

Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes May 15, 2012

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 15, 2012, at the City Council Chambers, 707 W. Acequia Street, Visalia, California. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mann at 5:32 pm.

Present: Lesa Mann, Carla Calhoun, Ben Filiponi, and Robert Doi

Guests: Bill Huott, Dolores Taylor, Jim Kelly, and Shann Blue

Absent: Jeff Boswell

Staff: Vince Elizondo, Jeannie Greenwood, Jim Bean, and Brenda Miernik

2. Review and Approve the Minutes of the April 17, 2012, Meeting. Commissioner Doi moved to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Calhoun seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 4-0

3. Public Comment: Mr. Huott thanked Mr. Elizondo for his presentation last week at the North Visalia Advisory Committee. He also thanked Commissioner Doi for participating as a representative at the meeting.

4. Review and Interview of Potential Parks & Recreation Commission Alternates. Commissioner Mann invited the candidates to approach the podium and inform the commissioners on why they are interested in the commission and what experience they have. The commissioners will then ask questions.

Dolores Taylor: Ms. Taylor said she is an accountant and the proprietor of her own business. She and her husband have two children and she would like to be more active in the community. She said she spends a lot of time in the park system, almost every day with her two children, and she has enrolled them in recreation programs such as T-ball and dance classes. She said she will be graduating from Leadership Visalia in June.

Question: Do you have any suggestions to make our parks better? Ms. Taylor said she was in Blain Park on Saturday for a birthday party at noon and the playground equipment was too hot to be used by the kids. She said the playground at Plaza Park is covered and is more user friendly.

Question: The commission meets once a month but all commissioners are representatives to other committees. Would you be able to commit to another meeting night? Ms. Taylor said she is currently serving on the Transit committee and she is aware that she will need to resign. She said she could definitely serve as representative to another committee.

In answer to Ms. Taylor's comment about shade structures, Mr. Elizondo said the structures cost between \$80,000 and \$120,000 and sometimes cost more than the playground. Ms. Taylor suggested, humorously, if maybe the trees could grow faster.

Jim Kelly: Mr. Kelly stated his father was a Parks and Recreation Director for 45 years. He gave some history on his family and the many places they lived.

Question: Is your interest in the commission due to your father's experience? Mr. Kelly said he has lived in the area since 1998 and desires to be an active participant in the community. He said he and his wife walk in the parks on occasion.

Question: Would you have any goals as a commissioner? Mr. Kelly said the budget would be of interest to him and how to be fiscally wise and responsible while providing parks, recreation and activities for young people.

Question: The commission meets once a month but all commissioners are representatives to other committees. Would you be able to commit to another meeting night? Mr. Kelly replied he would.

Question: Do you have any suggestions to make our parks better? Mr. Kelly said he and his wife walk by the Annie B. Mitchell area (Cherry Meadows Park) and it is under water quite often and he would like to see that drain faster.

Question: Parks & Recreation typically suffers from lack of funding, do you have any ideas how the department could raise revenue or be more self-sufficient? Mr. Kelly stated he understands the economy and if given the opportunity he would strive to do his best for the citizens of Visalia.

Shann Blue: Mr. Blue stated he has lived in Visalia for 10 years and his family is very active in the Lindsey community.

Mr. Blue said he and his wife have seven children and the whole family is athletically inclined. He said he has participated as coach, Chamber board member, and has now retired to spend more time with his family.

Mr. Blue said he is interested in giving back to the community and he would make the time for the meetings.

Question: Do you have any suggestions to make our parks better, in order to draw more users? Mr. Blue stated his family doesn't use the parks often but they live near Plaza Park and use the dog park. He said he is pleased with the diversification of the parks in Visalia. He stated he does not know enough about parks to really make any suggestions.

Question: Have you or your family participated in recreation programs provided by the Parks and Recreation Department? Mr. Blue said he has participated in Corporate Games, Little League, and is very willing to be involved. He said he has served on recreation committees in the past.

Question: The activities you were involved with in Lindsey, were your children involved or were you just interested? Mr. Blue said he began coaching before his children were born. He said he is active in the Catholic Church, teaching catechism classes.

Question: The commission meets once a month but all commissioners are representatives to other committees. Would you be able to commit to another meeting night? Mr. Blue said he is part of a management team in Dinuba and his time is flexible, so attending meetings is no problem for him.

Commissioner Calhoun asked the candidates to review the City's website, especially the Parks and Recreation section, which has a map of all the parks in Visalia.

Commissioner Mann thanked all of the candidates for attending the meeting and said a decision would be announced at the June meeting.

- 5. Parks Make Life Better Campaign.** Ms. Greenwood, Recreation Manager, said the commission expressed an interest in carrying the theme of "Parks Make Life Better" to the joint meeting with City Council. The California Park and Recreation Society (CPRS) has created presentations that can be made to fit individual cities and agencies. She said the department created the one she is going to demonstrate with individualized photos of our activities.

The commissioners were pleased and excited over the presentation. Mr. Elizondo said after the presentation management would present facts and statistics to the Council members.

6. Update on City Council Reports & City Staff Announcements:

- **Upcoming Recreation Programs & Special Events.** Ms. Greenwood said
 - Cinco De Mayo was celebrated on May 5th with the Mother/Son campout. Sixty participants had a great time.
 - Swim team season begins May 26. Swim teams begin the end of this month.
 - The summer brochure is out with our schedules.
 - June 9 is our Kids Vi-Tri at Golden West High School.
 - Pickle Ball leagues for adults have begun. This is an old sport that is re-emerging and it is played on a modified tennis court with a whiffle ball and a square paddle.
- **Upcoming Parks & Urban Forestry Projects, Programs & Special Events.** Mr. Jim Bean, Manager of Parks & Urban Forestry, reported the following:
 - Earth Day was held on April 15 and 600 trees were planted.
 - Arbor Day was held April 28 and we had almost 400 volunteers including commissioners, Church of Latter Day Saints and a lot of work was accomplished at St John's Riverwalk.
 - Kiwanis Park (Creekside) is still on schedule. The Grand Opening will be in July or August.
 - This winter parking lot repair is scheduled at Blain Park.
 - Thursday a new pump and irrigation controls will be installed at Recreation Park; and Friday bids will be accepted for the new basketball court.
- **Director's Report on Administrative Items.** Mr. Elizondo said next month he will present the proposed City budget for the Recreation Division, which will include the Operating Budget and CIP Plans for the next two years. He said it will be a "status quo" budget.

Ms. Miernik said that she and Mr. Elizondo attended the Committee/Commission Annual Training session held in early March. She noted the Commission Handbook that was made available to each Commissioner and asked them to look at the tab where new information regarding attendance had been recently added. It reads:

Attendance

Advisory body members are expected to attend meetings regularly. Conscientious attendance is a fundamental responsibility, as irregular attendance lessens one's ability to study all aspects of items under consideration. It is important to notify staff of any absences for the purposes of determining a quorum.

Members are required to notify the staff liaison no later than 24 hours prior to any regular meeting of his/her intent not to attend said meeting. Excessive absenteeism, which is defined to mean missing three consecutive regular meetings or four regular meetings in a 12 month period, shall constitute resignation of the member and the member shall be considered removed from the advisory body. In the event a meeting is cancelled because of a lack of quorum, the member(s) whose lack of attendance caused the cancellation will be counted, even though no meeting occurred.

Tardiness and early departure of more than 30 minutes in a meeting is considered an absence.

A Council sub-committee, comprised of the Mayor and Vice Mayor, may grant an exemption to the attendance policy or approve an extended leave of absence for members of City Committees/Commissions, based on individual circumstances.

The attendance policy becomes effective April 1, 2012, and April 2012 begins the first month in the 12 month attendance counting period.

Ms. Miernik said the Parks and Recreation Commission has never had a problem with attendance and thanked the Commissioners for their diligence.

Mr. Elizondo stated that Commissioner Griffith will be receiving a letter of commendation and a service plaque for his term in office. He served the commission for four years and he will be moving to Minneapolis to become a doctor. Commissioner Boswell resigned today; his last meeting will be June 19.

Commissioner Mann said the commissioner's appreciated Travis's energy and enthusiasm while serving the City of Visalia.

7. Commissioner's Requests & Comments:

- **Waterways & Trails Committee Report.** Commissioner Filiponi said the focus this month is the Spare the Air event.
- **North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee.** Commissioner Doi said Mr. Elizondo presented information regarding park planning, park development, and the general budget. He said there was a lively discussion on the Oval Park.

Commissioner Mann asked how many people attended the NVNAC meetings. Commissioner Doi said there were 10 to 12 at this meeting.

Mr. Elizondo reminded the commissioners about the meeting with Mr. Robb Cox where he asked the City to develop a park at Community Campus. He said this idea is still being pursued.

- **Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Update.** Commissioner Mann said she attended the meeting and the seniors are very excited about all the renovations happening at the center. There will be a barbeque to thank all the volunteers for their service.
- **Parks & Recreation Foundation Monthly Report.** Mr. Elizondo stated the main focus this month is the July 4th Celebration at Mineral King Bowl. He said the cost of the fireworks is approximately \$30,000 and volunteers are welcome. Mr. Elizondo stated that the City engineers have assisted the Foundation to create plans for installing shade structures at Garden Street Plaza and will be presenting the plan at next month's meeting.
- **General Plan Advisory Committee.** Commissioner Calhoun said the meeting had been cancelled again.

11. Adjourn to Regular Meeting, June 19, 2012, at 707 W. Acequia, City Council Chambers at 5:30 pm.

Commissioner Filliponi made the motion to adjourn and Commissioner Calhoun seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 4-0

Brenda Miernik
Senior Administrative Assistant