



CITY OF  
**PALO  
ALTO**

# Stormwater Management Oversight Committee

## Minutes

Thursday, June 3, 2021  
1 pm to 3 pm  
Special Meeting

\*\*\*BY VIRTUAL TELECONFERENCE ONLY\*\*\*

<https://zoom.us/join> Meeting ID: 990 9847 5635 Phone: 1(669)9006833

Pursuant to the provisions of California Governor's Executive Order N-29-20, issued on March 17, 2020, to prevent the spread of Covid-19, this meeting will be held by virtual teleconference only, with no physical location.

*Agenda posted in accordance Government Code Section 54954.2(a) or 54956.*

Committee Members Present: Catherine Perman, Ron Owes, David Bower, Hal Mickelson, Dena Mossar, Marilyn Keller

Committee Members Absent: Bob Wenzlau

Staff Present:

Karin North, Joanna Tran, Pam Boyle Rodriguez, Michel Jeremias, Jamie Perez, Loretta Olmos

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Members of the public who wish to participate by computer or phone can find the instructions at the end of this agenda. To ensure participation in a particular item, we suggest calling in or connecting online 15 minutes before the item you wish to speak on.

Call to Order (5 min) 1:01pm

Oral Communications (5 min)

*Members of the public may speak to any item NOT on the agenda. A reasonable time restriction may be imposed at the discretion of the Committee Chair.*

None

Old Business (5 min)

1. Approval of Minutes from the April 1, 2021 and May 6, 2021 Stormwater Management Oversight Committee Meeting (5 min)

- a. Approval of the minutes moved by Commissioner Dena Mossar and seconded by Commissioner David Bower. No objections from other Committee members.

New Business (90 min)

1. Welcome new committee members and elect Chair and Vice Chair of the committee (5 min)
  - a. Catherine Perman – Joined this committee as a pandemic project after researching information on rebates for rain barrels, later found out about the Stormwater Management Oversight Committee. Background and training in earth science and engineering with a focus in software use. Moved to California to go to Stanford University, pivoted to Software, and retired a couple years ago. She would like to give back to community. Born and raised in New York City.
  - b. Dena Mossar – Served on Palo Alto City Council for ten years and Stormwater Management Oversight Committee for four years. Interested in committee after looking for funding for stormwater upgrades while on City Council.
  - c. David Bower – Seven-year resident of Palo Alto, worked as a residential building contractor and is now retired. Became interested in stormwater after the 1998 flood that flooded his basement. He applied for this position after being on the stormwater ballot committee.
  - d. Marilyn Keller – Background in biology and environmental science at Stanford. Interested in Committee and currently works with tree canopy group in the City. Marilyn was also previously on the Utilities Commission and wanted to find out how stormwater interacts with tree canopy and utilities.
  - e. Ron Owes – Background in civil and environmental engineering, went to University of Seattle and had a consulting firm, but is now retired. Work was related to surface water, design, and abatement. He has done a lot of environmental cleanups in the past. His partner has a house in Palo Alto.
  - f. Hal Mickelson – Lived in Southern California and is a Los Angeles native, came to this area in 1967 for college and stayed since.

Attorney by trade, corporate staff attorney for Hewlett Packard, labor and employment law. Has been retired for 7-8 years.

- g. Karin North – City of Palo Alto staff, acting Assistant Director for Public Works in the Environmental Services Division. Undergraduate and Master’s degrees in Environmental Science from UC Santa Barbara. Started working for Palo Alto in 2001 in the Public Works department.
- h. Election of Chair and Vice Chair – Dena Mossar nominated Hal Mickelson for Chairperson, Ron Owes seconded. David Bower nominated Dena Mossar for Vice Chair and Hal Mickelson seconded nomination. All in favor.

## 2. Staff Update on FY 22 Final Budget (12 min)

- a. Jamie Perez – Management Analyst for Public Works Environmental Services. Job duties include working on internal service operations for the team, budget development, and finance.
- b. Not much changed to the proposed budget since the last meeting. Office of Management and Budget presented to Finance Committee. Proposed operating and capital books are available. Accepted all proposals and adjustments, this will be going to City Council for adoption on June 21<sup>st</sup>.
- c. Recap of proposed budget: increased proposed recommendation of Stormwater Management Fee by 2% and general increases in the base program. No real changes in maintenance and Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) projects, adjustment to Capital budget for stormwater budget partnership with Caltrans for a trash capture device. Encouraged to partner with local municipalities and agreed to fund \$613,000 (added as own capital project in adopted budget in FY22). No changes to the staffing allocated to the stormwater funds.
- d. Capital budget – FY22 proposed \$6.175 capital improvement total. Recycled any funds not this year to be used next year.
- e. Rinconada project will have to wait until end of Fiscal year to see if it is moving forward next year, still waiting for Council approval.

### 3. Staff Update on Matadero Creek Oil Spill (10 min)

- a. Karin North – Communications Office provided an update on City website. Fire Department is the lead for this effort and was the first on the scene. Background: Diesel spill due to exploding generator at Veteran’s Affair campus entered into storm drain system. CA Fish and Wildlife, Valley Water and Fire Department are working together for cleanup. Webpage will be emailed to committee.

### 4. Staff Update on CIP Projects (10 min)

Michel Jeremias – been with CPA for 8 years as Senior Engineer overseeing storm drain group for 4 years. Oversees Rajeev Hada and Vicki Thai. Their group handles and constructs Capital Improvement Projects within the City (13 projects approved by Stormwater Ballot Measures) in the process of designing three new projects.

#### a. Update on current rehab projects:

- i. Rehab and replacement project – list of locations throughout the city of pipes that need replacement. Focus is to continue to maintain the pipes currently in the ground, not to increase capacity. Goal is to make sure the pipes are continuing to function.
- ii. Pipes were identified through Public Services group when cleaning and maintaining debris. Staff verified the integrity of the pipes at this time. 60 pipes were identified by different tiers and locations. A lot of the pipes are overlapping so the goal is to target each of the 60 pipes to be replaced or lined this year. Hopefully a contract will be awarded before next rainy season.
- iii. Image of pipe shown during meeting – roots broken through the pipes, Public Services group removed debris and cleaned the pipes. Trimming device installed further upstream that cuts any roots and branches. A camera goes in during cleanup so staff can see the quality of the pipes. Installed 1940-1980s. Rust affecting integrity of the pipes. Concrete pipes also have cracks.
- iv. Staff identified a couple locations with pipes that are so severe that need replacement. Staff will check if any projects align in the area. West Charleston Arastradero Project (cost savings –

Streets group is funding the street re-pavement and Stormwater group will fund the replacement of the pipe they were already going to work on).

- v. Improvement options – when a pipe is failing, a trenchless method is used where a fabric reinforcement material is inserted into a pipe with a material that adheres to the pipe. The soft material is placed into a broken pipe and expands to take the same shape as some of the pipes. This method is great for elliptical pipes. Converting from concrete pipes to HDP pipe. Faster than full replacement. Full replacement would need trench excavation (another option if rehab doesn't work).
- vi. Rusted pipes can be rehabbed if there are no cracks or root intrusion. The liner will extend the life of the pipe (at least 20-30 years depending on the quality of the pipe), the liner will increase the velocity of the pipe.

#### 5. Staff Update on Caltrans Trash Control Device (10 min)

Pamela Boyle Rodriguez – Stormwater Compliance Manager with Watershed Protection Group. Work responsibilities include making sure the City is compliant with the Regional Stormwater Quality requirements, including business and construction inspections, reducing trash, and trying to increase the amount of GSI at the City. Originally from the East Coast, but lived in the West Coast for the last 20 years. Received her undergraduate degree from North Carolina State in Natural Resource Management and Master's Degree in Environmental Science. Career has been focused in Watershed/Stormwater and has been with the City for ~5 years.

- a. Staff wanted to take advantage of a grant opportunity with Caltrans to form a project on Embarcadero Road but they did not offer enough funding at first, so staff delayed project due to tight budget. Caltrans is now Caltrans providing full funding, but the project must be done during this fiscal year.
- b. Background – must follow strict requirements by Regional Water Quality Control Board, every permittee in the region must reduce trash by 100% by 2025 (extended from 2022). Reduction percentage will be compared to 2014 levels of trash as baseline, or no adverse impact to receiving waters (San Francisco Bay). Currently City is at 80% trash reduction. Going from 80% to 100%

will be a large effort. This project will provide a trash reduction credit and get the City from 80% to 85% due to the drainage area that will be captured. Trash capture device must catch trash as small as 5mm.

- c. Estimate for design and installation, 2 devices will be installed for \$613k. Caltrans will fund the entire project and City will take lead. Budget includes replacing the grass and restoring the area to as it was before.
- d. Location – underground in line with the pipes by the Palo Alto Golf Course. The City’s drainage area is 189 acres, and the Caltrans right of the way is 21 acres, the project will drain into our storm drain system. Everything upstream will be captured in this device. Caltrans can receive credit for reducing trash for those 21 acres.
- e. Maintenance over 50 years (lifecycle of this device). Approximately \$272k to maintain from City and Caltrans will reimburse. This is covered by the fee for maintenance of the storm drain system.
- f. Staff will go to Council June 14<sup>th</sup> to enter an agreement with Caltrans. Agreement will need to be signed by Caltrans and this will need to be done by the end of June. We can release RFP in a couple of months. We will be contracting consulting firm to figure out best device to install. These devices are only made by a couple vendors. Designs should not take too long, construction by next summer and completed before next season in 2022.
- g. Dena Mossar, question: Will there be an annual analysis of effectiveness overtime? Will we ever know how we’re doing?
  - i. Pam Boyle Rodriguez, answer: We will be able to weigh the amount of trash and sediment over time and we can look at numbers yearly.
- h. Hal Mickelson, question: How well do we do in comparison to other cities?
  - i. Pam Boyle Rodriguez, answer: In Santa Clara County, there are some cities that are further ahead and some that are further behind. You get 100% credit with these projects, but others such as cleanups are only partial credits. San Jose has put in 8 of these devices and were able to receive a lot of

credit this way. But other cities that don't have the topographic area to install these devices need to do other things to reduce trash.

- i. Marilyn Keller, comment: overflowing trashcans in local parks seem like its causing litter in the area.
  - i. Karin North: Parks department increased trash pickups over the weekends, but we will reach out to those departments to increase pickups.
- j. Dena Mossar, comment: There are trash pickups with automatic arms that also cause trash in the street.
  - i. Karin North: Zero Waste is aware of this issue and is promoting bagging of the trash to prevent stray trash from flying.
  - ii. Pam Boyle Rodriguez: Staff can share a presentation on how we reduce trash and how we can receive credits for reducing trash in the future.

#### 6. Review Final Workplan (13 min)

- a. Loretta Olmos – Public Works Engineering Management Analyst, helps Michel Jeremias and Jamie Perez on Capital Improvement Program Projects.
- b. Hal Mickelson – highlighted updates made to workplan since last meeting and what was added in response to past inputs from committee members.
- c. Karin North – Workplan was submitted and will be approved by Council by the end of June, deadline was May. Workplan kept broad and highlighted goals and missions. This is the first workplan of the SWMOC.
- d. Hal Mickelson - Council uses these workplans as a management tool.

## 7. Staff Update on EPA Grant (10 min)

Pamela Boyle Rodriguez – Greening Parking Facilities for a Sustainable Community

- a. Staff processed documentation to receive a grant from EPA. Submitted application May 2020. Staff did not receive the grant at the time but was placed on a waiting list if more funding came later. EPA reached out earlier this year to let staff know more funding became available and staff received the grant.
- b. Grant submitted by Palo Alto (lead applicant), the City of Santa Clara, and San Francisco Estuary Institute (lead researcher for looking at water quality in SF Bay), Grassroots Ecology, and San Jose Conservation Corps, Stormwater Clean Water Program for Santa Clara Valley.
  - i. Goals of the project:
    1. Retrofit two parking lots with green infrastructure in both the cities of Santa Clara and Palo Alto.
    2. Create a guidebook for other cities that include the lessons learned from this project and how to do a similar project for their parking lots.
    3. How to provide maintenance and training for GSI, look at what is the best framework for City Palo Alto to create a workforce program for creating green jobs for local community and increase local experience in GSI.
    4. Community engagement and community education
  - ii. Project will monitor water quality entering the green infrastructure features and exiting it, before and after construction.
  - iii. Staff would like to involve the community in some way through education event. City of Santa Clara will be doing school education programs.



- iv. Budget for parking lot (we need to match by 50% with partners, 1.2 mil budget). Construction will be in a couple years 2023.
- c. Lot A Emerson/Lytton; Staff looked at multiple parking lots with grading/drainage and proximity to storm drain systems:
  - i. This location was chosen because troubling location to Watershed Protection Group - over 10 restaurants use trash bins here and spills in this location.
  - ii. Office of transportation would like to revamp this area. Trees need to be retrofitted. No amenities for bicycles, pedestrian friendly
- d. Ideas – proposed retrofit (preliminary)
  - i. GSI integration
  - ii. EV chargers, EV lighting
  - iii. Updates for community parking lot (like a Farmer’s Market)
  - iv. Water quality – main purpose
  - v. Sustainable parking lot
  - vi. Take concrete out and add landscaping, pervious pavement, and integrate more trees.
- e. Expensive project, Staff is not recommending making every parking lot like this, but this project was awarded a grant.
- f. Marilyn Keller, question: Trees slow down peak flows, filters the air, and makes nicer community space. Is there also any consideration for solar panels?
  - i. Pam Boyle Rodriguez, response: talked to Utility Department and that was another idea came up. Solar panels could be funded with the EPA grant if it fits in the budget.

## 8. Staff Update on Stormwater Rebate Program (10 min)

Joanna Tran – Program Assistant in the Watershed Protection Group and works on the Policy and Outreach team. Recently took over as the lead for the Stormwater Rebate Program as the lead from Isabel Zacharczuk. Bachelors Degree in Environmental Studies from San Jose State University and has been with the City for almost five years.

- a. Outreach campaign for the stormwater rebate program ran for the months of April and May. Campaign consisted of:
  - i. Residential and commercial Utility Bill Insert in partnership with the Utilities rebate program.
  - ii. Ads on Google, Facebook, Youtube and Palo Alto Online. These ads were in the form of images, gifs, and videos.
  - iii. Social media posts by City Managers Office on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor.
  - iv. Newsletters to Green Stormwater Infrastructure and Sustainability lists.
- b. New supporting webpage was created, "Building Resiliency to Drought with Stormwater Rebates".
- c. Two workshops in partnership with BAWSCA: Landscape Design (rain gardens) and Pervious Pavement. Both workshops were well-attended.

## 9. Staff Update on GSI Program (5 min)

Pamela Boyle Rodriguez

- a. A new Utility Bill Insert will be sent out in July with the topic of "healthy creeks"
- b. Staff plan to create new yard signs for people that participate in rebate program. Slogan along the lines of "I helped protect the Bay!"
- c. GSI Program: In the Works

- i. Dena Mossar and David Bower have been working on the SWMOC Funding Adhoc Group. Figuring out new opportunities to leverage stormwater fee for additional funding to maintain and construct GSI. Will come back to the group in Sept with update
- ii. Rinconada project is pending, funding is ready for GSI but it was intended to be part of the improvement projects with Rinconada. Not determined what to do if the project is put on hold and whether staff will move forward on including drainage on Hopkins and GSI features.
- d. GSI Implementation Project Kick-off this month. Finalizing contract with consultant, will be implementing new tools from GSI Plan
- e. Staff is researching how to make rain barrels more available to Palo Alto residents without having to go through regular rebate application process.

Committee Member Comments and Announcements (10 min)

- a. Hal Mickelson – thanked and recognized Karin North for working on a lot of projects for the SWMOC.
- b. David Bower – When will meetings be back in person?
  - a. Karin North – City staff is still remote. There is discussion about potentially bringing back staff in August, but still anticipating official word from City Manager. Council will go back end of August and is looking to do a combination of Zoom and in-person meetings.
- c. Karin North – Confirm with Michel Jeremias of potential field visit for next August meeting.
  - a. Michel Jeremias – Project has not gone out to bid yet and not sure when contract will start. Group can schedule a field visit to see rehab work that happens. Realistically, Sept/Oct timeframe is more ideal to see something worth watching after project starts moving along.

Tentative Agenda Items for Future Meetings and Review Action Items (5 min)

Adjournment 2:56pm

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT (ADA)

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facilities, services or programs or who would like information on the City's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, may contact (650) 329-2550 (Voice) 24 hours in advance.

### **Public Comment Instructions**

Members of the Public may provide public comments to teleconference meetings via email, teleconference, or by phone.

1. Written public comments may be submitted by email to the staff liaison, Karin North at [karin.north@cityofpalalto.org](mailto:karin.north@cityofpalalto.org).
2. Spoken public comments using a computer will be accepted through the teleconference meeting. To address the Council, click on the link below to access a Zoom-based meeting. Please read the following instructions carefully.
  - A. You may download the Zoom client or connect to the meeting in browser. If using your browser, make sure you are using a current, up-to-date browser: Chrome 30+, Firefox 27+, Microsoft Edge 12+, Safari 7+. Certain functionality may be disabled in older browsers including Internet Explorer.
  - B. You may be asked to enter an email address and name. We request that you identify yourself by name as this will be visible online and will be used to notify you that it is your turn to speak.
  - C. When you wish to speak on an Agenda Item, click on "raise hand." The Clerk will activate and unmute speakers in turn. Speakers will be notified shortly before they are called to speak. When called, please limit your remarks to the time limit allotted.
  - D. A timer will be shown on the computer to help keep track of your comments.
3. Spoken public comments using a smart phone will be accepted through the teleconference meeting. To address the Council, download the Zoom application onto your phone from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store and enter the Meeting ID below. Please follow the instructions B-E above.
4. Spoken public comments using a phone use the telephone number listed below. When you wish to speak on an agenda item hit \*9 on your phone so we know that you wish to speak. You will be asked to provide your first and last name before addressing the Council. You will be advised how long you have to speak. When called please limit your remarks to the agenda item and time limit allotted.

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