



Memorandum

TO: NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES AND
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

FROM: Jon Cicirelli

SUBJECT: POLICE ACTIVITIES LEAGUE
(PAL) STATUS REPORT

DATE: May 27, 2024

Approved

Date

6/6/24

COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the status report on the Police Activities League partnership, programs, and services.

BACKGROUND

The San José Police Activities League (PAL) is a California non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, established in 1968, whose mission is to forge an everlasting bond between police, youth and community through athletics, academics and acts of goodwill. PAL offers an assortment of programs including Taekwondo, boxing, and the Junior Giants program that provides opportunities for mentally and physically challenged youth and adults. PAL also offers three different sports leagues: PAL/METRO Soccer, PAL PONY Baseball, and Football and Cheerleading programs.

The City of San José (City) provides significant support to PAL through free use of the J.R. Blackmore Police Activities League Stadium Complex located on the east side of San José. The stadium complex includes PAL's office building, sports field house, fitness center, futsal courts, baseball field, softball field, and a football/soccer field—including spectator stands, press boxes, restrooms, and running track.

Prior to 2018, the City also provided support in the manner of two San José Police Officers assigned to provide operational and program support as well as to support the PAL board.

In 2018, the City Auditor's Office conducted a review of PAL's financial reporting, facility use, service delivery, and compliance with City agreements. The results revealed significant weaknesses in the administration of the program and called for the City to re-examine its relationship and formal agreements with PAL. In response to the audit, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) outreached and engaged with the community; and PAL, the San José Police Department (SJPD), and PRNS saw their roles

change. As recommended in the audit, PRNS and SJPD re-examined the City's relationship with PAL and held partnership discussions, eventually presenting three potential operating models to the City Council's Neighborhood Services and Education Committee on February 13, 2020. The Committee supported staff's recommendation for a model of joint operation of the facility.

In January 2021, PRNS recommended, and the City Council approved Guiding Principles for a new partnership agreement with the PAL board for PRNS to serve as the contract manager for the PAL non-profit contract and provide staff support for PAL board development. PRNS holds a seat on the board for the PRNS Director or designee, manages the contract on behalf of the City and provides staff support for board development. PRNS performs limited daily field maintenance and manages major capital projects. PRNS staffing dedicated to PAL as of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 is 1.0 Recreation Program Specialist, 1.0 Groundskeeper, 1.0 Groundswoker, and 1.0 Recreation Leader part-time unbenefited hours. The Proposed Operating Budget for 2024-2025 eliminates the 1.0 Recreation Leader part-time unbenefited hours as they had been vacant. SJPD supports with Police Officers at programs and events held at PAL, as staffing allows; and SJPD also holds a seat on PAL's board.

In December 2022, PRNS entered into a three-year contract with two optional three-year renewals for a total of nine years with the PAL non-profit, solidifying this operational model and establishing the PAL non-profit as the operator of the PAL facility and programs as well as the primary fundraiser and promoter of PAL programs.

Since then, the partnership between the City and PAL has continued to develop. PAL is mostly a volunteer organization with only the following five paid positions: an executive director/general manager, program manager/bookkeeper, registration/office specialist and two maintenance workers. All of the PAL sports teams are coached by volunteers and the PAL board members are volunteers, except for the PRNS and SJPD members. Even as a small organization, PAL continues to be an essential resource that aims to provide youth and their families with opportunities to engage in fun and safe activities that strengthen bonds between the police and residents of San José. The City of San José's partnership with the PAL non-profit continues to support these efforts and support the development of the PAL board.

ANALYSIS

PAL Board and Executive Director Status

The partnership as outlined in the contract is in effect and collaboration between PRNS and the PAL non-profit is actively addressing facility care and programming. The PAL board has grown to eight members including PRNS and SJPD members, with a goal of 10-12 members. It is currently recruiting an Executive Director to serve as a primary fundraiser, promoter and operations manager. As a non-profit, funding for a full-time position is limited and the PAL board has had difficulty recruiting and retaining a qualified Executive Director due to financial

constraints. The PAL non-profit has had two Executive Directors since late 2022, with the position recently becoming vacant again. The PAL non-profit currently has an interim Executive Director and is actively recruiting for a full-time permanent staff person.

Contract Deliverables

The Executive Director turnover has had an impact on the organization's ability to grow and improve as quickly as City staff and the PAL board had initially planned. Each Executive Director and PAL board members acting in the absence of an Executive Director, have taken initiative and made progress that has been slowed by the frequent leadership change. Nonetheless, the PAL non-profit has met key contractual obligations.

Key deliverables of the City-PAL contract were for PAL to create a Strategic Plan that outlines program and funding goals and strategies and to update by-laws to include conflict of interest policies and a code of ethics. Other appropriate updates such as program statistics, field agreements and volunteer program compliance are provided on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis. The PAL non-profit prepared a Strategic Plan and is pursuing objectives of increasing funding through individual donors, grants and corporate sponsorships; recruiting board members; recruiting volunteers; expanding program offerings; and encouraging diversity and inclusion. PAL is revisiting and revising these deliverables over time to remain aligned with the City's principles and goals in these areas.

The contract also required the establishment of annual and monthly meetings, a method of submitting annual and monthly reports, and collection of pertinent program, donor and operational data to measurably demonstrate that program goals are being met. PAL provides monthly reports that help City staff understand if PAL and the partnership are achieving the goals set forth in the contract, reaching the youth most in need and improving equity and access. PRNS and PAL collaborate on a review of these reports to assess programs and resources and make adjustments as necessary to serve the community most effectively with available resources.

Program Status

PAL's programs have been notable for a small organization, and it has leveraged grants and corporate sponsorships to deliver them. PAL's soccer and football programs are going strong with over 700 participants combined last year and are on target to surpass that number this year. Taekwondo has 35 kids twice a week, and the boxing program is competing regionally and nationally. PAL holds volunteer events to help with facility care and holds sports tournaments and events to fundraise for and recruit participants for these sports teams, such as the recent soccer jamboree in partnership with the San Jose Earthquakes.

PAL serves youth across San José with 61% of participants being from East San José. Overall PAL currently has 20% of its participants identifying as female. This number is growing, especially in flag football which has 14% identifying as female this year. In Taekwondo, 47% of

participants identify as female and 23% of boxing participants identify as female. Another important metric for PAL programs is utilization of the scholarship program that is funded from PAL's operating budget. This year, from a total of \$24,000, over \$14,000 was allocated for soccer participants, over \$7,000 for football and \$2,000 for cheerleading. PAL has historically and continues to subsidize Taekwondo and boxing fees by keeping them at only \$75 per year for taekwondo and \$100 for boxing, per participant. The Jr. Giants baseball program has been restarted this year and, through a grant for \$10,000 from the San Francisco Giants Community Fund, is free of charge for over 230 participants.

PRNS has been able to supplement PAL's programming with several programs focused on life and career skill development such as Guidance into Adulthood for youth ages 15-23 years and a financial literacy and entrepreneurship course for third, fourth, and fifth grade students. Several different themed LEGO® Engineering & Design Camps are scheduled for this summer and a tutoring program is planned for this fall.

PAL's fundraising efforts yielded a \$150,000 Covid-19 relief grant from the Valley Health Foundation to support staff salaries, a \$10,000 grant from the Olympic Club Foundation for soccer and football programs and a grant for \$10,000 from the San Francisco Giants Community Fund to fully fund the Jr. Giants baseball program free of charge for over 230 participants. PAL has applied for several additional grants including a grant for \$25,000 from the Olympic Club Foundation for continued program support and a \$200,000 grant from the San Francisco 49ers Foundation for PAL operations and football programs.

Maintenance and Capital Projects

The partnership has created a smooth system for conducting regular and ongoing facility maintenance between PRNS and PAL. The J.R. Blackmore Police Activities League Stadium Complex has many needs, and capital projects are planned and delivered as funds become available. Several recent projects that have been completed are repairing and replacing the protective netting around the baseball fields, repainting the administrative building, and irrigation controller repairs. Upcoming work includes working through ADA requirements attached to upgrading the football field and track, working with an electrical consultant on redesigning and repairing the electrical switch gear making it possible to replace the scoreboard, repairing the press box and public address system and evaluating the field lights for a potential upgrade to a more efficient system.

Next Steps

The PAL non-profit and board have faced challenges over the past two years with turnover in the Executive Director playing a role in slowing the organization's growth and progress compared to the pace of progress previously estimated by City staff. Nonetheless, looking ahead to PAL's future and the future of the partnership, there is still great potential to grow PAL's fundraising opportunities and programming. Through the challenges, the PAL board has been focused on its mission of providing youth and their families with opportunities to engage in fun and safe

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activities that strengthen bonds between the police and residents of San José. Grants to support operational costs, staffing and program expenses, are actively being sought in alignment with PAL's fundraising plan. The PAL board is actively recruiting for a new Executive Director expected to be hired this summer and has identified funding to provide the new Executive Director with professional development support and help institutionalizing organizational systems that will ensure strategic goals and contract deliverables continue to be met. Through its strategic goals of board development and growth, and focus on youth most in need, PAL is poised to continue meeting the terms of its City contract and its mission of developing local youth through fun and engaging programs and connecting them with law enforcement role models.

COORDINATION

This memorandum was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office, the City Manager's Budget Office and the San José Police Department.

/s/

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and Neighborhood Services

For questions, please contact Shannon Heimer, Division Manager, at Shannon.Heimer@sanjoseca.gov.