



City/School Liaison Committee

Regular Meeting

Draft Minutes



Regular Meeting
June 25, 2020

Chair Collins called the meeting to order at 8:39 A.M. virtually via Zoom.

Present: City of Palo Alto Representatives
Greg Tanaka, Council Member
Lydia Kou, Council Member
Monique Le Conge Ziesenhenné, Assistant City Manager, Staff Liaison

Palo Alto Unified School District Representatives
Jennifer DiBrienza, Board Member
Todd Collins, Board President (Chair)
Don Austin, Superintendent, Palo Alto Unified School District

Oral Communications

None.

Minutes Approval

2. Approval of the May 21, 2020 Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: Board Member DiBrienza moved, seconded by Council Member Kou to approve the minutes as presented.

MOTION PASSED: 3-0

3. Superintendent's Comments and City Manager's Comments.

Assistant City Manager, Monique Le Conge Ziesenhenné, spoke on the work related to Cubberley and expressed appreciation for the team effort between the City and PAUSD. She also provided details on Summer Streets Program, which began as a test on California Avenue a couple of weeks back. California Avenue was closed to support restaurants and retail establishments could offer outside dining and services. Starting Friday, June 26, University Avenue will be closed from Cowper to High Street to support in street dining and retail. The closures will be effective Fridays – Sunday. University Avenue will reopen on Sunday, June 28, at 10:00 p.m. Beginning on July 3, University Avenue closure will run from 10:00 a.m. 10:00 p.m.

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every day through August 2. The City is working with merchants and restaurants tourists to find ways of making services more accessible. She added there is a Palo Alto summer streets business support page that provides current information on street closures, sidewalk dining, private parking lot dining, retail expansion, etc.

The Council and the Clerk's Office are on their break. Nearly all of the recreational facilities are open for service and summer camps will begin July 6. Community members can sign up online. Summer camps will follow social distancing protocols and will be smaller groups. The City is also adding more part-time recreation staff to help with the summer camps.

Summer reading program at libraries is taking place virtually. All students and staff have access to resources and materials. This week library began accepting returns of items rented out since February. You can return these items at Rinconada or Mitchell Park Libraries. These two libraries will also begin curbside services by appointment. Check out the City Library website for details and protocols. The buildings are not open, but you can schedule an appointment to pick up items.

Council will be back in session beginning August 3.

Superintendent of Schools, Don Austin, reported on the reopening plan and Cubberley. The athletic training has been opened. They cannot do practices; however, they can do small cohort activities in groups of 12 at a time to maintain social distancing. Rules are strict for school-directed cohorts.

He also echoed Ms. Le Conge Ziesenhenné's statement on the team effort between the City and PAUSD to stay connected and navigate matters together.

Council Member Kou expressed appreciation for the collaboration between the City and PAUSD.

4. Review of Recent City Council and PAUSD Board Meetings.
 - a. PAUSD: Recent Board Agendas Recap
 - b. CITY: Recent Council Agendas Recap

Board Member, Jennifer DiBrienza, spoke of the reopening plans including best practices and protocol provided by the County. She also noted nationwide articles that show data on the effect of distance learning in the achievement gap as under-resourced students have struggled. She noted, the District is waiting on County guidance to move forward with the reopening plans. Additionally, PAUSD will meet again for negotiations with

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their collective bargaining units on Monday, June 29. She also noted the district's budget was approved.

Chair Collins added that the District's budget was not as impacted as the City's since the primary source of revenue is property tax. Though the budget included cuts, they were in the single-digit range of expense reduction. PAUSD is still essentially providing the same programs as last year, but in different ways. He added that there is uncertainty for the budget in the future as property tax revenue is uncertain as this point, and there is a chance it will decrease. Additionally, the 2nd biggest source of revenue for PAUSD is the state and there is certainty this will decrease. PAUSD is considering drawing from reserves in addition to making additional reduction for the 2021-22 budget.

Council Member Kou asked how the state affect PAUSD's budget drop and asked details on what indicates a drop in property taxes.

Chair Collins explained PAUSD gets roughly two-thirds of their revenue from local sources and about 15-18% from the state. The county assessor has provided data on meaningful property tax slow-down in the growth, possibly a reduction, but most likely a slow-down of the growth.

Board Member, Jennifer DiBrienza, added that traditionally when it's calculated how much property taxes PAUSD is getting, they usually get that amount whether it's collected or not. The County then goes on to collect that amount. Moving forward, the County is not sure they will still be able to do that.

Chair Collins added that PAUSD gets paid on a schedule by the County, which is PAUSD's major source of revenue as it has a big impact on cash flow. The County may go to a different method, used at other counties, which will pay the District as they collect property taxes. As a result, PAUSD uses an instrument that other districts around the state use that consists of a temporary borrowing. The District would borrow short-term money in other to make up any shortfalls in the receipts they get.

Council Member Tanaka shared a few details from the City's budget which actually projects an increase in the property taxes. He also inquired on the sources the District used to determine the decrease on property taxes that PAUSD's budget projects.

Chair Collins explained that since property tax revenue is the line share of the District's revenue, the District almost always puts in their own scenario forecast. He noted the District forecasts conservatively and they generally

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use the data they get from surveying and their own judgement. Additionally, they used this information to make their multi-year projection.

Council Member Tanaka commented that City and PAUSD should have similar projections and asked City staff if anyone can further speak about this subject.

Assistant City Manager, Monique Le Conge Ziesenhenne, suggested a debrief on both budgets at the next meeting and possibly invite the budget coordinators or directors to have a further discussion.

Council Member Kou noted that they have been seeing an upward trend on local real estate sales.

Council Member Tanaka further inquired on the price of real estate and whether or not prices are going up or staying the same.

Council Member Kou explained that it depends on how the property is initially priced. A fairly priced property would usually attract more buyers and could have multiple offers driving the price up, whereas a highly priced property would usually sit longer without much activity.

Council Member Kou reported that City staff attended the first reading of vaping ban and the majority voted in favor of the ban with a 4-3 vote. There will be a second reading to adopt the ban sometime in August according to the City Attorney. She also expressed her appreciation in the collaboration from both PAUSD and the City in regard to the Cubberley lease.

Council Member Tanaka also expressed his appreciation for the collaboration in regard to Cubberley.

Council Member Tanaka indicated City Staff proposed cuts to teen programs, the reduction of one School Resource Officer (SRO) position and requested Board Members' input.

5. COVID-19 Coordination Update.

Superintendent of Schools, Don Austin, spoke to the reopening of PAUSD. He noted the District is working to have an actual plan by Friday, July 3. He noted that the District did a *thoughtexchange* study to get specific data as well as a family survey to provide opportunities for our community to share their input and comments. Additionally, he noted that like many other districts, there is limited information from the Public Health Department as far as reopening guidelines. However, PAUSD is ultimately relying on the Santa Clara Public Health Department and are expecting to have guidelines

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no later than Monday, June 29. Once these guidelines are received, the District will determine to what degree students are back in classes and what trigger points could result in additional closures if students are back to school in the fall.

Assistant City Manager, Monique Le Conge Zieshenne, noted they are continuing to get guidelines from the Health Department to determine services they can add back. She also noted they are continuing to allow staff who are working remotely in a satisfactory manner in order to limit the potential for exposure and limit the opportunity for a second large wave.

Chair Collins spoke to the effort from staff to coordinate and working together to stay informed.

Council Member Kou added that the City has been meeting every week with the Palo Alto Stanford Citizen Court Council as well as other partners including Stanford, PAUSD, PAMF to stay informed. She pointed out that Mike Jacobs, Safety Manager for PAUSD, has been participating to ensure everyone is connected and adhering to the health guidelines.

6. Updates on Ongoing Matters.
 - a. Cubberley Update
 - b. Grade Separation (Rail Crossings) Update

Item 6a.

Superintendent of Schools, Don Austin, noted the Cubberley lease agreement has been signed and will be reaching out to Kristen O'Kane to take another walkthrough of the site along with other team members to better analyze the use of the space. Additionally, he noted the PAUSD Board approved money for improvements to get the A and B wing up to code to allow for students.

Council Member Kou asked about the M Building of Cubberley. She noted this building has uses for musical/costume changes for theater events and asked for the District to consider when music organizations ask to use certain rooms in the M Building to allow for costume changes.

Superintendent of Schools, Don Austin, confirmed that the facility is available for rental use and confirmed they are willing to work with the music organizations to make this work. These options will also be available in the District's facility rental program through *Facilitron*.

Council Member Kou expressed the importance of music organizations in the community and academically.

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Chair Collins added that the previously proposed Cubberley agreement included an ad hoc committee with members from both the District and the City to discuss the future of Cubberley and how the parties could work together on things like the City's Community Center Division. He noted the District appointed members to the ad hoc committee back in January in anticipation of the lease being signed; however, the City did not appoint members to the committee. Furthermore, he suggested to move forward with an ad hoc committee to have joint discussion on the future of an asset (Cubberley).

Council Member Kou asked the Assistant City Manager for clarification on the City's side regarding the ad hoc committee.

Assistant City Manager, Monique Le Conge Ziesenhenne, noted she will look into it as she did not recall anyone being appointed to the committee or the intention behind it.

Council Member Kou expressed her interest in the City appointing members to the ad hoc committee given the importance of having a dialogue with PAUSD regarding community matters.

Council Member Tanaka concurred.

Council Member Tanaka left meeting at 9:29 a.m.

Item 6b.

Council Member Kou spoke about Churchill continuing to being a matter of whether or not to close. They are trying to focus on the south end which is Charleston and E. Meadow though they are looking at other alternatives brought to their Executive Cabinet by community members. She noted the extensive community engagement on this matter. The City is exploring the alternatives' feasibility and impacts.

Assistant City Manager, Monique Le Conge Ziesenhenne, noted the website continues to be updated and there is opportunity to comment. She noted the public comments get conveyed to the council as part of their correspondence package.

Chair Collins noted his conversation with Nadia Nayak at a previous council meeting and shared that pedestrian and bikes considerations were not getting as much attention as car traffic issues. He noted how critical pedestrian and bike considerations for Safe Routes to School efforts and for the City managing various ways of transit. He emphasized how equally vital

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it is to have workable and thought-through pedestrian and bicycle transits as well as cars.

Council Member Kou mentioned the City has not heard from the Palo Alto bike and pedestrian committee. She noted this is a very important factor they are taking into consideration. Ms. Kou also inquired if it would be possible to utilize PTA for community outreach.

Chair Collins noted that PTA operates separate from the District, but they do have a communications network. He suggested the City reaches out to the PTA communications council to notify the community on this matter.

Council Member Kou requested Assistant City Manager follow up on reaching out to the PTA communications council.

Future Meetings and Agendas

The next meeting is scheduled to take place the 3rd Thursday of August.

Chair Collins proposed to roll over the same agenda.

Council Member Kou would like to add the North Ventura Development to the August agenda as this could potentially affect the school district.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 A.M.