

PORTOLA VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING NO. 985, MARCH 25, 2020

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Aalfs called the Town Council's Special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Hanlon called the roll.

Present: Councilmembers Craig Hughes, John Richards, and Ann Wengert; Vice Mayor Maryann Derwin; Mayor Jeff Aalfs

Absent: None

Others: Jeremy Dennis, Town Manager
Cara Silver, Town Attorney
Howard Young, Public Works Director
Sharon Hanlon, Town Clerk

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor Aalfs announced that several local partners in public service have joined the meeting, which was held via teleconference.

Capt. Corpus, San Mateo County Sheriff's Office. Capt. Corpus reinforced that the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office is committed to continuing to provide professional law enforcement services with a focus on keeping the community safe during these unprecedented times. She said they are being very visible in the communities and educating people on social distancing, trying to adhere as best as possible to the shelter in place. Mayor Aalfs thanked the Sheriff's Office for being so helpful and responsive.

Roberta Zarea, Superintendent, Portola Valley School District. Ms. Zarea thanked the community for their help during these trying times. She said the parents are working as partners to implement the distance learning plans the teachers and staff are providing. She said today they completed their sixth day of distance learning. The school closure notice has been extended to May 1. She said the second phase of distance learning will ramp up after spring break. She said they are providing any possible means of support for families and students, particularly providing lunch. She thanked Assistant to the Town Manager de Garneau and the Farmer's Market for the donations of the food boxes. Mayor Aalfs expressed the Town's appreciation for the School District's efforts.

Selena Brown, Public Education Officer/CERPP Coordinator, Woodside Fire Protection District. Ms. Brown thanked the community for their amazing support. She said the Fire District and Emergency Preparedness Program have been reaching out as much as possible to try to connect all the residents that want to assist in providing their skills to the high-risk population.

Karyn Bechtel, Chair, Portola Valley School District. She said, with regard to collaboration and opportunity while sheltering in place, to keep in mind that all children are eligible to pick up food through the food program, not just qualifying children and not just children who attend the schools. She directed people to visit the School District website for the drop-off locations. She said the School District goal is make sure all children are fed.

CONSENT AGENDA

- (1) **Approval of Minutes** – Town Council Regular Meeting of February 26, 2020. *[Removed from Consent Agenda.]*
- (2) **Ratification of Warrant List** – March 11, 2020, in the amount of \$160,817.15.

- (3) **Approval of Warrant List** – March 25, 2020, in the amount of \$67,059.00.
- (4) **Request by Portola Valley Neighbors United** – Town Council Recognition of Portola Valley Neighbors United for Facility Use *[Removed from Consent Agenda]*
- (5) **Recommendation by Town Manager** – Frog Pond Open Space Restricted Fund *[Removed from Consent Agenda]*

Vice-Mayor Derwin moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 2 and 3. Seconded by Councilmember Hughes, the motion carried 5-0, by roll call vote.

- (1) **Approval of Minutes** – Town Council Regular Meeting of February 26, 2020.

The approval of minutes was carried 3-0-2, by roll call vote with Councilmember Hughes and Councilmember Wengert abstaining.

- (4) **Request by Portola Valley Neighbors United** – Town Council Recognition of Portola Valley Neighbors United for Facility Use

Mayor Aalfs said this is the first time taking comments on Consent Agenda items. Comments will be limited to two minutes each.

Resident Mary Hufty said they are happy to be on the agenda tonight and the acceptance received from the Town with regard to their mission to support and inform the community, governance, and staff of issues of importance to the Townspeople. She said they have been successful in getting momentum and traction and are pleased to be part of the process. She said their website – pvnu.org – is up and running with regular lively new additions.

Councilmember Hughes moved to approve Consent Agenda Item 4. Seconded by Vice-Mayor Derwin, the motion carried 5-0, by roll call vote.

- (5) **Recommendation by Town Manager** – Frog Pond Open Space Restricted Fund

Councilmember Hughes asked if the intention over time is to have a separate restricted fund for each Town-owned property. He asked about the logic behind creating a separate fund for this piece of open space as opposed to open space generally. Town Manager Dennis said this was a request from a resident through the Conservation Committee. He said it is anticipated there will be a desire for more of these restricted funds. He explained it is a different type of expenditure than the Open Space Acquisition Fund, which is the purchase of property. He said these restrictive funds would allow for some ongoing maintenance efforts, which are appreciated at the staff level. He said there is increased desire for expenditures to bring the properties up to a certain level of maintenance and then maintain that maintenance over the longer term, as expressed by Council direction and priorities last year. He said staff would certainly welcome additional such restricted funds to support other properties. He said this ask was primarily driven by the interest of a resident who wishes to make a donation specifically to that fund. Councilmember Hughes asked if that meant extra money in the Frog Pond maintenance fund could not be used for another property that needed extra work. Town Manager Dennis said that is correct. He said there could be a restricted maintenance fund for all properties created; however, he suspected that residents may be more interested in contributing to funds specific to those open spaces for which they have a personal connection rather than a general fund.

Mayor Aalfs invited questions from other Councilmembers regarding this item. Hearing none, he invited public comment or questions. Hearing none, Mayor Aalfs brought the item back to the Council for discussion.

Councilmember Hughes said he was concerned about creating separate individual parcel restricted funds. He said he appreciated setting up a restricted fund for open space maintenance but separately funding each parcel does not seem like the right approach because it would limit the Council's flexibility in maintaining the open spaces. He understands that desire for people to contribute to the park next door but that is not how public services typically work. He said typically contributions are put into a communal pot so that the entire community benefits and shares. He said unless there is a particularly strong reason to limit it to just the Frog Pond property, he would be more supportive of making it available for maintenance across all of the open space properties. He said the funds set aside for the road remnant property already had significant commitment to fund something very specific. However, because he did not understand the logistics of that, he said he abstained from voting for it. He said he is leery of going down this path that could result in separate maintenance funds for each of the 35 Town-owned parcels, which will rapidly become unmanageable.

Town Manager Dennis said the ask came from a specific resident who would otherwise not make that contribution to something more general. He said this approach could benefit from a broader Council conversation. He said it is not unprecedented and there are similarities to the types of programs seen in other parks and rec programs where people will buy a bench or support a tree. Town Manager Dennis speculated that a program could be created that would allow residents to support a handful of the priority open space properties. He said the majority of the properties owned by the Town are not classic open space.

Councilmember Wengert said Councilmember Hughes' point is valid. She said the time to consider a specific Frog Pond Open Space restricted fund should come at the time the Council discusses the following three items noted in the staff report. She said she was uneasy with the potential expansion of that open space and there is a lot more to discuss in that regard. She said it makes sense to potentially take this step at the same time the next set of work is done or not take it at all.

Councilmember Richards said there are good points being made regarding the difficulty of having a separate fund for every open space in town. He liked the idea of setting up more of a programed approach with a certain set of open spaces singled out in some way rather than just a broader fund. He agreed with Town Manager Dennis that some of the donations are meant to be targeted and may not be offered without that option.

Councilmember Hughes asked if the dollar amount of this particular pledge would be consumed fairly quickly if used as directed by the Conservation Committee to bring the park up to a basic level. He asked if a temporary specific fund was created now, if the offered contribution would likely be spent down quickly anyway. Then later, a more general open space maintenance fund could be discussed and possibly created.

Town Manager Dennis said he would prefer to wait until the Committees' efforts around the vision statements for the open space properties were completed before contemplating expenditures out of any restricted open space property fund. He said would anticipate monies would be spent fairly quickly, depending on the level of maintenance work.

Councilmember Hughes said, with regard to his earlier comments about preferring to see a more unified fund with greater flexibility, it matters if there will be a balance carried. He said if a contribution is collected that will be quickly spent on a specific project in a specific open space, it is less concerning. He said he is more concerned about maintaining flexibility with a long-term pool of money for funding ongoing maintenance efforts because some properties will need more than others in different years.

Councilmember Richards said bringing the Frog Pond and that area up to speed will take a substantial amount of money and any contributions would be quickly spent.

Councilmember Hughes moved to approve Consent Agenda Item 5. Seconded by Councilmember Richards; the motion carried 3-2, by roll call vote. Councilmember Wengert and Vice-Mayor Derwin voted nay.

REGULAR AGENDA

(6) Updates on COVID-19 and Town Response

Town Manager Dennis said the Town communications to the residents is coming primarily through the Mayor. Beginning yesterday, there will be daily roundups of important information learned and answers to any questions the Mayor has received through email or have been seen on Next Door, PV Forum, or other places. If additional information needs to get out, staff will continue to push it out. He recommended clicking on the red banner at the top of the Town's website, which is continuously updated.

Town Manager Dennis thanked Communications & Community Engagement Analyst Kari Chinn and Assistant to the Town Manager Brandi de Garmeaux for all of the work they've put into ensuring that the most amount of information is getting out to the most amount of people, including setting up conference calls with a variety of interested parties, making this meeting possible. Town Manager Dennis said Portola Valley is the first in San Mateo County to have a meeting that allows residents to communicate live from a remote location.

Town Manager Dennis said today is day three of the Town's construction suspension. He said it was a difficult message to send to the community because of the impact. He was happy to report that the construction community and those residents impacted by the suspension have been very positive and understanding in their comments to staff about Council's decision. He said the approach has been duplicated in other cities and Atherton, Menlo Park, and Woodside have implemented what they are referring to as the "PV model." He said there are some life and safety construction items still ongoing. He said residents who have any questions can contact Planning & Building Director Laura Russell or her staff. For projects that are expected to be ongoing because of their nature (significant erosion control projects or life and safety kitchens), the Town has attempted to keep residents in close proximity to those projects informed.

Town Manager Dennis said he issued a temporary parking restriction around Windy Hill because there were significant life and safety issues observed with parking in the street on Upper Alpine, bicyclists, and negative interactions regarding social distancing. Town Manager Dennis thanked Laurie Duval, who coordinates Neighborhood Watch for her help. He said he has been communicating very positively with residents on Willowbrook so they know there is someone they can come to with any issues. He said the Willowbrook community understands there is a regional asset just outside their door that comes with challenges and benefits. Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD), who operates Windy Hill, issued a new set of regulations today, titled "Help Up Keep Our Parks Open (available on their website), that speaks to the need for social distancing on the trails, and there will be more to come from them.

Town Manager Dennis said the managers have started work on a project to examine thoroughly the effect the shelter in place order has on the Town's finances. He said there will surely be decreases in revenue streams such as sales tax, permit processing, and facility events. There will also be reduced expenditures such as projects that have not been started and consultant fees. He said within a week the Finance team will provide him with the estimated range of impact of the shelter in place order. Staff will then consult with the Council Finance Subcommittee (Councilmembers Wengert and Councilmember).

Town Manager Dennis said staff is discussing whether or not spring quarter for classes is even possible and what it will look like for leagues and the Town fields. He said staff is inclined to allow for a season that goes later than normally allowed on the fields. He said it is anticipated the shelter in place order will continue for some time which will definitely impact classes. He said the Farmer's Market pickup

opportunity has been very successful, with 150 basic veggie bags sold out, 123 specialty veggie bags sold out, 52 bags donated to families of children who come to PVSD from outside the community, and 100 pounds of ground beef sold out. The food essentials bag did not sell out, partially because there was no picture available to show people what was in it. He said they worked with the vendor so that the Town covers the cost of the administration but not the cost of the bags, with any leftover bags for essentials being returned to the Farmer's Market and sold. He thanked Assistant to the Town Manager de Garreaux and Nile and Lauren with the Farmer's Market for creating the program. They have received a lot of emails from Town residents thanking the team.

Town Manager Dennis said there are restaurants and other businesses still open in Portola Valley and residents are encouraged to visit them for take-out needs.

Town Manager Dennis warned about a PG&E scam going around where residents are being asked via email to keep their side gates on for access to look at meters.

Town Manager Dennis asked residents to let staff know if they are listening via AM radio.

Town Manager Dennis said staff has been doing well under these extraordinary circumstances with everyone except for Public Works is working from home. He said it is working well and everyone is in good spirits. He thanked everyone on the staff for making this something to be proud of. He said Public Works is on the front lines in Town doing life and safety work. They continue on the 9/80 work schedule and the rest of staff is working from home on a Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00, schedule.

Town Manager Dennis said the County has banned evictions in all 20 cities. A program called San Mateo County Strong has been created that takes donations for residents, nonprofit organizations, and small businesses that are particularly hard hit. He said the County seeded that program with \$3 million. The website is at smcstrong.org.

Town Manager Dennis said this afternoon the County issued new guidance on the park system and encouraged much more social distancing, anticipating more parking lot closures for the County park systems, with some parks already closed. He said the County Health Officer issued strong guidance around visiting recreational opportunities, recommending people not travel for recreation.

Mayor Aalfs invited questions from the Council.

Councilmember Richards thanked the Mayor for the great job he's doing in community messaging.

Councilmember Hughes thanked Town Manager Dennis and staff for keeping everyone so well informed and doing a tremendous job despite these completely unprecedented circumstances.

Councilmember Wengert agreed with the previous comments. She there was a discussion today by Charlie Crocker of Zonehaven regarding the establishment of evacuation zones throughout the County. There has been a pivot on their previous focus on wildfires, to creating and modifying the maps to provide more information to all the affected communities in San Mateo County that includes medical, social services, food, and parks and rec. She requested that the Town Manager look into the parks and rec portion of it which may be a great potential tool to identify places for people to go.

Councilmember Hughes agreed the Town should research the parks and rec information. He said because Portola Valley is fairly small, although for fire evacuation purposes the town is split into multiple zones, the same information pretty much applies across town for COVID-19 purposes. He suggested using the link from the Zonehaven site to the Town's website and then focus activities on making sure it has the most relevant information for the Town citizens. He said it might be useful for other parts of the County more than Portola Valley and we should make sure they're not recommending people drive to and

park in Portola Valley to visit Windy Hill. Councilmember Hughes suggested the Portola Valley website would be a better tool.

Town Attorney Silver said the presentation was intended for local agencies to make individual comments and it may be an appropriate tool to specify any parking restrictions that apply to the trails in town.

Councilmember Wengert supported Town Attorney Silver's idea. She said having that resource being used by a broader group of people throughout the County potentially increases the possibility that people will look to see where there are parks to visit. Her concern is that purposes were not being crossed.

Mayor Aalfs agreed that outreach should be done on that question. With no other Council questions, he invited questions or comments from the public.

(7) **Recommendation by Public Works Director** – Adoption of a Resolution for the 2019/2020 Street Resurfacing Project – Surface Seals Project No. 2020-PW01

- (a) Adoption of a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley Approving Plans and Specifications and Calling for Bids for the 2019/2020 Street Resurfacing Project Surface Seals No. 2020-PW01 (Resolution No. __)

Public Works Director Young presented the staff report regarding the proposed resolution for the 2019/2020 street resurfacing project and surface seals project. He noted that this project was planned and assembled prior to the COVID-19 related shelter in place. He described the background and discussion items and the fiscal impact, as detailed in the staff report.

Staff recommended adoption of the resolution approving plans and specifications for the FY 2019-20 Street Resurfacing project and calling for sealed bids for this project; authorize the Town Manager to award the project to the lowest responsible bidder with a total contract and change order amount not to exceed \$596,604 (base bid and additive bid alternate one). This would include authorization to add to (or subtract from) the project, additional work as recommended by the Public Works Director if the allocated amount allows, in an effort to maximize paved areas and utilize the entire allocated amount; and, authorize the Town Manager to award additive bid alternate two as aligned with the Council adopted budget for improvements related to the Pedestrian Safety Study, as detailed in the staff report.

Mayor Aalfs invited questions from the Council.

Councilmember Richards asked Public Works Director Young if the usual bidders were operating and if they were even in a position to bid. Public Works Director Young said some are still open and some have an outgoing voicemail message that they are closed due to COVID-19.

In response to Councilmember Wengert's question, Public Works Director Young said the Alternate Bid 2 items are included in this year's adopted budget. Councilmember Wengert asked why they wouldn't then be part of the base bid if they were part of the adopted budget. Public Works Director Young said it is not within the base bid because they're not within the resurfacing area and he wanted to separate those costs out. In response to Councilmember Wengert's question, Public Works Director Young said it is a separate budget item from the resurfacing budget.

In response to Councilmember Wengert's question, Public Works Director Young said the plan is to do the rolling on the shoulders of the Portola Road sections. Councilmember Wengert asked if that will be happening on any of the other main arterials. Public Works Director Young said the rolling arterials that were previously approved (Portola and Alpine) were included in the bid package. He said they can certainly add other streets for rolling.

Councilmember Hughes said the estimated project completion will be into the following budget year. He asked if this will all be charged against this year, even if the payment is not made to the contractor until next year. Public Works Director Young said a rollover was not anticipated. He said last year was different because the paving project was held off for a bit. He said the anticipated finish date is at the end of June and the July 10 date is the conservative estimate.

In response to Councilmember Hughes' question, Public Works Director Young confirmed that the base projects and Alternate #2 items will be done for sure, but Alternate #1 will only happen if the base projects come in under budget and there is room in the budget to do it. Public Works Director Young explained that separating out Alternate #2 also highlights it as a topic for discussion at Council level and so that the Council and public are aware that these projects are moving forward.

Town Manager Dennis said the Town tends to go to bid on roads a bit earlier than other cities, budgeting for roads projects to happen at the end of the fiscal year as opposed to the start of the fiscal year. He said in a normal year they would be discussing altering that because it has caused some accounting challenges in the past. He said that issue will be brought to Council during a normal year's budget discussion.

Councilmember Hughes asked if the contractors were committing to a particular start/end date with their bid submissions. He asked if projects that are delayed due to COVID would need to be rebid. Public Works Director Young said the specifications indicate the bids are good for 45 days, as per Public Contracts Code. He did not know whether or not that 45 days is flexible.

Town Attorney Silver said her understanding is that the Public Contracts Code allows advertising a longer-term price guarantee in the bid request. However, it would be likely that contractors would then bid a higher price based on the longer price guarantee period.

Mayor Aalfs invited questions from the public.

Kristi Corley. Ms. Corley asked if they were planning to resurface the flat area on the corner of Golden Oak and Alpine, across from Alpine Swim & Tennis, across from the crosswalk. She said AT&T, PG&E, and others are parking there and it's not in good condition. Public Works Director Young said that area will be slurry sealed and any necessary repairs will be made.

With no other public comments, Mayor Aalfs brought the item back to the Council for discussion.

Town Manager Dennis acknowledged that life has changed fairly radically in the last few weeks and the future is unknown. He said there was discussion about whether the road work item should have been included on the Agenda at this time. He said they are not assuming that suddenly in a couple of weeks things will be normal, but in order to potentially do the things normally done, they wanted to start this process. Town Manager Dennis said he wanted to acknowledge that it was definitely recognized how peculiar this all is. He said this ultimately commits to an expenditure of approximately \$70,000 for design. They would then get bids and make a decision. He said last year one of the concerns was that so many firms that do this kind of work were getting quality, large jobs in other places and the bids were far outside what was anticipated. He said tonight's request includes allowing the Town Manager to make the call about whether or not to move forward. He said this year will clearly be a different environment. Town Manager Dennis said he has explained to the Interim Finance Director and her staff that anything on the General Fund dollars expenditure side that has not been started will be fair game to assist in any financial hit the Town takes during all of this. He said most of the money for these road projects comes from nondiscretionary sources, either very specific to exactly these kinds of projects or right-of-way work. He said there is approximately \$120,000 of General Fund dollars, but the rest comes from funds received from the State and other sources. He said there are issues that come from potentially not moving forward, but they all can be handled. He said for transparency, not to sway the conversation, but to provide clarity on what that looks like – the State has requirements around a Maintenance of Effort (MOE), which will be

a problem for all cities. He said the Town is required to contribute a certain amount of funding for these types of projects because the State does not want the towns and cities to rely solely on their funds. He said some of these funds, as per the Town's right, to support salaries for the Public Works Department. He said that, given the current circumstances, the Council can certainly ask for the item to come back at some point if there is a desire to have some increased level of oversight. He said the staff is committed to provide, through the Finance subcommittee, staff's analysis of the impacts on revenue and expenditures. He said if things need to be delayed, they will do that, either through Council direction or under the Town Manager's authority. He said project starts can be delayed and monies can be moved to the next year. He said the MOE requirements would be met in that case. Town Manager Dennis said there will be other issues brought forward that may seem a bit out of place, but if things are still operating, they want to provide some level of ability to move forward on those things.

Councilmember Hughes said he appreciates that there is a lot of the usual blocking and tackling that needs to be continued at some level. He said road maintenance is one of the largest single expenditures every year and it is worth proceeding toward bids. He said he is supportive of recommendations #1 and #3. He said because the financial future is uncertain around COVID-19, as the Town works through that with the Finance subcommittee (he and Councilmember Wengert) and the Town staff, there will be a clearer picture of that by mid-May. He said the go/no-go decision can be made at that point. He said in order to make that decision in May, the bid needs to be put out now, but the approval for starting the project can be held back until May 13.

Town Manager Dennis suggested the motion be amended to include bringing the item back at the May 13 Council meeting to provide information on the bid. Councilmember Hughes suggested that also include anything the Council needs to know that's relevant around the MOE and different funding sources. He said the State and County are currently focused on unemployment insurance, making sure the elderly are getting food, and housing the homeless. Over the course of the next month or so, they will likely be moving on to less pressing issues.

David Cardinal. Mr. Cardinal said he does not know how much discretion there is on how to spend pavement money but he would be happy to drive on bumpy roads if it means the Town can spend more money helping people and businesses that have been affected by this crisis. He said unless it's a safety issue, he'd rather see the money go somewhere else. Town Manager Dennis said he loves the sentiment; however, the majority of the funds are restricted and not allowed to be used for other things. They are either used for something related to road or nothing. Mr. Cardinal wondered if there was some flexibility on that. He suggested going back in the spirit of the times and there may be some changes in the way the funds are allocated. Mayor Aalfs said he is not sure that is possible around road funding. He said they've discussed this issue fairly often, for example being able to save a half million dollars one year by not doing the roads, but every year the routine maintenance is delayed the roads suffer more damage to the point where if it's delayed too many years it is a \$2 million cost to restore. He said it is a balancing act. He understands the point and likes the idea of having flexibility but it is complicated.

Councilmember Wengert said this is an incredibly difficult time right now and she is very uncomfortable looking at any expenditure of half a million dollars for some of the reasons Mr. Cardinal articulated. She said there have been long and robust discussions over the years of why these dollars typically need to get spent and are available on a fully discretionary basis. She said Public Works Director Young has indicated it will cost \$70,000 just to get the bids. She said there will need to be a very hard look taken at the Town's entire financial picture. She asked if there is the ability to back the schedule up. She said she does not think there will be a lot of firms available to bid right now until the shelter in place and some normalcy begins to reestablish itself in all businesses in the County. She would not want to spend \$70,000 to go out to bid when they will not get a reasonable number of bids. She said it will be incredibly difficult to bid a job like this right now. She said nobody knows if the workforce will be available, if costs will go up because supply chains have been interrupted, etc. She said the uncertainty associated with all parts of this suggest this whole schedule be backed up to at least the lifting of the shelter in place and possibly beyond and that there is an intermediate review by the Council prior to the final awarding of any contract.

Town Manager Dennis said the issue can be backed up. He agreed the uncertainty is challenging. He said there may be challenges associated with pushing it back. If the economy comes back, there may be the same problems as in previous years about whether or not Portola Valley will be an attractive place for a bid and what that would look like. He said those are problems that can be dealt with then with the understanding that it could cost more.

Public Works Director Young said the \$70,000 to go out to bid actually includes \$50,000 already spent in the design. He said it can be pushed further down the line. He said one of the concerns would be weather because a good quality job of slurry seal cannot be done in October and November. He said in the summer the costs could go up 10 to 20 percent because a lot of cities and schools start bidding things out in the summer, which is why the Town tries to go out to bid a bit earlier to be first in line and get better pricing. He said at this time, because the design is done, if it gets pushed off too long, the base failures marked out for repair may become obsolete. He said those things can be addressed later on by refreshing the design, which would have a cost.

Councilmember Richards said he would support holding off a bit. He said the long lead time for preparation has already been done and will allow a bit more flexibility when they get to the point where some of the bidders will be available and ready to go. He would prefer to conserve as much cash as possible right now. He said although those are restricted funds, it should be looked into if there is any possibility to use those funds for other means as this whole situation develops.

Town Manager Dennis said the way the staff report is currently written, there is zero obligation to spend the majority of the dollars and would only happen with a decision by the Town Manager or modified to come back to the Counsel. He said there is no obligation to spend \$600,000 at this point should the Town go out for bid. Councilmember Richards agreed with Councilmember Hughes' suggestion to bring it back to the Council.

In response to Vice-Mayor Derwin's question, Public Works Director Young confirmed that if the Town was going to do this whole road project now, and there was not a pandemic, it would cost \$120,000 out of the Town's General Fund with the rest coming from the transportation funds that come in every year. Vice-Mayor Derwin said she sits on two transportation boards and the dedicated funds are dedicated to roads, potholes, highways, etc. She said, while it is a wonderful sentiment, the Town will never be allowed to use those funds to help, for example, struggling businesses. Vice-Mayor Derwin supported pushing forward, putting it out for bid. She supported Councilmember Hughes' suggestion to come back in May when there is more of an idea of what the world looks like and then make a decision to proceed or not.

Councilmember Hughes said he would prefer to go out to bid now because there is the outside chance a bid will come back way under the estimate because no one else is bidding. He said because the design costs are already spent, getting those bids in, even if not acted upon on May 13, may result in a low-ball offer and there is not a lot of downside to putting it out to bid now. He said it can be put out to bid again later if they decide not to proceed but having the option to proceed will be nice for when the financial picture is clearer in May. Mayor Aalfs added that if the bid is put out now, they could be keeping people employed, which will be good for everyone.

Councilmember Wengert said she understands the desire to foster businesses, but there is still a shelter in place order and putting these bids out next week could encourage some level of commerce that may not be appropriate for a municipality. She said obviously a number of businesses will not be bidding and it doesn't seem like a fair competitive environment if some are adhering to all of the orders to limit activity. She said this makes her uncomfortable pushing ahead of at least the next level of COVID activity settling into the next phase.

Mayor Aalfs acknowledged that was a fair point.

Public Works Director Young clarified that he would not assume the paving companies will not submit bids because although the offices may be closed during the shelter in place, the employees are working from home. He anticipated there would be bids submitted, particularly due to the current work environment.

Vice-Mayor Derwin asked if the workers had to leave their homes to come on-site to do the bids or if they are familiar enough with the area they can bid without leaving their home. Public Works Director Young said the standard bid process is staff would recognize social distancing by sending something out that instructs bidders to FedEx their bids, which must be opened and read aloud publicly. If the bidders do show up, an outdoor area or the community hall will be set up to recognize the social distancing requirements.

Town Manager Dennis said this conversation is similar to the other discussions around construction. He said roadwork is an essential service, although it is acknowledged that there is obviously unease about creating environments where people could be exposed.

Councilmember Wengert said the Town is among the communities leading in the COVID activity and environment and making sure that we're shutting down as much commercial activity in town as possible. She is concerned about the continuation of business that would involve contractors or others coming out to look at this project, having to visit each of the streets on the list. She suggested not moving forward with this until at least the next stage of the COVID crisis.

Councilmember Hughes asked Public Works Director Young if the bidders need to come on-site and inspect the locations or if they are they bidding from the engineering drawings. Public Works Director Young said the bidders will come on-site and that will include multiple subcontractors – base repairs, crack seals, slurry seals, and striping. He would expect that the smart contractors will not bid merely by a piece of paper but will come out to inspect the streets and their condition, shading, and available parking. Councilmember Hughes said he did not realize there was such extensive activity just to do the bidding and that information puts him more in line with Councilmember Wengert's opinion.

Councilmember Richards agreed that the Town would not accept a bid from any bidder that did not come out and inspect the site. He agrees that this project should at least wait until the next phase of the crisis and people should not be encouraged to step over the line and break the social distancing rules.

Mayor Aalfs agreed.

Councilmember Hughes suggested continuing this item to the April 13 Town Council meeting. Town Manager Dennis said he would assume this item would be tabled for more than a few meetings. The schools have extended their closures until May 1. He said it may not make much sense to set a date at this point.

Vice-Mayor Derwin asked if this item is tabled now, it means it is basically tabled for a year. Public Works Director Young said because of the way the fiscal year lines out and the expenditure of the funds, that is correct. Town Manager Dennis said, moving forward, the Town would state a certain amount of road-related money is not being spent, both discretionary and nondiscretionary funds. He said there will then be follow-up conversations held with Town Attorney Silver and his counterparts related to what the State may or may not do with those funds. He said there is something of a grace period going into next year around that but it is an unknown at this point. He said there should be full acknowledgement that when the economy comes back online, the Town may not be able to get to a project next year because of issues related to competing with other projects, bids that are too expensive, or weather.

Vice-Mayor Derwin asked if there was a way to queue this up so that if things looked better on April 13, the Council could move forward with it. Town Manager Dennis said the item can be brought back to the next regularly scheduled meeting as a placeholder. He said the budget issue can be resolved. The issue

becomes whether or not the project can be completed within the fiscal year and, if not, monies would need to be moved around, but it's doable. Town Manager Dennis said it can be scheduled repeatedly until a point where there is some clarity.

Councilmember Wengert understands the risk of higher bids, weather, and other activity that will be robust when the economy returns, but thinks the right strategy is to keep this on the agenda on an ongoing basis until everything is in a much more normal state.

Councilmember Hughes would prefer to leave it up to the Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Town Manager to decide when it is appropriate to put it back on the agenda rather than having it come up every meeting.

In response to Vice-Mayor Derwin's question, Public Works Director Young said the specific funding streams for this work are Measure M, Measure W, and Measure A.

In response to Mayor Aalfs' question, Public Works Director Young said it will take a bit of research to determine if those funds are lost if not spent this fiscal year and how the State reacts to COVID-19. He said there are certain parameters in terms of spending the money within a fiscal year or rolling it over and how it meets the MOE. Town Manager Dennis said it is unknown what the State is going to do but the hope is there will be a lot of flexibility as it relates to any of this. He said Portola Valley will not be alone in that discussion because everyone will be dealing with these types of issues. He said a potential scenario is the loss of access to those funds for a year, which just means the project doesn't get done, which has always been an option.

Vice-Mayor Derwin said on C/CAG she's seen a somewhat similar situation where cities didn't spend the money on their project in the right amount of time and sometimes it works out and sometimes it doesn't. She said, as Town Manager Dennis mentioned, there will be a lot of people in the same situation so it is hard to predict whether or not the funds will be lost.

Councilmember Hughes moved to table this item until a future meeting to be determined at the discretion of the Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Town Manager. Seconded by Councilmember Wengert; the motion carried 5-0, by roll call vote.

(8) **COUNCIL LIAISON COMMITTEE AND REGIONAL AGENCIES REPORTS**

Councilmember Wengert – None.

Councilmember Richards – None.

Councilmember Hughes – Attended Bicycle, Pedestrian & Traffic Safety Committee meeting earlier in the month. The Sheriff's Office continues to provide their monthly report regarding the number of citations and the range of those citations. They are now tracking what percentage of the citations are issued to Portola Valley residents as opposed to people visiting town. In February only 12% of the citations were issued to Portola Valley residents.

Vice Mayor Derwin – Attended Council of Cities Dinner in Belmont on February 28, where they heard a presentation of Zonehaven with regard to wildfires. Zonehaven is an attempt to evacuate people in real time using maps where every place in the County is zoned. Built into the maps is the ability to look at the behavior of fire and help residents evacuate before losing power and before it's too late. She suggested bringing Zonehaven representatives to a Town Council meeting for a presentation. She attended an Express Lanes JPA meeting where they decided to have two openings for the express lanes project – the southern piece will be done at the end of 2021 and the northern will be done at the end of 2022. She attended the C/CAG Admin meeting. Because the election for the new chair has been postponed, she is still the chair. The next meeting will be online.

Mayor Aalfs – Attended the Ad Hoc Fire Committee on March 4. They will continue the conversation with insurance carriers, following up in terms of making sure people can keep their coverage. They discussed Hillsborough’s Wildlife Urban Interface (WUI) ordinance and working with the Fire District regarding modifications to the Town’s fire codes going forward. He said the Nature and Science Committee has put out a flower scavenger hunt for people sheltering in place. They also talked about foraging and there was concern about people misidentifying things not actually edible as well as overhunting. The Committee has come up with ways for people to enjoy themselves even when they can’t spend time together.

(9) **TOWN MANAGER REPORT** – Town Manager Dennis said a couple of Committees have expressed interest in holding virtual meetings. He wants to move that forward and, unless there is an objection, he will start the conversation more officially with staff on how to make that work.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

(10) **Town Council Digest** – February 27, 2020

None.

(11) **Town Council Digest** – March 5, 2020

None.

(12) **Town Council Digest** – March 12, 2020

None.

(13) **Town Council Digest** – March 19, 2020

#3 – Letter to the Community from the Mayor in response to COVID-19 – March 18, 2020. Councilmember Hughes commended the Mayor for his fantastic letter. Mayor Aalfs thanked staff for helping to put all this together. He said it has been very much a team effort.

ADJOURNMENT [9:03 p.m.]

Councilmember Hughes moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Wengert; the motion carried 5-0.

Mayor

Town Clerk