



CITY COUNCIL SUMMARY MINUTES

Special Meeting
April 24, 2023

The City Council of the City of Palo Alto met on this date in the Council Chambers and by virtual teleconference at 5:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Present In Person: Burt, Kou, Lauing, Lythcott-Haims, Stone, Tanaka, Veenker

Present Remotely: None

Absent: None

SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

1. Interview for Openings on the Human Relations Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission

There are two full-term vacancies (ending March 31, 2026) and two new terms (ending March 31, 2024) available on the Human Relations Commission (HRC). There are four vacancies (ending March 31, 2026) for the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC).

Council interviewed the HRC candidates.

Katie Causey is a lifelong Palo Alto resident. She volunteered in Palo Alto starting as a teenager. She had a degree focused on inclusive approaches to community work. She has worked for six years with our local nonprofits and faith-based organizations to help community members navigate our City's resources. The PRC expressed a need for further understanding of issues that renters face in Palo Alto. As a former staff member of the Palo Alto Renters Association (PARA), she helped community members facing eviction. Her work with PARA included outreach to buildings with mass evictions and helping community members find resources to pay rent, affordable housing waitlists, and finding translators and social workers. Her work as a staff member at First Presbyterian Church included helping people find community resources for homelessness, immigration and affordable housing.

Ms. Causey watched HRC meetings and reviewed the last two years' work plans. She gave presentations to the HRC on renters. She wanted to be on the HRC and help them support our most vulnerable community members. She was excited about the Housing Element. When the City implements the rent registry in early 2024, they could use the data to reach renters most

SUMMARY MINUTES

likely to be struggling. PARA tried different approaches to reach renters such as canvassing, targeted digital ads, calling, emailing, texting and holding events. She wanted to help the City increase renter outreach and education. She thought the HRC should have more opportunities to collaborate with other commissions. The HRC's work plan should align with Council's work plan and priorities as best as possible. Housing, rental issues and helping our unhoused population were the most urgent items on the HRC agenda.

Ms. Causey had a degree in Women Studies focused on working with communities at the local level. When finding common ground within tough issues, she found that it helped to listen to others and allow others to learn, be very empathetic and assume everyone had the best intent.

Ms. Causey was motivated to apply to the HRC because of the misunderstanding of Palo Alto renters. A common misconception was that many renters were here short term. Last year, every major eviction she handled was someone who lived in Palo Alto at least 12 years. She hoped to elevate more voices so the City could understand renters' perspectives.

Ms. Causey stated that a path to homeownership for first-time homebuyers in Palo Alto was critical. Mayor Kou remarked that we have to be realistic about Palo Alto's price point. The opportunity for homeownership should be explored, either in this community or countywide as there were more opportunities elsewhere.

In closing, Ms. Causey told Council that they were keeping our community together when they passed renter protections. The HRC needed the perspective of someone like her who had experience doing direct service work in Palo Alto for a nonprofit.

Miles Goodman had been a Palo Alto resident since he was 10 years old. He graduated from PAUSD, had an Associate Degree in Social Sciences from Foothill College and a Master's Degree in Psychology from the University of San Francisco. His mom and he often face insecurity as renters. He was interested in sharing his voice on the HRC because many of the issues he advocated for in the past four to six years were the same things Council was trying to accomplish, such as adolescent mental health.

Mr. Goodman wanted HRC to collaborate more with other commissions on issues brought before the Council. HRC should not act on independent goals. HRC was in a supportive role to Council. It would have been helpful to have an HRC commissioner weigh in on the debate about banning e-bikes on unpaved paths to speak about accessibility and people who used e-bikes to commute. Ownership statistics showed there were close to 500,000 people in the country who owned e-bikes and electric vehicles since 2020.

Mr. Goodman suggested that the HRC and the Arts Commission collaborate on adolescent mental health. He was in band during high school. He spoke to students at Gunn and with Council Member Burt about the role of music in our community. Many people turn to art as a

SUMMARY MINUTES

form of alternative healthcare. The HRC could use music and art to bring people together and create more opportunities for musicians to thrive.

Mr. Goodman wanted the HRC to do more outreach. At USF, he researched how people respond to activism and policy decisions at the local level. Understanding how people respond to the HRC's decisions and how they interpret our literature was the perspective he would bring.

Mr. Goodman stated he was a very detail-oriented person. Whether as a team lead at Philz or the research director at a student-led nonprofit, he tried to understand the big picture and look at all the details of how a decision affects everybody. He served as a Transfer Student Representative at USF. One of his main projects was creating a resolution to overhaul the outdated transfer articulation agreements, which led to a new credit evaluation system for prospective students as well as the creation of a new student pathways work group targeted to the most marginalized students.

Mr. Goodman met many people daily while working at Philz, which gave him the opportunity to learn about the community's strengths. He knew the importance of breaking down barriers and setting precedents. That was the vision he wanted to bring to the City. A position on the HRC was an opportunity to not just give back but also push forward.

Mary Kate Stimmmer thought one of the most complicated challenges this community faced was how to create inclusivity in a place where extreme wealth and privilege were the norm. She addressed that question in her work as a Social Scientist at Google. She led a team that ran over a million survey applications a year. Their Diversity Team gave her an award for helping to bring transparency into the needs of their black, Latinx and disabled employees and communicate those needs to leadership. Similarly, the HRC helps to bring those needs to the leadership of our City Council.

Ms. Stimmmer learned that inconsistencies and ambiguity in process often lead to bias. For the selection of police, she thought that leadership of community organizations could vet the criteria and provide feedback for creating a hiring rubric. It could be empowering to have that level of transparency, accountability and community input.

Ms. Stimmmer believed that everybody should have an equal voice and that was one of our founding principles as a city and as a democracy. She had a PhD from Berkeley. She leads a team called People Analytics. She thinks through problems using data, so she was excited about the renters' registry. For police reform, look at disparities in the compositions of the police and the population as well as the compositions of those committing crimes and those who were arrested. We could compare ourselves to national benchmarks and similar cities.

Ms. Stimmmer opined that our city had generational divides and other types of divides. She had seen the energy it brings when you close generational divides. When she was President of the

SUMMARY MINUTES

Palo Alto-Menlo Park Parents Association, she made a proposal to Avenidas for cross-programming.

Ms. Stimmmer watched all HRC meetings from the last six months. She noted a lot of tension in the discussion around renters' protection. She thought everyone on the Council and the HRC wanted to protect our renters but one of the most challenging things we needed to get right was how much protection created too much bureaucracy and as a result would dissuade people from wanting to become landlords.

Amy Hsieh had been a resident of Palo Alto for 17 years. She is a nonprofit fundraising professional. She serves as the Director of Institutional Partnerships at Glide Foundation, a social justice organization that served unhoused residents in the San Francisco Tenderloin. She was a graduate of the Palo Alto Citizens Police Academy and a 2018 Leadership Palo Alto fellow. She wanted to be on the HRC to create the Palo Alto she always wanted to live in. As a community advocate with a passion for promoting diversity and inclusion, she believed she had unique skills and experiences to contribute to the HRC's efforts to create a more equitable and just Palo Alto. She worked closely with communities of color, immigrants and low-income families. She understood their challenges and was committed to work toward addressing them. She had experience as a grants writer, grants manager and Director of Fundraising with 15 years' experience writing CDBG proposals for the Cities of San Jose, Daly City, San Mateo, Hayward and Fremont. Glide had partnerships with UCSF, San Francisco Community Health Center, local nonprofits, community-based organizations and the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. Glide worked closely with the San Francisco Department of Public Health and numerous City organizations. It was critical for the City of Palo Alto to collaborate with community-based organizations to develop the capacity to serve the community better, such as Avenidas Peninsula Healthcare Connection, LifeMoves and Momentum for Health.

Ms. Hsieh spoke of her father's experience. Many elderly people do not feel like they have a place in society or a sense of belonging. Despite having connections, families and friends, many elderly residents and people who live on the margins do not feel wanted, do not feel cared for, or do not see themselves as an integral part of this city. She felt that an important part of the HRC's efforts was to hold community conversations about the different ways we can draw people on the margins into the center of our city.

The HRC was collecting information via survey about Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI communities) on their thoughts and feelings about belonging and their relationship to the city. Ms. Hsieh would love to be on the task force reviewing the survey results and hold community conversations with residents of all ages on hate crimes and racial bias in our city. We need to invite the community into the conversation before we come up with solutions.

Ms. Hsieh used to work at Samaritan House in San Mateo. They had a homeless shelter near the San Francisco Airport. Glide was involved in San Francisco's housing crisis. She was familiar with

SUMMARY MINUTES

community organizations that served the homeless in Palo Alto, including Momentum for Health, Peninsula Healthcare Connection, LifeMoves, city shelters and Hotel de Zink. She thought that HSRAP could encourage deeper collaboration between these organizations and future partnerships with Stanford or other businesses or corporations to increase services for the homeless.

In closing, Ms. Hsieh believed that compassion, access, diversity and equality truly mattered for this work. She was excited about the opportunity to serve on the HRC and looked forward to working with and complementing the skills and dedication of our current and future HRC members.

Commissioner Daryl Savage is on the HRC and was a former Chair and Vice Chair. She was interested in a one-year term to continue her HRC work. Her experience would help with the transition of new commissioners. She found the increase in crime very disturbing, particularly hate crime and hate incidents. She was on the Emergency Funds Committee that reviewed emergency grant applications from nonprofits for pandemic-related issues. While on the HRC, she was most proud of the relationship she developed with the Palo Alto Police Department (PAPD). She was on the liaison committee speaking with command staff quarterly and relaying information to the HRC. A few weeks ago, the Chief and many of his command staff were on the street talking to people. She thought PAPD should be encouraged to do more of that. There would be less misunderstanding if more people knew police officers on a personal level.

The City recently adopted the TRUST program to assist community members with mental health issues. Council Member Burt thanked Commissioner Savage for introducing him to the Eugene CAHOOTS program.

Commissioner Savage opined that PAPD acted when hearing constructive criticism. PAPD recently revised the canine policy in response to some people in Palo Alto who felt it was too lenient, although they may need to do more work. People were upset about encryption, so PAPD changed it to the way the majority of people believed it should be.

As a former Palo Alto Weekly columnist and a resident of Palo Alto for over 30 years, Commissioner Savage believed she knew the community and the city well. She knew the importance of treating people fairly and equitably.

Council thanked all the HRC candidates for applying and for their service to the City. The Council then interviewed the PRC candidates.

Commissioner Amanda Brown was on the PRC but had not served a full term. She was proud to be involved in the CIP, the update to the sidewalk vendor policy, the policy update for pickleball and tennis court usage and Mitchell Park Dog Park improvements. There were many new PRC members and she was one of the longest-tenured commissioners. She was born and raised in Palo Alto. She loved all of Palo Alto's parks and did not have a favorite. She worked in local

SUMMARY MINUTES

government, so she understood staff's perspective. She worked as a consultant to local governments throughout California, so she learned best practices from other organizations and used them in her professional life as well as her commission work. She had two puppies and used the dog parks. She had a 3-month-old baby, so she felt motivated to make parks safe, long lasting and accessible for everybody so her son can have the same experience and fond memories as she did.

Commissioner Brown stated that she used to watch City meetings on television when she was little. Her grandfather served on the Portola Valley Town Council for more than 20 years. She often wore Municipal sweatshirts to PRC meetings because the brand's owner credited municipal basketball courts for helping him stay off the streets of Boston.

Commissioner Brown thought Palo Alto was unique in its breadth of different types of parks, including nature preserves, aquatics, smaller parks and bigger destination parks and we kept the quality of the parks high.

Commissioner Brown explained that she made decisions from a data perspective using quantitative, qualitative and policy information. For the Measure E site, she looked at State legislation related to SB 1383 and considered impacts on cities, their budgets and staffing. Public comment was her favorite part of watching any meeting but she thought it was important to look at items holistically.

Commissioner Brown remarked that pickleball was a spontaneous group that emerged in town and the PRC and staff provided resources and space to foster those relationships and build a sense of community. Keeping verbiage and the community in mind when we create programming spaces made it more inclusive. We referred to the gym as a wellness center because it was more inclusive of the various types of recreational programming and it does not alienate people who do not think they need a gym. Parks and Recreation Departments throughout the state were naming senior centers after a person to make it more approachable for people who want to avoid the stigma of identifying as a senior.

Commissioner Brown supported the development of strategic plans for Parks and Recreation Departments in the Cities of Pleasanton, Beverly Hills and Tracy. The City of Tracy made a multigenerational wellness center a few years ago and she pushed that information to the ad hoc. Beverly Hills and Pleasanton combined library and recreation services into one department. Pleasanton had Library and Recreation. Beverly Hills had Community Services. When PRC worked on Foothills outreach and education, they made that information available in the libraries. Using the Library Department for marketing and communication was helpful because libraries were throughout the community and served the age groups that use recreational services.

Bing Wei had been a Palo Alto resident for over 16 years. She had been involved with Neighbors Abroad since 2012. She had the support of many former mayors and City Council Members to

SUMMARY MINUTES

make Yangpu, Shanghai a Sister City of Palo Alto in 2018. Parks and Recreation activities create a vibrant and inclusive environment for all community members to thrive. This was an opportunity for the PRC's mission to align with the City's Key Pillars for 2023. Our parks can be vital in promoting community health and wellness, addressing climate change concerns and tackling affordable housing issues. She could bring her perspective on diversity, inclusivity and creativity to the PRC. She enjoyed our City's parks and appreciated their unique character and value. Her favorites were Foothills Park and its beautiful lake, Pearson-Arastradero Park and Scenic Trail. She spoke at Mitchell Park many times for Chinese New Year celebrations.

Ms. Wei was committed to fostering community engagement across generations. With our Asian community becoming the majority in Palo Alto, she thought it was critical to welcome new immigrants with open arms and help them integrate into our social fabric through our parks. Multigenerational families could practice tai chi, kung fu, ping-pong and yoga in an open door gym. We could transform our parks into open concert halls for youth performances. Offering hiking classes for new Asian immigrants to familiarize them with our local plants, birds, animals and terrain could be a wonderful opportunity for them to connect with nature and their new community. Certified Japanese bathing meditation teachers could offer classes in Foothills Park and other nature parks. Peer-to-peer mental health support groups could utilize the tranquility of nature. She wanted to collaborate with organizations such as Friends of Palo Alto Parks and Palo Alto Recreation Foundation to expand BOOST! programs in our *Enjoy!* Catalog. She would incorporate local greenspaces and parks into plans for new low-income housing. She planned to leverage those new programs to generate more donors and funding sources to enhance our Parks and Recreation offerings. With her background in corporate social responsibility and fostering public and private partnership, she was committed to finding innovative, collaborative and feasible solutions to meet the needs of our diverse community. She would advocate for initiatives promoting health, wellness, climate change, resiliency and affordable housing opportunities.

Ms. Wei suggested using streets for music concerts on California Avenue. We could incorporate existing parkland into an open gym, open concert hall, open Shakespeare theater or Peking Opera in the summer. Many parks could have a temporary stage to perform plays, dramas or musicals for families from all racial backgrounds. Bringing people together was one of her professional career strengths. Teach outside photography and painting in Gamble Garden. Seniors could teach our youth to look at nature and birds.

Nanci Howe lived in Palo Alto for over 30 years. Access, belonging, collaboration and consensus drove her thinking. The City opening Foothills Park was an example of access for people outside Palo Alto to use our facilities. Parks and Recreation services created a sense of belonging in Palo Alto. She was interested in the e-bike debate and suggested working more collaboratively with nearby communities to make the best decisions regionally. There were always needs, so we should seek balance through consensus, which she had experience with in her career.

SUMMARY MINUTES

Ms. Howe spent much of her career working with student organizations with a variety of views. She brought people together who were very passionate and opinionated and made them feel that their opinion mattered, such as with Palestine and Israel student groups as well as Democrats and Republicans, and helped to find common ground and understanding.

Ms. Howe spoke about the Baylands and the e-bike debate. She visited parks in Redwood City and Mountain View. Each city approached things differently and we could learn from each other. The City should collaborate with entities in Palo Alto on the new wellness center. There were government agencies, nonprofits and commercial activities that provided similar services, so bringing them together would be of value to the City.

Ms. Howe was involved in counting oak trees in Palo Alto. She wanted more of our public lands contributing to native species. There were opportunities to create pockets of wildness in an urban area through native species.

Ms. Howe thought it would be useful for the City, key stakeholders and nonprofits to share expertise and problem-solve on a regular basis. Nearby communities face some of the same challenges that Palo Alto faces. Palo Alto is a privileged community that should assist other communities to the extent possible, particularly East Palo Alto. Maybe having annual workshops could help in reaching goals in a more collaborative and collective way.

Ms. Howe was aware of the challenges of finding commonality but data and values should guide decisions. She had experience serving on the Y Board. She understood the role of a commissioner was not a staff person. Commissioners support and assist staff but do not run Parks and Recreation.

Yudy Deng moved to Palo Alto 4½ years ago from Bellevue, Washington. She served on the City of Bellevue Parks and Community Service Board for two years. Her two kids were in Ohlone Elementary School. They use park facilities daily. She was a certified referee and volunteered for her kids' soccer practice. She runs track and field every morning. Last year, David Moss from Friends of the Palo Alto Parks put up a poster to raise money. She collaborated with her running group, soccer club and family and together they raised \$10,000 for refurbishing the field. She was proud that *Palo Alto Weekly* wrote about her fundraising effort. The Cities of Bellevue and Palo Alto were very comparable. They have great open space plans and many high tech company headquarters. She felt that her experience and background could help the City of Palo Alto and the PRC.

Ms. Deng thought the most challenging issue the PRC faced was having enough land for our open space plan and the State mandate to add 6000 new housing units. Many of our parks and community centers were outdated and needed money for refurbishment. She served on many nonprofit organizations and could bring her fundraising experience to the PRC. She saw fundraising as part of a commissioner's role. The City had a limited budget. Issuing bonds takes a long time.

SUMMARY MINUTES

Ms. Deng stated that commissioners should be great listeners. She was present when the tennis and pickleball communities debated. She was a parent lead for the youth soccer club and they had brokering meetings. She worked closely with City staff and knew how complicated it was to solve conflicts. It took experience, the right attitude and communication. Our citizens were reasonable. We need to make very clear communication to them ahead of time.

Ms. Deng is a leader in the local Asian American community and felt responsible to represent her community and contribute. The PRC lacked Asian female faces and representatives from her generation, so she could communicate that missing perspective. She wanted to work closely with the Planning Commission and communicate with Council Members regularly. Although Vice Mayor Stone was the liaison, the PRC needed to hear different voices. Last week, Avenidas Center told her Palo Alto lacked senior activities.

Commissioner Jeff LaMere served on the Commission for approximately six years. He was a college basketball coach and now a basketball coach at Palo Alto High School. He recognized the importance of being part of a team, similar to being part of a community, and the mental health and wellbeing it provided. He saw the impact that nature had on students. Serving on the Commission and moving forward the goals of our City and community was one of the great honors and privileges of his life.

Commissioner LaMere noted sometimes students wanted to participate in an indoor activity but high school gyms and facilities were always in use. It was very difficult to balance our open spaces and recreation facilities. Some people wanted soccer fields, lacrosse fields, a bird sanctuary or open space. We have to listen to our constituency and see if we can have multiuse space to serve different populations. We tried to resolve the racket policy, which was very contentious. Opening Foothills Park to the community was one of the City's goals and it was the right thing to do. We have to weigh different goals and determine the best use but we have to be forward-looking, especially when deciding to develop open space or take away parkland. A big issue for our City is we do not have enough staff to work on a project. He understood patience, the need to do things the right way and following a project through until the end. He appreciated the work of Council and staff.

Laura Granka lived in New York, moved to San Francisco in 2004 and to Palo Alto in 2008. Over the years, she was a graduate student, renter, parent and homeowner. Open spaces, parks, community activities and the catalog of kid activities help to bring a sense of community to Palo Alto that made it a wonderful place to live. She wanted to give back and help shape the future of the PRC. Her favorite is Peers Park for the kids because they used to live across the street. She usually biked with the kids to parks on weekends.

Ms. Granka believed there needed to be a balance between preserving open space and adding recreation buildings. Multipurpose spaces facilitate people of any age group to meet and get together, especially in the winter. She wanted to encourage a sense of community.

SUMMARY MINUTES

Ms. Granka takes the bike path from Churchill Ave to Caltrain with her kids. She frequently noted Caltrain commuters pass them on their e-bikes at top speeds. Helping people realize there were limits along paths or trails was helpful even if we could not police it. We need to take into consideration those who use trails the most and what were the best conditions for them. We understand commuters need to go fast because they may be late for work, so maybe they can have a separate lane if there was available space.

Ms. Granka stated that empathy for everybody was critical. Interviewing town members and soliciting community feedback at public meetings were important in determining where we can make the most impact. She read the Parks Master Plan in December. It was important to update the bike and pedestrian routes. The PRC should have a weighted criteria matrix for prioritizing projects. As Palo Alto grows and people change, she wanted to help the City determine where to put resources and services.

Star Teachout has lived in Palo Alto for about 20 years with her husband and three children in the Barron Park area. Her youngest child is a junior in high school. They enjoyed Palo Alto's recreational classes, parks and open spaces. Sustainability and the environment were very important to them. They appreciated living in Palo Alto because of its bikeability. She volunteered for starting a school garden at our elementary school, helping green teams in middle school, and the Challenge Success program.

Ms. Teachout spoke about the need to compromise. The City should distribute development to maintain quality without isolating El Camino. Some of our parks, such as Mitchell, had space for a community gym. She suggested sharing resources with our school district. A superintendent used to open the Gunn gym on Sunday nights for kids to play basketball. She is a substitute teacher and had been in the district since 2003. She tried to be a good listener, was neutral and recognized both sides of an argument when she was involved in the PTA, parent networks and the Site Council. She wrote long letters to elaborate an argument. She tried to connect the right people together because she realized she was not an expert on every issue.

Ms. Teachout stated that Barron Park was a beautiful park but it was underutilized. Some students were interested in having a juggling club at the park on Saturday afternoons. She suggested surveying the community to find out what they would like to do in our parks. There were opportunities to develop programs to get more people in our parks and getting to know their neighbors better without costing too much money.

Ms. Teachout noted the PRC does not have a sustainability ad hoc committee or a sustainability commission to serve City Council. She liked the PTAC model that brought together PTA presidents and they can communicate back to their PTA. When possible, she attends the Sustainable Schools Committee meetings. Looking at our communications was a great project to see where the barriers are and identify key people who can help keep others informed.

SUMMARY MINUTES

Adriana Flores-Ragade has been a Palo Alto resident for about 10 years. She wanted to make a difference for our youth. She did social impact and community outreach work on the college board and Univision. She is a sixth grade school counselor at JLS Middle School. She had two children. Her 13-year-old is at JLS and her 10-year-old is at Ohlone Elementary. Part of the reason she applied was because her son plays for Palo Alto Soccer Club. There were times when 12 teams practiced together at Cubberley's turf field. She felt it was extremely important to have partnerships with the school district and mixed-use property developers. The City needed to think strategically of ways to have mixed use for parks, open space and housing.

Ms. Flores-Ragade remarked that what differentiated her from other candidates was she wanted to bring in the youth voice. She would engage our youth and contribute to what impacted them. She would bring in diverse stakeholders to conversations and make decisions as a community. She may not have the experience of some of the other candidates but she could get answers from her connections and thus contribute more meaningfully.

Ms. Flores-Ragade was cosponsor of the Pickleball Club at JLS. She suggested reaching out to clubs and form partnerships with stakeholders directly working with the community you wanted to impact. Bring in more voices by increasing outreach to schools and organizations. She coaches track and field and cross-country at JLS. She was very impressed with the work of the Parks and Recreation staff. There were leadership development opportunities for high school youth, especially for middle school coaching positions. She wanted scholarships for middle school sports. Sometimes staff paid 50% if a student did not qualify for a full scholarship. She would like the PRC to explore ways they could work with outside donors to fundraise to make school sports accessible to all members of our community.

Shani Kleinhau was on the PRC for a little more than one year. Previously, she served on the Citizen Advisory Committee and was a stakeholder in the development of the Parks Master Plan. She worked as an advocate for the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. She had a PhD in Ecology from UC Davis. She worked on environmental issues, nature and species protection. At the PRC, she looked at protecting and integrating nature into our natural and urban landscapes. One of the challenges she faced during her time as a commissioner was explaining science to the public and to her fellow commissioners. She researched the latest scientific information, whether it was pickleball and noise or potential impacts to species in our Baylands, and tried to make the best judgement she could. Another challenge was she had a lot to learn about recreation. She wanted the City to have a youth ranger program to show young people what rangers do, the challenges they face and what was happening in nature. We worked with wonderful organizations such as Environmental Volunteers, Grassroots Ecology and Save the Bay but she wanted more communication about the work we do. We could mail information and do events. She had many other ideas on communication and youth, which was why she applied for the PRC again.

Commissioner Kleinhau thought that being limited to their work plan was a challenge because sometimes you wanted to explore things that were not in the work plan. Had we looked at all

SUMMARY MINUTES

bicycle use, we might have come to a different conclusion on electronic bicycles. There were many efforts to create dog parks but we had limited space. When we take a large park and start parceling pieces for Magical Bridge, pickleball and a dog park, we may not have valuable big open space. She was not comfortable with expansion of the dog park at Mitchell Park but she voted for it because it seemed like it was the only choice. She would prefer to see off-leash hours in several parks and share space rather than parcel the space. She wanted more opportunities for people to connect with nature. She would like to have an adopt-a-park program in Palo Alto. We started a comprehensive Baylands Master Plan but did not finish it. She wanted to move parts of it forward to enhance the environment. The burrowing owl plan had been sitting on a shelf for years but never implemented it fully.

Commissioner Kleinhaus stated that she does a lot of research on items that come to the PRC, including reading what other cities do in the area, listening to other commissioners and the public. She read everything the PRC received. Ad hoc committees work on different issues and she listened to their conclusions. She asked questions if she did not understand something.

Sierra Peterson thanked Council for their time and energy in serving the community. During the pandemic, she moved to Palo Alto from Montana. She was a renter and did not have a yard. Her first weekend in Palo Alto, she walked through Johnson Park and saw a string quartet playing, people sitting on blankets, wearing their masks and enjoying the space and music. That was a memory of Palo Alto she would cherish for the rest of her life and was the type of moment she wanted others to have the opportunity to experience. She wanted to use her time and experience to help everyone enjoy parks. With her background in business economics and a personal focus on the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals, she believed the PRC was the best opportunity for her to share her talents and impact our community for future generations. She graduated from a university in the last four years and could bring the youth perspective to the PRC as well as her experience as an events planner. She noticed throughout different meetings that everybody wanted to go with the flow. She was not afraid to stand out and ask challenging questions.

When Ms. Peterson was 3-years-old, her mother committed suicide. Mental health was critical, especially coming out of the pandemic. She grew up in the arts. From a recreational standpoint, arts were very critical, including band and choir. Recreation was broad and we can expand its role.

Ms. Peterson advised weighing the stakeholder needs of various groups to balance recreational needs with open space. There were vacant office spaces and unattended buildings but land was a nonrenewable resource. It was important to protect land because it had a deeper, long-term impact but buildings come and go. She had experience with grant writing. Because of the City's limited staff, commissioners should go after funding opportunities.

Commissioner Joy Oche was a Nigerian immigrant and a single mom of two boys who play for the Palo Alto soccer team. She had a master's degree in environmental engineering. She had

SUMMARY MINUTES

almost 20 years' experience working in the U.S. and U.K. She works for one of the big Bay Area tech companies as a sustainability technical program manager. She has been on the PRC for about the past 10 months. She learned a lot from her PRC colleagues. Her dad taught her to not always expect and receive from the system but to try to give back. Her mother was the equivalent of a City Council Member three times. She reapplied because she felt as though she still had a lot of work to do. The African culture was known for storytelling. She saw a gap here between seniors and youth. Many of our seniors want to volunteer to the community. She was the victim of life-threatening domestic violence. For her to rise up from that and serve her community was rewarding. Mental health was an issue in our society. She would like to have programming for people with physical and cognitive disabilities in Palo Alto.

Commissioner Oche stated that most of the PRC time focused only on the environment but did not create awareness globally. She reached out to the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure and they were willing to provide free training to City staff. During her term on the PRC, she learned to be open-minded, listen to people's perspectives and do research. She took her role seriously because it affected the whole community. Besides learning from experienced PRC commissioners and City staff, she wanted to learn from other cities. She would like to have opportunities for collaboration with Sister Cities. We do not need to reinvent the wheel when we can learn from others. Leverage our Silicon Valley innovation. Denver, Boston and Seattle have multiuse programming. We can learn from them and customize it to fit Palo Alto. She wanted to do more research on available grants. She appreciated the work that City staff and Council does.

Council thanked PRC candidates for applying and for their service to the City.

ACTION: None

The Council took a break from 8:00 – 8:10 p.m.

ACTION ITEM

2. Adoption of a Resolution to Appoint Adriane D. McCoy of Baker Tilly US, LLP as City Auditor

The CAO Committee met last Monday to discuss the appointment of Adriane D. McCoy as City Auditor. She had over 25 years' experience in the public sector, a master's degree, bachelor's degree, a government auditing professional certification, and was a certified internal auditor. Vice Mayor Stone stated Interim City Auditor McCoy's audit reports were easy for him to read and understand. She had been very accessible for him to ask her questions. The CAO Committee recommended by unanimous vote that the Council adopt a resolution to appoint Adriane McCoy as City Auditor.

Public Comments: None

SUMMARY MINUTES

Council Member Veenker echoed Vice Mayor Stone's remarks. Council Member Lythcott-Haims spoke with Ms. McCoy by phone and appreciated her thorough perspective, background and deep interest in serving the City.

Ms. McCoy enjoyed her role and was excited to be here permanently. She wanted to do the best she could for the people who were depending on her.

MOTION: Council Member Veenker moved, seconded by Council Member Lythcott-Haims to adopt a Resolution to appoint Adriane D. McCoy of Baker Tilly US, LLP as City Auditor.

MOTION PASSED: 7-0

STUDY SESSION

3. Study Session: Safe Routes to School Annual Report for 2021-2022; CEQA status – not a project.

Transportation Director Philip Kamhi introduced Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Coordinator Jose Palma. SRTS's Mission and Goals were to help reduce risks to students en route to and from school and encourage more families to choose healthy, active, sustainable alternatives to driving solo. Their goal was to increase community awareness of the many resources, educational programs and encouragement opportunities available to address transportation safety. They implemented several programs to support families from underrepresented communities. They partnered with Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP) on an adaptive bicycling pilot for 22 secondary exceptional needs students. They coordinated a similar event for elementary students the year before. They hosted bike repair events in collaboration with campus PTAs at Greene, JLS, Fletcher, Paly, Gunn and Escondido. They distributed approximately 75 helmets donated by the Santa Clara County Department of Health. They conducted a Black History Month Celebration Ride organized by Escondido and El Carmelo Transportation Safety Representatives (TSRs) honoring historical achievements of black Palo Altans and East Palo Altans. The partnership reviewed its five-year plan yearly to ensure it remained responsive to community needs. In 2021-2022, they completed two new strategies, 86% of the Year 4 objectives. They conducted site assessments for Gunn High School and Briones Elementary and reviewed transportation concept plans and community engagement strategies with the City-School Transportation Safety Committee (CSTSC).

There was a flat trend in walking/biking on average; however, driving appeared to be increasing districtwide. City staff suspected that the lack of City shuttle service, reduced PAUSD bussing, driving habits developed during the pandemic, campus access points limited due to security concerns, disruption of the normal SRTS education schedule, and reduced PTA volunteer capacity were factors contributing to driving.

SUMMARY MINUTES

Council Member Burt noted this program was state and nationally recognized. Transportation Director Kamhi stated our rates were in the top five. The primary focus of the SRTS educational programs was on the elementary schools. They do not have volunteers to deliver middle and high school programs. They may leverage some of the student-run groups, such as student bicycle clubs. They will conduct a needs assessment to determine the resources needed to deliver secondary programs. Council Member Veenker suggested the Palo Alto Student Climate Coalition.

Council Member Veenker asked why they did not complete the Year 3 strategy to work with PAUSD to develop an equity action plan and what the next steps were. SRTS Coordinator Palma replied that the equity plan was in progress. They were in communication with PAUSD's Family Engagement Specialist (FES) to discuss opportunities to bring the draft plan to FES events for feedback from families and students.

Vice Mayor Stone commented that JLS held raffles for students who biked to school and were wearing their helmets. He wondered if the school district or City offered incentives to encourage students biking safely to school. Transportation Director Kamhi was not aware of any incentives. Rose Mesterhazy believed that the act of biking itself was the incentive and they did not need to give away trinkets because students reap the benefits of riding to school with their friends. Whenever possible, they have blender smoothie events for bikers. The PTA held Earth Day events at JLS and Fletcher Middle School. They provide helmets and bicycles to families in need as well as bike repair events.

A student parking permit is \$100 at Paly High School. Vice Mayor Stone suggested a higher parking permit as an incentive to bike. He also commented on protected bike lanes. Transportation Director Kamhi stated the limitation of their program was to limit risks. Their primary path to secondary students was to start training at a younger age. They build infrastructure to create safety when possible but bicyclists can behave as they choose. He believed PAPD issued warnings and talked to student cyclists when they were in unsafe conditions.

Council Member Lythcott-Haims noted the graph included data from 1985, 1993, 1999, 2000 and every year after, so it created a false impression of the curve. The high school and middle school graph included 1985, 1991, 1993, 1997, 2000 and every year since. She asked if they could present the data without compromising the scale. She wondered if we should charge parents for using pick-up and drop-off car lanes or use other incentives. She asked about educating drivers on slowing down and following the rules of the road when children were on their way to and from school. Transportation Director Kamhi explained that they designed the graph to indicate the lows post fatality in 2002 and the work this program put in since then but the program dropped off pre-2002. The highway patrol had some educational programs for drivers and enforcement was an education tool.

SUMMARY MINUTES

Council Member Lauing suggested using peer pressure and school pride as incentives. Communicate to parents what the numbers were and that we want to get those numbers back. Compete to have a higher percentage growth than other schools. He asked about the infrastructure project timeline for Lincoln and Middlefield. Transportation Director Kamhi stated that SRTS provided educational messaging to parents to encourage them to model these programs for their kids, for example wearing their helmets when they ride bikes. Arnout Boelens does Walk and Roll to School events, which was a great way of educating people. The attorneys were reviewing the consultant's report on Lincoln and Middlefield. Staff will post the report on the website and hold community meetings in the coming weeks.

Council Member Tanaka noted the graph of high school bike counts showed Paly had a sizeable drop and he wondered why. Transportation Director Kamhi explained the counts were a snapshot in time, so it might not accurately indicate the number of people riding. They did most of the bike counts in September but Paly was in February and that could have contributed to the counts being lower this year. The weather in February was a bad time to do counts.

Council Member Tanaka has kids at Paly and he was concerned that kids at Paly did not think it was cool to bike. He thought there should be a high school program to change the perception or coolness factor of biking. He suggested using incentives or competition. A phone app rewards you with money if you bike to Downtown Palo Alto. Maybe we could have a bike app for students and have a raffle at the end. High school kids have an option because some of them can drive themselves. If we want to hit our sustainability goals, trying to get the numbers back up at Paly was a good start. Maybe we should close a lane during school hours so kids can bike six aside. The progress over the years had eroded. He liked the suggestion of increasing the price of parking. Transportation Director Kamhi reiterated that they do not have resources for a secondary program but they were doing an assessment to determine the resources needed for a secondary program. Council Member Tanaka recommended having student groups help with polling or somehow figure out what was going on at Paly.

Council Member Veenker shared her experience with seeing students walking or biking to school when homes were under construction on both sides of her residential street and unable to use the sidewalk. She wondered if the City could prohibit moving large equipment while kids were traveling to and from school. Transportation Director Kamhi replied that depended on the type of construction. If they were not closing the road or a lane, they had limited involvement in the traffic control plans but they review the permits if construction work impacted sight lanes. He was happy to discuss this issue with the Planning Department.

This week, SRTS will post regional best practices for E-bikes on their website. Rose Mesterhazy and Sylvia Star-Lack were diligent in educating students on their routes to school. Transportation Director Kamhi explained how bike rodeos create scenarios for students to ride through so they could experience the different situations they would encounter in the real world. Parents can and should help. They have many parent volunteers in the SRTS program. The two SRTS coordinators were very busy putting on many events throughout the year and

SUMMARY MINUTES

sharing information. It was not an effective use of their time to station them in the field for enforcement. PAPD stationed officers in the mornings and afternoons when schools were going to session and releasing. CSTSC was a collaboration between SRTS staff, school district staff and parents. Mayor Kou asked if parents could help with enforcement. Transportation Director Kamhi responded that TSRs were parents but he had not heard of that model for enforcement. They need more volunteers to deliver their existing programs. Mayor Kou noted when the sun sets earlier and it was dark around 5:30, youth need to have their lights on in back and front. She encountered many who did not have their lights on.

Public Comments:

Arnout Boelens thanked everyone for their continued support of SRTS, including the City's investments in infrastructure such as Charleston/Arastradero, safety improvements at Churchill and employing Jose Palma and Rose Mesterhazy as SRTS coordinators. Walking and rolling had many benefits. Kids get physical exercise, mental and physical benefits. There was less congestion and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions because of one child walking or riding replacing four car trips. With fewer cars on the road, the City could invest less in infrastructure for cars and the District could dedicate less space to parking on their school grounds, which saved money given the price of land in Palo Alto. The City needed to design roads to be safe for everyone and encourage safe road behavior.

Reid Kleckner thanked Council for supporting the SRTS program and asked for their continued support. He grew up in Palo Alto and biked from elementary school through high school. He has two kids and biked as often as possible. He appreciated SRTS's work in creating a biking culture.

Keri Wagner is President of the Palo Alto PTA Council. SRTS provided critical information and training to students and their families for biking and walking safely to school, which was important from a traffic and health perspective. She thanked Council for supporting the SRTS program and looked forward to a continuing partnership with the City to ensure students and families gain the knowledge and confidence to safely walk and bike to school.

Nakita Kutselev commented that community awareness was not enough. You need infrastructure. People take the most convenient route. Build roads that are safe and convenient. The City of Oslo, Norway started a program in 2015 and by 2019 had zero road fatalities. They translated the design model to English and he presented it to Council as a gift.

Deborah Goldeen opined that kids would rather be on their bikes than driven by their parents. Parking permits should be \$1000/year instead of \$100/year. The recent drop in numbers at Paly may be due to SRTS losing its two biggest champions, Penny Ellson and Kathy Durham who were full-time parent volunteers for 10 years. There was a lot of information on how beneficial biking is for kids. Infrastructure was the only way to protect cyclists and SRTS had put in lifesaving infrastructure.

SUMMARY MINUTES

Owen Kuwayti is on the biking club at Paly. Phela Durosinmi is on the biking club at Gunn. The SRTS program was very important. Expanding the SRTS program could combat the dropping biking population among secondary students. Having more lessons and education in the upper level classes would bring more awareness to biking and encourage students to bike. Clubs could help but they should not be the focus because he was leaving next year. It was more valuable to have someone permanent working with the City. Paly did not discuss bike safety. The only time they mentioned biking was once a year when there was a survey asking students how they get to school. SRTS needed more members. If you expanded it, there would be a rise in cyclists biking to school. You could advocate for climate change and reasons for riding bikes. They worked on a school project about e-bike safety. E-bike use at Paly was growing and an e-bike club started this year but their survey showed there was not much awareness of e-bike safety. Almost 40% of Paly students do not know about SRTS, which they could combat with a larger presence. SRTS should increase their resources for e-bike safety. Their survey found that 30% of students did not have lights on their bikes, so increasing awareness about bike lights or making them more accessible would help with usage of bike lights at night.

There was a bike repair event at Paly last year attended by over 130 students. Last weekend, there was a bike repair event at Gunn and many students came to get their bikes fixed. Bike repair events incentivize more people to ride their bikes to school. There could be more programs. Maybe it was not necessary to increase the parking permit if increasing SRTS presence had good results. Mayor Kou thanked Owen Kuwayti and Phela Durosinmi for sharing their survey results and for answering most of Council's questions. She advised them to forward their survey discoveries to the schools and perhaps to the district so the City-Schools Liaison Committee could discuss it in their meeting. Mayor Kou thanked all commenters and staff for their mental and physical work.

ACTION: None

AGENDA CHANGES, ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Katie Rueff spoke on behalf of 350 Palo Alto, Palo Alto Climate Coalition and SB 350. She thanked City staff and Council for supporting youth during Earth Week and attending the rally and festival. She thanked Mayor Kou and Vice Mayor Stone for speaking, and Council Members Veenker and Burt for attending the events. She will send email invitations for a meeting to discuss how they could work together.

Cherrill Spencer announced that April 24-30 was Daniel Ellsberg Week. As a member of a coalition of peace organizations, she emailed a resolution to Council and she read it for the

SUMMARY MINUTES

record. During Daniel Ellsberg Week, she encouraged everyone to read his books, articles and interviews and view his films and videos on diffusenuclearwar.org/ellsberg.

Aram James appreciated having three minutes for public comment. He did not want a shorter meeting at the expense of public input. He suggested have public comments at a fixed time.

Julia Zeitlin is co-founder of Palo Alto Student Climate Coalition (PASCC). On Friday, April 21, they hosted the 2023 March and Rally for Climate Justice at City Hall. Speakers included Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, Mayor Kou and Mayor Gauthier. Council Members Burt and Veenker as well as community members from East Palo Alto and surrounding cities came to show their support for local climate action. PASCC and their adult allies urge Council to set a date and timeline to phase out natural gas use. PASCC could help with public awareness and education campaigns.

CONSENT CALENDAR

4. Adoption of a Resolution of Intent to Not Levy Assessments for the Palo Alto Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) in FY 2024 and Setting a Public Hearing for May 15, 2023; CEQA status: Not a project.
5. Approval of Minutes from April 10, 2023 Meeting

Public Comment: None

MOTION: Council Member Lauing moved, seconded by Council Member Burt to approve Agenda Item Numbers 4 and 5.

MOTION PASSED: 7-0

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

City Manager Ed Shikada showed a list of upcoming Earth Month events, Library's Palo Alto Reads program and the United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF) documentary. He encouraged removing grass and replacing it with a water-efficient garden. See cityofpaloalto.org/EarthDay for information on events that continue through May and into June.

On Tuesday, April 25 at 6 p.m., the community can engage in the discussion of the Historic Resource Reconnaissance Survey, an ongoing project led by our Planning and Development Services Department. On Thursday, April 27, 6 p.m., there will be a virtual meeting related to the ongoing effort for car-free streets including a progress report and opportunity for feedback on emerging recommendations.

SUMMARY MINUTES

The Cubberley Artist Studio Program (CASP) Annual Open House is on Saturday. Community members can see the artists in residence at the Cubberley facilities. More information is on cityofpaloalto.org/casp.

The Palo Alto Puzzle Hunt begins May 1. May Fete Parade is on Saturday, May 6 at 10 a.m., from downtown leading to the May Fete Fair at Heritage Park. For information, go to cityofpaloalto.org/MayFete.

Upcoming Council agenda items: May 1, discussion of the proposed FY 2024 budget, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan, and a public hearing on a proposed land use change at 2147 Yale Street. May 8 was devoted to a Council and Planning joint session to review proposed revisions to the Housing Element based on feedback from the State Housing Community Development Department. May 15 will be the legislative update and an updated ordinance on accessory dwelling units. May 22 will be a Cubberley Study Session and a feedback discussion from the Finance Committee's budget deliberations.

ACTION ITEM

6. Review and Adoption of the Council Procedures and Protocols Handbook – Including Changes Directed by Council on January 30 and March 20, 2023

Deputy City Manager Chantal Cotton Gaines presented a summary document of the changes staff made to the Council Procedures and Protocols Handbook based on Council's actions from January 30 and March 20.

Section 2.3b(2)C was the procedure for appearing remotely. There was concern that AB 2449 would not allow us to continue the Council meeting if a council member had connectivity issues and disconnected while attending remotely. Upon further clarification from the City Attorney, meetings need to stop if there was a public broadcast disruption or if we were unable to take public comment. Staff updated language to reflect that understanding, as can be seen on Packet Page 59.

Changes to Procedure Sections 3.1, Call to Order, and 3.4, Special Orders of the Day, were on Packet Pages 64 and 66, respectively. Yearly, staff will bring the Council calendar to the City Council, acknowledging holidays and dates of special significance throughout the year.

Staff proposed deletion of Procedure Section 3.9b(9), Cancellation of Meetings or Scheduling of a Special Meeting, as the current practice does not require these items to be included on the Consent Agenda.

SUMMARY MINUTES

Protocol Section 1.6d was about being cautious in representing City positions on issues. Packet Page 89 contained staff's added text based on the May 20 Council Motion to clarify Council Member roles on regional bodies.

City Manager Ed Shikada asked that requests for clerical corrections be handled offline.

Public Comment: Aram James was against City Council Members needing to be cautious about speaking on matters. He believed that impinged on their First Amendment rights to speak out on critical social, political and legal matters. As Republican Party versus White Supreme Court Case 2002 said, the First Amendment rights of public officials were not only critical for them to be able to speak out on these issues but for the members of the public to be fully informed on the issues, particularly how our government was run. The Los Gatos Town Council censored a Planning Commissioner for his comment on affordable housing. In the commissioner's defense, ACLU wrote that the First Amendment protects the rights of all citizens, including public employees speaking as private citizens on matters of public concern. City Council Members can speak on items of public record, including Zack Perron, the all-white command staff of the police department, and RIPA data but they should say they are speaking as a private citizen and not as a Council Member. The public wanted to know what Council's views were.

MOTION: Council Member Veenker moved, seconded by Council Member Lauing to adopt the articulated Amendments 1-5 on the updated Council Procedures and Protocols Handbook including Procedures Sections 2.3b(2)C, 3.1, 3.4 and 3.9b(9) and Protocols Section 1.6d.

MOTION PASSED: 7-0

Staff referred the following seven items to the Policy and Services Committee for discussion. The annual organization of the City Council related to the mayoral appointment, video participation for public comment, proposed censure language, refraining from lobbying board and commission members, the role of council liaison to boards and commissions, international travel, and expenditures.

The Council discussed public comment time limits and when to stop accepting cards as well as meeting start times, breaks and agenda order.

MOTION: Council Member Burt moved, seconded by Council Member Stone to amend the handbook as follows:

In Section 5.1d: Strike "request to speak....to speak on an item" and include "Presiding officer will endeavor to identify in advance the time when public comment cards will no longer be accepted."

In Section 5.1c(1): Strike "typically will" and replace with "may."

SUMMARY MINUTES

MOTION PASSED: 7-0

MOTION: Council Member Veenker moved, seconded by Council Member Lythcott-Haims to direct staff to:

- 1) Amend the Municipal Code that the start time of our regular meetings is 5:30 p.m., and
- 2) Amend Handbook Section 2.3a to include at least one 15-minute break.

MOTION PASSED: 7-0

MOTION: Council Member Burt moved, seconded by Council Member Lauing to direct staff to amend the handbook to reflect study sessions be moved to immediately following general public comments.

MOTION PASSED: 7-0

MOTION: Mayor Kou moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Stone to direct staff to amend the handbook to reflect the order of the agenda as listed below:

Call to Order

Special Order of the Day

Closed Session

Agenda Changes

General Public Comment

Council Member Questions, Comments and Announcements

Study Session

Consent Agenda

City Manager Comments

Action

Adjournment

MOTION PASSED: 6-1, Tanaka no

MOTION: Council Member Burt moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Stone to approve the balance of the proposed changes to the Procedures and Protocols Handbook as presented.

MOTION PASSED: 7-0

COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUMMARY MINUTES

None

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 10:58 p.m.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

APPROVED:

Mayor

NOTE: Action minutes are prepared in accordance with Palo Alto Municipal Code (PAMC) 2.04.160(a) and (b). Summary minutes (sense) are prepared in accordance with PAMC Section 2.04.160(c). Beginning in January 2018, in accordance with [Ordinance No. 5423](#), the City Council found action minutes and the video/audio recordings of Council proceedings to be the official records of both Council and committee proceedings. These recordings are available on the City's website.