



# City/School Liaison Committee Regular Meeting Minutes



Regular Meeting  
September 16, 2021

Chair Burt called the meeting to order on this date in virtual teleconference at 8:32 A.M.

Present: City of Palo Alto Representatives  
Pat Burt, Vice Mayor (Chair)  
Greg Tanaka, Council Member  
Chantal Gaines, Deputy City Manager, Staff Liaison

Palo Alto Unified School District Representatives  
Shounak Dharap, Board President  
Jennifer DiBrienza, Board Member  
Don Austin, Superintendent, Palo Alto Unified School District

Absent:

## Oral Communications

None

## Minutes Approval

### 2. Approval of Minutes From the August 19, 2021 Meeting.

Chair Burt announced that Board Member DiBrienza submitted a minor edit to the minutes.

**MOTION:** Board President Dharap moved, seconded by Board Member DiBrienza to approve the minutes as presented.

**MOTION PASSED:** 3-0

### 3. Updates.

- a. Superintendent's Comments and City Manager's Comments including COVID Updates

# SUMMARY MINUTES

## b. Review of Recent City Council Meetings and PAUSD Board Meetings

Board President Shounak reported that the 2021/2022 school year is moving along and there have been no COVID related issues that have affected the School District. COVID cases in the School District are very low and continue to decrease.

Deputy City Manager Chantal Gaines shared that Staff has received positive feedback from the community regarding the hours of operations for the libraries that are open. COVID testing continues to be available at City Hall on Wednesdays and at Mitchell Park on Tuesday.

Board President Shounak noted that the School Board have begun to hold in-person meetings. All in-person participants must show proof of vaccination. If they cannot show proof, they are able to attend virtually. At the last meeting, the School Board identified priority areas in the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) Promise guiding document. Among those priorities were mental health, wellness, and service to others.

Board Member DiBrienza appreciated that the School Board is discussing the PAUSD Promise document again.

Board President Shounak shared that the School District's Family Engagement Specialist work one on one with students and their families. At the last School Board meeting, a presentation was given about how that program impacted one specific student's trajectory during the pandemic.

Chair Burt disclosed that he was not aware of the Family Engagement Specialist program. He inquired if there is intention to do long term tracking of impacts to the degree that they can be compared to a baseline.

Board President Shounak indicated he did not know, but the desire is there, and it is a goal.

Chair Burt mentioned that City Council had intended to use a hybrid approach to public meetings, but that was rescinded due to the COVID Delta case spikes. The Council met and discussed the grade separations at East Meadow Drive and Charleston Road. The Council gave direction for the next steps and requested additional information in order to move to the next phase of the project. He encouraged the School District to participate in the discussions regarding the grade separation project because the project does impact how students get to and from school. He shared that the Santa Clara

# SUMMARY MINUTES

Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Sale Tax Measure from 2016 contained a large sum of money that is devoted to the eight grade crossings between the City of Sunnyvale and the City of Palo Alto. The distribution of those funds has been decided and the City will be receiving over \$400 million for its grade separation project. He acknowledged that the VTA funds will not fund all the grade separations, so the City is exploring other funding mechanisms. In a recent City Council meeting, the Council approve the reopening of University Avenue to automobiles starting October 15, 2021, but will keep the half block of Romana Street permanently closed. For California Avenue, the Council approve the continuation of the street closure to automobiles through June 2022. Staff will be exploring a short-term and long-term street design for California Avenue. Upcoming items that Council will be discussing are the transitional housing project that is sited to be located at the end of San Antonio Road; the Churchill Avenue grade crossing separation; and pursuing a bicycle and pedestrian bridge crossing or underpass in the vicinity of El Carmelo Avenue and Loma Verde Avenue. Council will also be receiving a presentation on the North Ventura Coordinated Area Plan (NVCAP). He asked if the School District has received any results regarding the school enrollment analysis.

Board President Shounak shared that he will present that information at the next meeting.

Board Member DiBrienza noted that enrollment numbers are down across the board, but that follows the state and country trends.

Council Member Tanaka noted that the Policy and Services Committee recommended to Council to explore ways to provide more tools to the City Attorney's Office for misdemeanor offenses.

## Future Meetings and Agendas

Deputy City Manager Chantal Gaines shared that the next City/School Liaison Committee meeting will be October 21, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 A.M.