



**City of  
Santa Clara**  
The Center of What's Possible



**MINUTES OF THE CITY-SCHOOL  
LIAISON COMMITTEE  
SPECIAL MEETING**

Virtual Meeting

Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 11:45 a.m.

**Council Present:**

Mayor Lisa M. Gillmor

Vice Mayor Raj Chahal

Councilmember Kathy Watanabe

**City of Santa Clara Staff Present:**

City Manager Deanna J. Santana

Assistant City Manager Cynthia Bojorquez

Assistant to the City Manager Robyn Sahid

Assistant Chief of Police Wahid Kazem

Director of Parks and Recreation Jim Teixeira

Director of Community Development Andrew Crabtree

**Santa Clara Unified School District (District) Present:**

Board President Jodi Muirhead

Trustee Albert Gonzalez

Trustee Andrew Ratermann

Superintendent Stella Kemp

Chief Business Official Mark Schiel

Director of Facility Development and Planning Michal Healy

Director of Bond Projects Larry Adams

Public Information Officer Jennifer Dericco

**Mayor Lisa M. Gillmor called the meeting to order at 11:47 a.m.**

**Item 1. Introduction of New Members**

**Item 2. Approve Minutes from September 2, 2020**

It was moved by Trustee Andrew Ratermann, seconded by Councilmember Kathy Watanabe, and unanimously carried to approve the meeting minutes from September 2, 2020.

**Item 3. Approve 2021 Meeting Calendar**

The Committee meets the first Wednesday of every other month, starting in January. Board President Jodi Muirhead asked to move July meeting to mid-August. Superintendent Stella Kemp further suggested that there should be no meetings in July or August due to the District's need to plan for school opening in August. The meeting that would have taken place on July 7<sup>th</sup> was proposed to take place on June 23, 2021. All were in favor of this date change.

It was moved by Councilmember Watanabe, seconded by Trustee Ratermann, and unanimously carried to approve the 2021 meeting calendar with this change.

#### **Item 4. Status of Returning to School in Person**

Superintendent Kemp gave an overview of the District's plan to reopen, noting that the County is nearing the Orange phase. There is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with employee groups that in-person instruction can begin on the Monday following the announcement of the County moving into the Orange phase. Of families that have completed the District's survey, an average of 40% of families want to go back to in-person learning. Plans for safety and reopening for the remainder of this year are in place and fall reopening plans are in progress. The County Office of Education is working with the County of Santa Clara to make vaccines available to district employees.

Mayor Gillmor asked if the District honors all parent requests for return to in person learning. Superintendent Kemp responded that the method of determining who returns to campus is dependent upon the number of students who want to come back in as compared with capacity limits. The District can accommodate most of the families who want to come back to campus. For all families who did not respond to the survey, the default is to remain in distance learning.

Vice Mayor Raj Chahal asked if all teachers and staff are returning to school sites. Superintendent Kemp responded staff members who do not want to come back for health reasons can meet with Human Resources for an interactive meeting. This matter was settled with the teachers' union. All teachers are returning to campus unless they have a medical note.

Councilmember Watanabe asked if temperature checks are required to enter the building. Superintendent Kemp responded that temperature checks are not required by public health guidelines. There are several screening and protection measures in place however, and the District is providing thermometers to teachers for their optional use.

#### **Item 5. Update of Food Distribution Programs**

Director of Parks and Recreation Jim Teixeira presented an overview of the City's programs, including the Commodity Point of Distribution (CPOD) operations at the Santa Clara Senior Center and the Food for Families distribution in partnership with the Salvation Army. The Senior Center continues to see an increase in community participation. The Food for Families operation distributes an average of 555 food boxes per week. As of the date of this meeting, a total of 8000 boxes/2818 households have been served. The City's contract with Salvation Army runs through June 2021; the Silicon Valley Food Bank is the source of the food boxes, and the City is prepared to continue the operation for as long as it is needed.

Mayor Gillmor suggested that the City send the District information on this program to share with their families and asked what kind of paperwork is needed to participate. Director Teixeira responded that the paperwork is simple, and Salvation Army will work with individuals to assist them in completing the requirements. Community members are even able to register for the program on the same day.

Chief Business Official Mark Schiel provided an overview of the District's food distribution operations. He reminded the committee of the many regulations in place from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), and that the USDA issued a waiver and release from these regulations due to pandemic. As a result, the District has been able to serve any student that is under 18, and students are offered breakfast, lunch and sometimes dinner. Increased funding by the Federal government means no increased debt to the District for the distribution programs. The District served more students in the period from March – December 2020 than all of 2019. The District is also thinking creatively about using produce grown as part of its farm program; and has packed and distributed 42,000 lbs. of organically grown produce. In addition, the District distributed 20,000 boxes of food in collaboration

with the City. The District also implemented the Taste of Farm dinner program, a fundraising catering service, whereby Food Services staff cooks gourmet meals from scratch cooking using District grown organic produce.

Mayor Gillmor welcomed Mr. Schiel to the committee.

Councilmember Watanabe spoke about the Farm to Families distribution operation by the River of Life (ROL) Christian Church; she and Mayor Gillmor were contacted by Pastor Sam Loh of ROL about their program giving out meals every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. ROL is the largest distributor of food boxes in the Bay Area. The USDA reached out to ROL through the Farm to Families program. Councilmember Watanabe also reached out to the School District through Suzy Cortez to promote this program; the District has been picking up 300 to 500 boxes at Bill Wilson Center each Saturday and the Mayor and Councilmember Watanabe have been distributing these boxes to local families in need.

Board President Muirhead spoke in more detail about the District's Taste of the Farm Dinner Program – these are four-course meals, very high quality and are available for pick up on Tuesday evenings. Orders are due the Monday evening prior. Cost per meals is between \$20 and \$30 per person.

Superintendent Kemp asked Public Information Officer Jennifer Dericco to speak on the additional food distribution done by the District Family. In early February, the District launched a family pantry through the Family Resource Center in response to learning that many families were in immediate need of food staples and couldn't wait for the distribution days. The Teachers and Classified Staff Unions partnered with the Santa Clara Schools Foundation and Family Resource Center to buy a commercial refrigerator and have been coordinating on keeping pantry stocked every week, and working with members to raise funds and shopping at Costco to purchase food for the program.

#### **Item 6. City Budget Discussion**

City Manager Deanna J. Santana gave an overview of the City's budget impacts due to the pandemic, which are severe. Prior to the pandemic, the City was able to reduce the City's deficit from 3 years ago from \$116 million to \$13 million just prior to the pandemic. At that time the City was on a growth strategy. With the impacts from COVID, preliminary numbers were released; in Fiscal Year (FY) 19-20 the City had a \$10 Million deficit which was cured by expenditure controls. FY 20-21 the City was projecting a \$22.7 million deficit. This was premature information in April 2020, at the time when the duration of COVID was not known. The recent forecast is now at 41.7 million. The Council has been deliberating on the budget and looking at where to make changes to staff's proposal. This has been a difficult process. The changes are being addressed in phases. Phase 1 comprises an initial cut of up to 43 vacant positions, thereby reducing the deficit to \$29 million from \$42 million and allow for the City to maintain status quo.

Assistant City Manager Cynthia Bojorquez detailed three proposals related to the District.

1. One-time reduction in maintenance of closed school sites equivalent to \$36,000 - the previous agreement has expired.
2. Reduction to the Latchkey Program, resulting in a savings of approximately \$108,000 ongoing— this agreement expired, in conversations with Superintendent Kemp, the City was informed that the program would continue since the District has access to state funding but there will be a reduction of 10 spots available for this program.
3. As part of Tier 2 budget balancing, there is a proposed liquidation to the \$50,000 annual allocation to the Library's Footsteps to Brilliance Program. Program expires at the end of this fiscal year and the City will propose to reallocate this funding.

Superintendent Kemp responded that the District would look into options to maintain the Footsteps to Brilliance program.

Mayor Gillmor commented the bulk of the Council's budget discussions at the past two meetings centered around public safety. An agreement was not reached and will go to a third meeting.

Assistant Chief of Police Wahid Kazem provided an update of the crossing guard program in preparation for the return to school in person at the end of March. As many of the crossing guards are seniors, the Santa Clara Police Department (PD) is assisting with coordinating vaccines. The aim is to meet the need for staffing.

Trustee Albert Gonzalez commented that it will be beneficial to have people and PD presence in place to ensure a smooth reopening. Students are no longer used to crossing streets and drivers are not used to student presence.

Trustee Ratermann commented on programs he finds have been very beneficial to the community. One program is the D.A.R.E program, which he feels goes a long way in helping community policing. He does not want it to be cut and is asking for the District to be part of these discussions. The youth safety patrol is another example of a positive program for students. He further commented about the positive impacts to students for both the D.A.R.E and the Every15 Minutes program. Mayor Gillmor agreed with the positive effects of the D.A.R.E program and said she would fight to keep this and other programs funded in the City budget. Councilmember Watanabe concurred.

Director Teixeira commented that due to the need to respond to County/State emergency orders, the City immediately shifted to a role of providing disaster service. A lot of the City's recreation facilities are closed to indoor programs. One-time budget cuts related to this equaled \$4.7 million, of this amount \$1 million was for contractual services. The City cut 48% of as-needed staffing for Parks and Recreation programs which resulted in \$1.3 million in savings. The City projects reduced hours at recreation centers; the Senior travel program was cut which resulted in savings, as well as savings from not being able to hold special events. Parks and Recreation departments have also realized savings by freezing vacant positions. Phase 2 budget reductions project about \$830,000 in ongoing savings.

Trustee Muirhead commented on D.A.R.E and other programs, sharing her hope the programs can continue and that 5<sup>th</sup> graders who missed the D.A.R.E program can participate in future years.

Vice Mayor Chahal asked about the D.A.R.E and the School Resource Officer (SRO) programs, stating that the Chief of Police has assured him that no services will be reduced because of the proposed cuts to the public safety and that standards will be maintained. He asked if it is possible for District to help with funding to some of the supplemental programs. He further asked if City Manager Santana knew if any of the programs mentioned by Trustee Ratermann are on the list for budget cuts. City Manager Santana did not know specifically about the D.A.R.E program and asked for confirmation from Assistant Chief Kazem.

Assistant Chief Kazem responded that the department is in early stages of submitting phase 2 cuts. D.A.R.E positions are on the list for Council's future consideration.

City Manager Santana cited the loss of the City's two main income streams - sales tax and TOT revenues. More budget solutions will be brought in May to address the additional \$29.4 million shortfall.

Vice Mayor Chahal reiterated his request that the District investigate ways it might supplement funding and to contact the City Manager and/or Assistant Chief Kazem.

Mayor Gillmor commented that SCPD is offering \$3.8 million in cuts, and that there will be service reductions, according to information she received from the Police Officers Association (POA). This

could impact the D.A.R.E program.

Trustee Ratermann commented that it would be nice to make input on these topics as a Board, but that the Board of Trustees would not be able to do so as the topic would need to be agendaized, and asked that the Liaison Committee members share what is being discussed at this meeting with the full City Council. He then spoke about the \$36,000 on maintenance for closed school sites and wanted to get further details. He also asked for a future discussion on the leases for the Teen Center, YAC, and Skate Park, in the hopes that the City and District find a good solution for all parties.

Mayor Gillmor asked staff to follow up.

Trustee Gonzalez asked about whether the City anticipates receiving Federal COVID relief funding. City Manager Santana responded that City staff does not know for sure yet, however it is anticipated that the City may receive \$23 to \$26 million in one-time funds, noting that that one-time funds cannot address ongoing budget shortfalls.

Assistant City Manager Bojorquez commented that the libraries have experienced savings due to identifying some non-personnel related costs, and savings due to key positions being vacant, resulting in less of an impact in Tier 1 budget solutions. There will be more of an impact in the Tier 2 phase of budget solutions.

Councilmember Watanabe thanked trustees who have made comments regarding their concerns about public safety. The community's concerns have been illustrated by the number of emails received on this topic.

Trustee Muirhead commented about the potential for the District to assist in funding some of the programs but that this would affect the District's budget. She asked that the City share information about costs with Superintendent Kemp to see if there is any room in the District budget to absorb extra costs, if possible. She further commented that the Board of Trustees can't entertain a conversation if they don't know what the costs are.

City Manager Santana closed the discussion with her last comments. Like any other public agency, the City is an organization in transition. COVID resulted in immediate cuts of 550 employees from the City's staffing resources and had a hiring freeze. The City is at a 17% staffing vacancy rate. The opportunity for the Board of Trustees to consider would be April and offered to have the City's Finance Director to present to the Board.

Superintendent Kemp asked City Manager Santana to send a list of the items that are on the Phase 1 cuts and Phase 2 cuts, and she will take the list to the CBO and to the Board at their next budget study session.

Director Teixeira addressed Trustee Ratermann's comments about the Youth Activity Center– the lease goes through May 2022. The City and District staff have been meeting to discuss master agreement and joint use facilities.

Director of Facility Development and Planning Michal Healy addressed comments about the decrease in budget for maintenance of the closed sites. District grounds staff members already do the maintenance. This agreement was like a reimbursement agreement and won't affect staffing or service since the District is already doing the maintenance. For the Latchkey program, it has been discussed internally.

CBO Schiel stated that he sent a message to staff during this meeting to find out if the District contributes to the D.A.R.E Program; the District provides a \$62,000 offset to the cost of the D.A.R.E

Program.

**Item 7. Reopening Support, Fee Based After School Programming from Parks and Recreation Department.**

Superintendent Kemp commented that the District is interested in seeing if the City has staff and capacity to run a fee-based after school program for families on District school sites. Families have need for after school childcare and there aren't enough spots at existing programs. The District has a contact person as a coordinator to share with Director Teixeira.

Mayor Gillmor asked the City Manager to review options and report back to the committee at the May meeting. Director Teixeira stated the department would need to look at hiring capacity and is in process of determining the number of staff needed to operate City programs as they restart. If this is a fee-based program, the City could look at staffing separately.

Superintendent Kemp said the District will connect Director Teixeira with a District staff member to further the conversation. This program should be either net zero or revenue-generating for the City.

Trustee Muirhead commented that this conversation should move forward now not wait until 2 months as the need is now. The Mayor responded that she wants to track progress through the committee.

Councilmember Watanabe asked about a program she has seen on the campus of Don Callejon School. Superintendent Kemp responded that it may be a learning center – she is not certain and would find out.

**Item 8. SCUSD Comments on Patrick Henry Drive Specific Plan**

Director Healy opened by stating the District is still looking for a school site to be designated on the Patrick Henry Specific Plan before it gets approved and asked that the City reach out to developers for this request. Mayor Gillmor asked Director Healy if the District provided parameters in what it was looking for in a school site. Director Healy responded affirmatively and restated that the District is looking for 4 to 5 acres to accommodate a facility that would house up to 600 students; for a multi-story building to fit on small site against park land to use joint use fields.

Community Development Director Andrew Crabtree commented that he and Director Healy met a few months ago to discuss a potential property and asked if there was an update from that meeting. Director Healy responded that there was no update now.

Mayor Gillmor asked Director Crabtree about public outreach on the Patrick Henry Specific Plan. Director Crabtree responded that there is a community meeting on March 10, 2021 and that the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) public circulation is scheduled to start in April.

Director Crabtree shared that there are still 11 to 12 developers who are actively participating in the planning effort. Mayor Gillmor asked if this includes the Kylli site, and Director Crabtree confirmed that it does not include the Kylli site. Mayor Gillmor asked Director Healy about District preferences. Director Healy responded that since Kylli is no longer looking at putting a school site in their project that Patrick Henry Specific Plan is the only option. The last conversation the District had with Kylli was last month. CBO Schiel clarified that a smaller school site would require a state waiver.

Trustee Ratermann asked about any way that the developers of the projects north of Highway 101 north could form a consortium of to come to an agreement, for example on a proportional basis with other developers. Director Crabtree responded that the City recognizes a property owner has a right to a certain amount of development capacity. The City can identify preferable sites and can try to facilitate between property owners and the District.

### **General Updates from Attendees**

Director Crabtree provided planning and development updates and commented on the upcoming Housing Element update. Director Healy asked a question on whether the conversion of the project on N. Winchester Blvd. rezoning would mean increased school impact fees due to the District. She also asked for distinctions regarding the units counted in the Housing Element update. Director Healy updated the committee about school fields reopening. New gates on fencing will be posted that gates will be unlocked after school operations are closed for the day. Tracks are not yet open to the public since they are being used for school track teams. The District will be putting in a new playground for the preschool program and will relocate fencing at the Montague Swim Center which will reduce some turf area.

Trustee Gonzalez commented on the community use of fields, and the Mayor further commented that the community wants to use the new tracks. The citizens feel that they funded the project cost and the Mayor commented that there should be a compromise.

Trustee Ratermann thought about an opportunity for the community to use highly impacted facilities, such as a period earmarked for community use. He agreed that he would like to see a compromise.

Vice Mayor Chahal thanked Trustee Gonzalez and Trustee Ratermann for the idea of opening facilities to the community. The City received emails from the community on this topic and Vice Mayor Chahal asked for more notice to the City when fences are put up and to disseminate this information to the public.

Director Teixeira provided an update on new parks and rehabilitation projects.

Director of Bond Projects Larry Adams commented that the District has begun construction of a new fence between Bowers Elementary School and the park and has put signs up on the new fences to inform the community. They have been taking calls and emails from concerned residents.

Mayor Gillmor spoke about the recent passing of Don Callejon and asked the District to inform the City of their plans to honor Mr. Callejon.

A motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Ratermann, seconded by Vice Mayor Chahal, and was unanimously carried. The next regularly scheduled meeting is the first Wednesday in May. The meeting was adjourned at 1:38 p.m.