



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
PARKS COMMISSION  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2023  
110 EAST MAIN STREET  
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
LOS GATOS, CA  
6:00 P.M.**

*Rob Stephenson, Chair  
Craig Gleason, Vice-Chair  
Mike Buncic, Commissioner  
Brant Corenson, Commissioner  
Chirag Mapara, Commissioner  
Matt Ober, Commissioner  
Pravin Balasingham, Youth Commissioner*

This meeting will be held in person at the Town Council Chambers at 110 East Main Street in Los Gatos. Members of the public may only provide public comments for the agenda item in person.

### **PARTICIPATION IN THE PUBLIC PROCESS**

The Town of Los Gatos strongly encourages your active participation in the public process, which is the cornerstone of democracy. If you are interested in providing oral comments during the meeting, you must attend in person and complete a “speaker’s card”. If you wish to speak to an item on the agenda, please list the item number. The time allocated to speakers may change to better facilitate the Board meeting. You are welcome to submit written comments via email to [ppwcomment@losgatosca.gov](mailto:ppwcomment@losgatosca.gov).

#### Public Comment During the Meeting:

- When called to speak, please limit your comments to three (3) minutes, or such other time as the Chair may decide, consistent with the time limit for speakers at a Town meeting.
- Speakers at public meetings will be asked to provide their full name and to state whether they are a resident of the Town of Los Gatos. This information is optional and not required.

#### Deadlines for Public Comment and Presentations are as follows:

- If you are unable to participate in person, you may email [ppwcomment@losgatosca.gov](mailto:ppwcomment@losgatosca.gov) with the subject line “Public Comment Item #\_” (insert the item number relevant to your comment). Persons wishing to submit written comments to be included in the materials provided to Board must provide the comments as follows:
  - For inclusion in the regular packet: by 11:00 a.m. the Friday before the Commission meeting
  - For inclusion in any Desk Item: by 11:00 a.m. on the day of the Commission Meeting
- Persons wishing to make an audio/visual presentation on any agenda item must submit the presentation electronically, either in person or via email to [ppwcomment@losgatosca.gov](mailto:ppwcomment@losgatosca.gov), by 11:00 a.m. the day of the meeting.

## **RULES OF DECORUM AND CIVILITY**

The purpose of the meeting is to conduct the business of the Town in an effective and efficient manner. For the benefit of the community, the Town of Los Gatos asks that you follow the Town's meeting guidelines while attending Town meetings and treat everyone with respect and dignity. This is done by following meeting guidelines set forth in State law and in the Town Code.

The Town does not tolerate disruptive conduct, which includes but is not limited to:

- addressing the Commission without first being recognized;
- interrupting speakers, Commission or Town staff;
- continuing to speak after the allotted time has expired;
- failing to relinquish the microphone when directed to do so;
- repetitiously addressing the same subject.

Town Policy does not allow speakers to cede their commenting time to another speaker. Disruption of the meeting may result in a violation of Penal Code Section 403.

### **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

### **ROLL CALL**

### **CONSENT ITEMS (TO BE ACTED UPON BY A SINGLE MOTION)**

1. Approve Parks Commission Regular Minutes of August 7, 2023. (Attachment)

**VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS** *(Members of the public are welcome to address the Personnel Board on any matter that is not listed on the agenda. To ensure all agenda items are heard and unless additional time is authorized by the Chair, this portion of the agenda is limited to 30 minutes and no more than three (3) minutes per speaker. In the event additional speakers were not able to be heard during the initial Verbal Communications portion of the agenda, an additional Verbal Communications will be opened prior to adjournment.)*

**OTHER BUSINESS** *(Up to three minutes may be allotted to each public speaker on any of the following items.)*

2. Pickleball (Attachment)
3. Trail Connectivity Ad Hoc (Verbal Report)
4. Parks and Public Works Report (Verbal Report)
  - A. Park Operations
  - B. Vegetation Management – Open Space
  - C. Events
5. Beautification Committee Liaison Report (Verbal Report)

## **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Special Joint Meeting of Arts Commission and Parks Commission: October 18, 2023

Next regular meeting scheduled: December 4, 2023

***IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, IF YOU NEED SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT THE CLERK DEPARTMENT AT (408) 354-6834. NOTIFICATION 48 HOURS BEFORE THE MEETING WILL ENABLE THE TOWN TO MAKE REASONABLE ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE ACCESSIBILITY TO THIS MEETING [28 CFR §35.102-35.104]***



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
PARKS COMMISSION REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 10/02/2023

ITEM NO: 1

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**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PARKS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
August 7, 2023**

The Town of Los Gatos Parks Commission conducted a Regular Meeting on August 7, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:03 p.m.**

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Chair Stephenson, Vice-Chair Gleason, Commissioners, Buncic, Corenson (absent), Mapara, Ober.

**CONSENT ITEMS**

1. Approve Minutes of the Parks Commission Meeting of June 5, 2023.

**MOTION:** Motion by Commissioner Ober to approve Consent Item 1.  
**Seconded** by Vice-Chair Gleason.

**VOTE:** Motion passed unanimously

**VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS**

No verbal communication.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

2. Role of the Ad Hoc Committees

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, verbally reported on this item.

- Ground rules
- What they should be
- What they should not be

The Commission asked questions and discussed this item.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, responded to the questions.

3. Pickleball Ad Hoc

Chair Stephenson, verbally reported on this item.

**MOTION: Motion** by Chair Stephenson to dissolve the Pickleball Ad Hoc Committee in favor of putting Pickleball on the agenda going forward. **Seconded** by Commissioner Buncic.

**VOTE: Unanimously**

Opened Public Comment.

- Teri Kent

I am a homeowner on Hilow Ct. which backs up to the beautiful green lawn at Blossom Hill Park. I am not sure where the new Pickleball facilities are being proposed, but a rumor was that it might be behind our fence at Blossom Hill Park. That green space is used daily for many outdoor activities enjoyed by a wide variety of age groups.

Activities such as youth soccer classes, volleyball games, badminton games, pick-up football, birthday parties, dog training, picnicking, mommy and me music classes, and many, many more activities. These are wonderful, healthy ways to enjoy the outdoors at Blossom Hill Park. We would hate to see this gorgeous green space which is so limited in our Town be paved over with cement.

- Ursula Kelly Tolley

I am here on behalf of the Pickleball community and representing as a Pickleball player. I would like to see Pickleball on the agenda going forward every month. I think that it is an amazing sport for the members of our community. We need to fix the courts at La Rinconada, we need to consider where else in Town we can provide courts. Whether it is a portion of the tennis courts already available at Blossom Hill and over-stripping them and giving us the same access to sport in our community as the tennis players already enjoy.

- Connie Kirby

Founding member of the Pickleball club that Joel kicked off in 2018. I want to highlight what Ursula said in terms of the availability of Pickleball courts equal to that of tennis. I guess I raise the philosophical question of the extent to which, tennis players have dedicated tennis courts, but Pickleball players don't have courts at all. I don't understand that, and I also don't understand why tennis players can play for free and Pickleball players can't. I would also like to save how significant how seriously the courts at La Rinconada need to be resurfaced in terms of now there are tree roots growing into the back corner court from the trees and this is causing trip hazards. The cracks are opening in such that we get divots, again it is easy for people to trip and hurt themselves as people are prone to do. I know the budget is tight and I am not sure who

Other Business Item #3 – continued

to talk to about that. I'm here as a spokesperson to advocate for resurfacing those courts because they are not safe. Also, I would like to know, when you went to the courts and talked to the residents. Can you please highlight or summarize what you discovered, and what your report would be?

Closed Public Comment.

Chair Stephenson, responded to the public comment question.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, responded to the public comment question.

The Commission asked questions and discussed this item.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, responded to the questions.

4. Trail Connectivity – Mission Statement

Vice-Chair Gleason, verbally reported on this item.

The Commission and Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director asked questions and discussed this item.

Vice-Chair Gleason responded to the questions.

5. Town Parks and Public Works Report (Verbal Report)

A. Park Operations

Jim Harbin, PPW Superintendent, verbally reported on this item.

The Commission asked questions.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, and Jim Harbin, PPW Superintendent, responded to the questions.

B. Vegetation Management

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, and Jim Harbin, PPW Superintendent, verbally reported on this item.

The Commission asked questions.

Nicolle Burnham, PPW Director, and Jim Harbin, PPW Superintendent, responded to the questions.

C. Events

Jim Harbin, PPW Superintendent, verbally reported on this item.

Commissioner Ober gave an update on Fiesta de Artes and asked a question about Labor Day events.

Meredith Johnston, PPW Administrative Technician, responded to the question.

6. Beautification Committee Liaison

No report was given.

**COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioner Ober commented on three more Music in the Park shows for this season.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the August 7, 2023 meeting as approved by the Parks Commission.

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/s/ Nicolle Burnham, Director of Parks and Public Works



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS**  
**PARKS COMMISSION REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 10/02/2023

ITEM NO: 2

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DATE: September 28, 2023  
TO: Parks Commission  
FROM: Nicolle Burnham, Parks and Public Works Director  
SUBJECT: Discuss and Provide Feedback on Pickleball at La Rinconada Park

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Discuss and provide feedback on pickleball at La Rinconada Park.

**BACKGROUND:**

At its meeting of June 4, 2018, the Los Gatos Parks Commission (Commission) received a report from staff recommending that the tennis court at La Rinconada Park (Park) be striped to accommodate pickleball and that a pilot program for pickleball be initiated. The Commission supported this recommendation.

In Fall of 2018 the Town of Los Gatos entered into an agreement with First Serve Productions to layout and stripe four pickleball courts on top of the existing tennis court at the Park.

On April 1, 2019, the Commission heard a report indicating that the pickleball pilot had been successful and recommending that the courts be programmed two days each week for pickleball under the guidance of Los Gatos Saratoga Recreation. The Commission supported this recommendation.

On August 5, 2019, the Commission heard a report from Los Gatos Saratoga Recreation (LGS Rec) regarding their pickleball program. The report indicated that programming was scheduled for Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 AM to 12 PM. Since the pilot program was initiated in 2019 pickleball use at the Park has grown to seven days per week during most hours in which the park is open (sunrise to one hour after sunset). At present, LGS Rec runs pickleball programs at La Rinconada six days a week with a combination of open play and lessons. A total of 20.5 hours per week is dedicated to LGS Rec use. All other times are open play for the public.

There is no record of additional discussion of pickleball in Commission meeting minutes until December 5, 2022, when a representative of LGS Rec discussed the need for additional pickleball courts and asked to convert courts at Blossom Hill Park from tennis to pickleball.



BACKGROUND (continued):

During 2023, the Commission has received numerous comments from the public regarding the need for more pickleball courts, and about the adverse impact of pickleball noise on the residential properties near the Park. In addition, staff regularly receives noise complaints about this activity at La Rinconada.

At the August 2023 meeting, staff provided the Commission an overview of concerns about pickleball related noise at the Park and potential options for addressing this. The Commission requested additional information to facilitate discussion of these alternatives.

DISCUSSION:

Management of noise related to pickleball is a chronic problem shared by parks and recreation agencies and communities all over the United States. Pickleball paddles and balls are much harder than tennis rackets and balls and so pickleball sounds very different from tennis. With a smaller court, the frequency with which pickleball strikes occur adds to the noise impacts. This has proven to be a very challenging issue to resolve.

Three options presented in August were: 1) eliminating pickleball at La Rinconada; 2) implementing acoustic barriers; or 3) requiring the use of "Green Equipment" that are designed to generate less noise. Since the August meeting staff has met with LGS Rec to discuss additional potential solutions.

Option 1 – Eliminate Pickleball at La Rinconada

This is not a preferred option given the level of use the four pickleball courts receive. The loss of four courts would reduce the number of dedicated public pickleball courts in Los Gatos to zero.

Option 2 - Implement Acoustic Barriers

Staff evaluated the installation of an acoustic barrier around the courts. Installation of a hard wall and landscaping would create safety concerns since they would reduce visibility into the court. Installation of acoustic blankets affixed to the existing chain link fence on two sides of the court would be feasible and some courts have succeeded in managing noise with this technique. Staff can install these blankets, but the Town does not have funding to purchase them. The cost to purchase the blankets is \$10,000 - \$12,000.

Option 3 – Require Use of Pickleball Equipment that Reduces Noise (Called Green Paddles)

DISCUSSION (continued):

A “green pickleball paddle” refers to a pickleball paddle that is meant to produce less noise than traditional pickleball paddles. The term “green” in the name is used to indicate that they are more environmentally friendly because they produce less noise pollution.

A quiet pickleball paddle is usually made from materials that absorb / dampen vibrations and reduce the amount of noise generated when the paddle strikes the pickleball ball. However, there does not yet appear to be any consistent standard or certification for green pickleball equipment.

Mandating the use of this type of equipment would reduce the noise impacts; however, neither the Town nor LGS Rec has the capacity to enforce this requirement consistently. Regardless, we can still recommend this and ask that the pickleball community be courteous to their neighbors and mindful of their proximity to residences.

Option 4 – Operational Changes

The courts at La Rinconada Park, like most park assets in Los Gatos, are open from sunrise to one hour after sunset seven days per week. Staff has discussed limiting the hours of play by locking the courts each evening and opening them each morning at a set time (e.g., opening at 8 AM and locking at 6 PM). The Town does not have the staff resources to complete this task with consistency. That said, limiting hours of play may provide some relief to the neighborhood and staff recommends installing signage at the court that limits the hours of play.

Staff recommends limiting the hours of pickleball play via signage rather than installing locks. If the pickleball community refuses to adhere to the hours of play, then more drastic measures such as locking can be evaluated.

Option 5 – Convert one Tennis Court at Blossom Hill Park to Pickleball

Since La Rinconada Park has the only pickleball courts in Los Gatos, use of the courts is intensive. Additional courts could potentially provide some relief and an alternative location for pickleball play. Staff has discussed with LGS Rec the need to identify other courts and LGS Rec has considered additional courts at locations not owned by the Town. At this time, no other options have been identified.

The tennis courts at Blossom Hill Park are heavily used for tennis. Staff at LGS Rec observed use of the courts at Blossom Hill Park and La Rinconada over a two-week period in September. Attachment 1 shows the results of these observations. While there are certain times when all courts at Blossom Hill Park are in use for tennis, there are times when courts are vacant.

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SUBJECT: Discuss and Provide Feedback on Pickleball at La Rinconada Park

DATE: September 28, 2023

DISCUSSION (continued):

Given the observations by LGS Rec staff is willing to consider a pilot program to convert one of those courts to pickleball. One tennis court yields four pickleball court so this conversion would double the number of courts in Town. While there are advantages and benefits to converting a Blossom Hill Court, there are also concerns regarding potential noise impacts and conflicts in play.

Staff recommends that the northwesterly court be converted for the pilot project since it is furthest from the residential properties. The closest residences on Hilow Court and on Fairmead Lane are approximately 280 feet away from court in question. At La Rinconada Park the closest residences are 140 feet from the courts.

If a court at Blossom Hill Park were to be converted, the four pickleball courts would be directly adjacent to a tennis court, creating the opportunity for conflicts between the two uses. Fencing cannot be installed between the courts as it would not provide enough "run off" area adjacent to either use. As part of the pilot program staff would need to monitor concerns presented by users and consider these when discussing making the court permanent.

The cost to stripe one tennis court for pickleball would be \$10,000. The Town does not currently have funding for this work.

**CONCLUSION:**

Staff has identified options for potentially reducing neighborhood impacts associated with pickleball at La Rinconada Park. Table 1 summarizes these options and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

**Table 1. Summary of Options**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
1. Eliminate pickleball at La Rinconada	- Eliminates noise impact	- Leaves no pickleball courts in Los Gatos
2. Install acoustic barrier	- May reduce some noise impact	- No Town funding for purchase - Actual attenuation would be hard to predict
3. Mandate Green Zone equipment	- Would reduce noise	- May impact play - Hard to enforce - relies on goodwill of players to achieve noise reduction
4. Operational Changes	- Would reduce early morning and evening impacts depending on hours selected	- Hard to enforce - relies on goodwill of players to achieve noise reduction
5. Stripe on tennis court at Blossom Hill for Pickleball	- Would provide four additional pickleball courts in Los Gatos	- May not reduce demand at La Rinconada - No Town funding currently

These options are not mutually exclusive and combinations of each may be feasible. Staff looks forward to the Commission's feedback.

**Attachments**

1. Observed Court Usage – La Rinconada and Blossom Hill Park

**OBSERVED COURT USAGE - LA RINCONADA AND BLOSSOM HILL PARKS**

Site	Time of Day	Tuesday 9/12/2023	Wednesday 9/13/2023	Thursday 9/14/2023	Friday 9/15/2023	Saturday 9/16/2023	Sunday 9/17/2023	Monday 9/18/2023
La Rinconada Park	10am	PB 4 players	PB 18 players	PB Class-10	PB 20 players	PB-10 players	0	PB 23 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 1	10am	0	0	0	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 2	10am	0	0	0	0	Tennis 2 players	0	Tennis 2 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 3	10am	0	Tennis 2 players	0	Tennis 4 players	Tennis 2 players	0	Tennis 2 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 4	10am	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis-3players	0	Tennis 2 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 5	10am	0	0	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis-3players	0	Tennis 5 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 6	10am	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis-3players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 4 players
La Rinconada Park	2pm	PB Lesson 10 adults	0	PB 4 players	0	0	0	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 1	2pm	0	0	0	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	Lesson 8 kids
Blossom Hill Park Court 2	2pm	0	Lesson 3 kids	0	0	0	0	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 3	2pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	Lesson 1 adult
Blossom Hill Park Court 4	2pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	Lesson 2 adults
Blossom Hill Park Court 5	2pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 6	2pm	0	0	0	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	0
La Rinconada Park	6pm	PB 4 players	PB 4 players	PB 4 players	Tennis-2players	0	0	4 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 1	6pm	Tennis lesson, 8 kids	Tennis 3 players	0	Tennis-2players	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 2	6pm		0	Tennis 4 players	0	0	0	4 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 3	6pm	Tennis 4 players	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis-2players	0	0	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 4	6pm	Tennis 3 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	0	0	0	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 5	6pm	Lesson, 1 adult	0	Tennis 4 players	0	0	0	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 6	6pm	0	0	Tennis 2 players	0	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players

Site	Time of Day	Tuesday 9/19/2023	Wednesday 9/20/2023	Thursday 9/21/2023	Friday 9/22/2023	Saturday 9/23/2023	Sunday 9/24/2023	Monday 9/25/2023
La Rinconada Park	10am	PB 15 players	PB 8 players	PB Class-10	PB 21 players	PB-12 players	0	PB 18 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 1	10am	0	0	0	Tennis lesson, 5 adults	Tennis 4 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 2	10am	0	0	0		Tennis 4 players	0	Tennis 2 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 3	10am	0	0	0	Tennis 4 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 4	10am	Tennis 5 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis-2 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 5	10am	0	0	0	0	Tennis-4 players	0	Tennis 5 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 6	10am	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 4 players	0	Tennis 1 player	Tennis-2 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 4 players
La Rinconada Park	2pm	PB Lesson 10 adults	0	PB 4 players	0	0	0	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 1	2pm	0	0	0	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	Lesson 8 kids
Blossom Hill Park Court 2	2pm	0	0	0	0	0	Tennis 2 players	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 3	2pm	0	0	0	0	Tennis 2 players	0	Lesson 1 adult
Blossom Hill Park Court 4	2pm	0	Tennis 2 players	0	0	Tennis 2 players	0	Lesson 2 adults
Blossom Hill Park Court 5	2pm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 6	2pm	0	0	0	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	0
La Rinconada Park	6pm	PB 4 players	PB 6 players	PB 4 players	Tennis-2players	0	0	4 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 1	6pm	Tennis lesson, 8 kids	Tennis 2 players	0	Tennis-2players	Tennis-4 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 2	6pm		0	Tennis 4 players	0	0	0	4 players
Blossom Hill Park Court 3	6pm	Tennis 4 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis-2players	0	0	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 4	6pm	Tennis 3 players	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players	0	0	Tennis 2 players	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 5	6pm	Lesson, 1 adult	0	Tennis 4 players	4 players	Tennis-4 players	Tennis 2 players	0
Blossom Hill Park Court 6	6pm	0	Tennis 4 players	Tennis 2 players	0	0	Tennis 2 players	Tennis 2 players

Notes: Observations courtesy of Los Gatos Saratoga Recreation