

Town of Los Altos Hills

City Council Special Meeting Minutes

Wednesday January 25, 2023

Council Chambers, 26379 Fremont Road, Los Altos Hills, California

Present: Mayor Lynda Swan, Vice Mayor Stanley Q. Mok, Councilmember Lisa Schmidt, Councilmember George Tyson
Absent: Councilmember Kavita Tankha
Staff: City Manager Peter Pirnejad, City Attorney Steve Mattas (left the meeting at 11:45 am), Planning Director Sofia Mangalam, Public Works Director/City Engineer WooJae Kim, Administrative Services Director Sarina Revillar, Community Services Manager Sarah Robustelli, Maintenance Superintendent Michael Schloetter, Senior Planner Elaine Ling, Utility Engineering Manager Daniel Liang, Management Analyst II Cody Einfalt, City Clerk Deborah Padovan

CALL TO ORDER (9:00 A.M.)

- A. Roll Call
- B. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Swan called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Mayor Swan said **Councilmember Tankha** will be given a chance to weigh in at the next meeting.

1. STUDY SESSION ON COUNCIL PRIORITY SETTING AND 2023 WORK PLAN

A. Introductory Remarks

City Manager Peter Pirnejad provided introductory remarks.

Facilitator Dan Rich, Renne Public Management Group, San Francisco, introduced the agenda and ground rules for the day, as well as the foundational principles for goal setting.

Executive Director Nelson Fialho, Renne Public Management Group, San Francisco, introduced himself to the City Council and shared the top challenges facing local governments in 2023.

City Manager Pirnejad explained that in January 2022, Council identified four value/priority areas to focus on for that calendar year. They were:

- Quality of Life and Community Character

- Public Safety
- Effective Service Delivery and Governance
- Infrastructure

All the goals that were established fell into those categories. Twenty-three projects with 56 milestones were established and 32 Council initiatives were added throughout the year. Of all of those, about 76% were completed and the rest carried over to the next year. He then reviewed those that were carried over. He explained how the work plan was assembled, and the timeline of events leading up to today's session.

He then outlined the four lists that the Council will create today:

- Proposed 2023 Work Plan
- The "Parking Lot"
- Committee Goals for 2023
- Any new items added at this meeting

Finally, he presented the Proposed 2023 Work Plan.

Council Recess at 10:15 a.m.

Council Reconvened to Open Session at 10:25 a.m.

Council questions and initial discussion followed.

B. Public Comment (Public Comment is Limited to Items which are the Subject of the Special Meeting)

Birgitta Indaco, Los Altos Hills, said it was interesting how we have to be so reactionary to all state mandated things. She would like to be proactive. She would like to add in a few things to protect the green sheets ideas - having horses and farm animals in Los Altos Hills. She would also like to highlight that the fence ordinance. Why is it not ready? The security of residents should also be addressed.

Duffy Price, Los Altos Hills, addressed local control, and said it is slipping away. One of the reasons is that the League of California Cities has failed to follow what cities have asked. She said that the town should let them know that we are unhappy with that action, and we should no longer pay dues.

Bob Elson, Los Altos Hills, said he doesn't see any new pathways or funding for building pathways in 2023. He hopes the town completes the pathway system. He suggested utilizing the committees to minimize staff time. Committees have a lot to contribute. He supports the green sheets and keeping the rural nature of the town.

Carol Gottlieb, Los Altos Hills, she supported the green sheets and the support of having farm animals in town. The fence ordinance should also be a priority. The

History Committee can help in making Westwind Community Barn a state designated landmark.

Allan Epstein, Los Altos Hills, commented about the process. Why are items on the list that are routine items? He thinks a number of things could be removed from the list. Some things are missing relating to the sewer system - issues with capacity and changes in the town affect the needs for additional capacity. There are some changes to the municipal code relating to procurement process.

Anand Ranganathan, Los Altos Hills, wrote to the Council about putting the reach codes on the priority list. He asked that the reach codes be moved out of the parking lot. Passing a reach code that affects existing buildings this year should also be added. Climate Change is not waiting for us to go through our bureaucratic processes.

Ann Duwe, Los Altos Hills, recommended that we be proactive in promoting elements of the green sheets and that we join with other communities in challenging HCD (California Department of Housing and Community Development), its process and its numbers. The requirements are wreaking havoc with local control. We should be able to find a way to work with other cities to challenge the RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Allocation) process. We should consider delaying our dues to the League of California Cities.

Teresa Baker, Los Altos Hills, said she wants to codify the green sheets and maintain them. She wants to see horses and other animals in the future. We also need to finish the pathways.

Kjell Karlsson, Los Altos Hills, urged Council make sure that they direct staff to send a message to the League of California Cities. Also, **Councilmember Tankha** is not here. She should have input.

Identify Possible Additions to the Work Plan

Further Council discussion ensued on potential additions to the proposed work plan:

Councilmember Tyson said that he has three things that he wants to elevate:

1. Reach Codes.
2. Support of the pathway expansion.
3. Continue with the fence ordinance.

Two things that people have spoken about are the green sheets and farm animals. He supports the farm animals completely. The green sheets - the enormous workload to add an item to the ballot - that is a huge lift. He does not see the sewer rate study, the conveyance charges as rising issues.

Mayor Swan said that a previous Council voted to do away with the pathway system. There is more to keeping the green sheets than the farm animals. She wants to be proactive. She also wants to see the fees reviewed and the process streamlined for ADUs.

Regarding sewer rates - she thinks a fairness comes into play and we should look into see if we are overpaying.

Vice Mayor Mok:

1. Legacy giving - that needs to be prioritized. We need to promote this to a priority item.
2. Gas shut off valve.
3. Reach codes.
4. Fence ordinance.
5. Green sheets.
6. Pathways.
7. Sewer fees.

Councilmember Schmidt:

1. Green sheets - in the most cost-effective way.
2. Reach codes.
3. More meat on the pathway discussion.
4. Emergency safety by the Emergency Preparedness and Response Committee. Put some money in the program for that during the budget cycle.
5. Fence ordinance.

Vice Mayor Mok noted said that the broadband issue is a multi-year issue.

The meeting went into Recess for lunch at 12:15 p.m.

The meeting Reconvened to Open Session at 12:49 p.m.

Discussion of Additional Items Identified Prior to Lunch

Council discussion ensued on the following:

- Reach Codes
- Pathways (Planning and Implementation)
- Fence Ordinance
- Codification of Green Sheets
- Sewer Rate Study
- ADU Incentives
- Broadband
- Legacy Giving
- Gas Shut-Off Valves

- Emergency Safety Outreach

Public Comment

Allan Epstein, Los Altos Hills, said it is not a sewer rate study, what it being proposed is the equity and fairness of what is being charged for the processing of conveyance. To determine whether or not we are being unfairly charged. If we are being overly charged, then we can start the discussion with Palo Alto and Los Altos. He mentioned Matadero Creek, and said we need to do more than to get a permit.

Birgitta Indaco, Los Altos Hills, said the fencing ordinance - it has now become property perimeter fencing all around. You cannot turn back the hands of time, there will be no code enforcement issue if they are allowed to do that. The problem is as permits are coming in, we get tested each time.

Bob Elson, Los Altos Hills, said we need to update code enforcement. For fencing, for pathways. Enforce our rules.

Duffy Price, Los Altos Hills, reemphasized that local control is slipping away. The Council needs to take action. The town as a group needs to let the league know that we are not happy. Invite the new president of the League of California Cities. Send a letter. Before we pay our dues, we need to invite the president to come talk to the town.

Anand Ranganathan, Los Altos Hills, thank you for taking the reach codes seriously. On priorities in general, he asked that one of things that blinded us as a community, was we wanted something that took a life of its own. It would be useful to create a process, have staff tell us if it will affect their priorities for the year. We need a process that it is made clear beforehand (not after). Regarding the sewer rate study, he said Council increased rates based on certain assumptions about the number of new houses that would be built. It is possible to go back and reevaluate to see if more or less money is coming in than is needed.

Jim Waschura, Los Altos Hills, it needs to be considered that the Planning Department is seriously overextended right now. Personnel changes are coming. Most of what we do in the planning area is mandated. Are they considering splitting the Building from the Planning Department? It could help balance what goes on in the two different departments.

Kjell Karlsson, Los Altos Hills, said it was a great idea to add resources to have a separate Planning and Building department. We should really understand what adding resources really means.

Forced Ranking on Changes to the 2023 Priorities

The Council then ranked their priorities. They were each given three dot stickers and were to place them next to their three top priorities.

The forced ranking results were as follows:

Mayor Swan:

- Pathways
- Legacy Giving
- Green Sheets

Vice Mayor Mok:

- Reach Codes
- Legacy Giving
- Green Sheets

Councilmember Schmidt:

- Reach Codes
- Pathways
- Fence Ordinance

Councilmember Tyson:

- Reach Codes
- Pathways
- Fence Ordinance

The results were as follows:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| • Reach Codes (3) | • ADU Incentives |
| • Pathways (Planning/Implementation) (3) | • Broadband |
| • Fence Ordinance (2) | • Legacy Giving (2) |
| • Codify Green Sheets (2) | • Gas Shut-Off Valves |
| • Sewer Rate Study | • Emergency Safety Outreach |

The meeting went into Recess at 2:08 p.m. for **STAFF HUDDLE**

The meeting Reconvened to Open Session at 2:36 p.m.

C. Council Priority Setting

City Manager Pirnejad presented the possible changes to the work plan.

Possible Deletions to Work Plan

1. Adobe Creek CIP
2. Addressing fire code application in town for development (AMMR)

Possible Additions to the Work Plan

1. Reach Codes - will need additional resources and staffing
2. Pathways
 - a. Initiate multi-year plan to finish pathway system design - contractor
 - b. Initiate construction on next 3.6 miles of pathways - contract and staffing

Council discussion ensued.

D. Recommendation and Motion to Approve a 2023 Work Plan

No action was taken. City Manager Pirnejad stated that the 2023 Work Plan would be on the February 16, 2023 City Council agenda for approval.

2. **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 2:51 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Padovan

Deborah Padovan
City Clerk

The minutes of the January 25, 2023, special City Council meeting were approved as presented at the February 16, 2023, regular City Council meeting.