can help facilitate this. Townsend asked if he is referring to private or Silicon Valley Foundation. Burt answered it is individuals, non-profits, and foundations, all of them.

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The timeline is rapidly narrowing so they need to act. DuBois said the District should get in contact with Senator Simitian.

DuBois would like the Ventura agreement to be revisited. Right now, if the City does any major maintenance, it triggers some clause that the District can buy the building back so these childcare facilities are only getting very minor maintenance and they feel very constrained.

DuBois would also like to see the Cubberley planning started with community involvement. He would like to see a formal structure with parents, seniors, the art community, and neighbors as a working group and perhaps this committee could have an oversight.

DuBois encouraged the District to register for the City Summit scheduled for May 30.

Godfrey knows they are working on getting more capacity for middle school athletics and she asked about the status of those efforts? De Geus said they are in the process of gathering data, and will have something in about a year. Middle schools athletics is one of those programs that are highly impacted. They have a lot of students who want to participate. He does not know if the City is going to be able to solve that capacity problem. Godfrey said it sounded like it was more about finding a coach for an hour an half that is an issue. De Geus said yes, and facility space. Townsend asked what committee did Godfrey attend? Godfrey said it was City's master plan meeting. De Geus said he would like to discuss the issue further with the District.

Burt noted the discussion is about how the City is the agency administering middle school athletic programs and that is problematic on several levels. If this is a school program, under the state constitution, these have to be universally available without fees. The court rulings and mandates from legislature and the state superintendent have become clearer on this in the last one to two years. They need to reflect on the nature of the program and assure it is universally available without fees. They have scholarship programs but they do not guarantee that. There are a number of ways this has to be part of the consideration including transportation for Voluntary Transfer Program students that are not participating because of transportation and fees; in that case they are not providing universal access. Aside from that, the City has taken on the function of being the provider of middle school athletics and the District is the secondary participant on how they can help the City do a better job on this and believes that it is backwards and they need a serious discussion on how to resolve this problem. Townsend mentioned she has no problem as both a citizen of the City and the District who provides the program because frankly, most people do not care. Long before she came, the City has provided services to its young citizens, to her it does not matter but yes, it does matter that they are doing it legally and correctly. It is true they had to discontinue their summer school programs because they could not afford it since recent law recently states they cannot charge for summer school programs so it is only provided for those in need. The District does not have the funds to provide a lot of these programs. Townsend said the reality is, whether they say it is the City or the District, to their citizens, they do not care who has the money to do this, or which has done it effectively. What they try to do is look at ways to improve their services not only for their public school children but their private school children as well. Godfrey asked if this could be an agenda item on a future agenda. Keene said they should have an open mind into looking at what the best way is to do this.

Burt reported they recently expanded their shuttle program, and they really need to look at how the combination of public transportation from the City shuttle, County busses, and District busses all work together to adequately serve those who need them. Included within that is the Voluntary Transfer Program. He knows McGee has recently addressed this by expanding the District busses but what are the gaps and how can they fill them with some collaboration.

Burt stated the present Ventura agreement has led to the degradation of a facility that is of importance to both the City and District. It is a problem that is probably solvable.

Burt would also like to include in future discussions the loss of summer school programs.

The City and District have a lot of money and they can prioritize. They cannot do everything but can do what they choose. It would be helpful for this Committee to have these discussions.

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Townsend asked if there is a timeline to improve Cubberley. Keene answered they renewed the lease for five years that included the commitment to develop a master plan and they have a fund being developed.

Townsend asked if there are formal discussions with Caltrain. De Geus reported they had a formal meeting on March 13 with Caltrain leaders. The City spelled out a number of things the City would like Caltrain to help with that included removal of vegetation, fencing improvements, some innovative technology the City would like to pilot, media support and reporting on suicide clusters. The vegetation removal will begin next week. Townsend asked if there is a standing committee. Keene said the City is meeting on a weekly basis and can communicate with the District and the community as a whole. In addition, as it relates to Project Safety Net work, they may establish a monthly forum where they can align their communications response and the chance for community feedback. He does believe the City is the lead on the issue of the tracks access and they are very dedicated to moving as quickly as possible. He believes they have made about 80 percent progress identifying issues but still have some work to ensure deterrence. Burt said they have initiated the conversations with Caltrain and had some moderately positive meetings. After Keene sent a letter summarizing the areas they would like to see done, they received a response letter from Mark Simon from Caltrain that he would describe as very disappointing. Although there are certain measures they are willing to participate in that they pushed on, many others they got push back. He hoped they did not have to ramp up a political campaign to help support what staff is trying to do. He has been in contact with leaders of the HEARD Alliance that have offered to participate in this. Frankly, they were hopeful they would not need to apply more pressure but they will need to. They will want to start to pull in political support to push this forward. Townsend thanked the City for all their work. McGee said any muscle they could add to this effort, they are willing to do so.

Townsend asked if McGee and Keene meet as needed. Keene said they meet as needed and as available.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 14, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. at the District office.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 a.m.

Future Meetings and
Agendas
Adjournment