

Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes June 19, 2012

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, June 19, 2012, at the City Council Chambers, 707 W. Acequia Street, Visalia, California. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mann at 5:30 pm.

Present: Lesa Mann, Jeff Boswell, and Ben Filiponi

Absent: Carla Calhoun and Robert Doi

Guests: Bill Huott, Dolores Taylor, Carol Hoppert Hays, Bill Dillberg, Michael Alvarez, and Paul Olsen

Staff: Vince Elizondo, Jeannie Greenwood, Jeff Fultz, Chris Crawford, and Brenda Miernik

2. Review and Approve the Minutes of the May 15, 2012, Meeting. Commissioner Boswell moved to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Filiponi seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 3-0

3. Public Comment: Mr. Dillberg invited the Commissioners to a Senior Advisory Meeting tomorrow at 1 pm and noted improvements that have been accomplished at the Senior Center.

Mr. Huott stated he is a member of the North Visalia Advisory Committee and he attended a meeting last Tuesday. He said Nick Anthony presented information on Oval Park and it was well received by the committee.

4. Proposed Garden Street Plaza Shade Structure. Mr. Crawford, City Engineer, stated this is a Parks & Recreation Foundation (Foundation) project and City staff has provided technical assistance.



Mr. Crawford said the project is located at the intersection of Garden and Main Streets, in the plaza area on the south side of Main Street. The structure will consist of metal posts with connecting cables that support shade sails. The structure has been configured to keep the posts located between the existing trees outside of the main plaza access aisle while still leaving space for the trees to grow and develop. As the trees continue to grow the combination of tree canopies and shade sails should provide a nicely shaded area.

The color of the shade sails will be a combination of Terra Cotta and True Blue, and the structure posts will be Dark Green to match the existing street lights, park benches, and bollards located in the plaza.

Mr. Crawford said this final shade structure concept is the result of a significant amount of input from a variety of local community members – Property Owner’s Association of Downtown Visalia, the Downtown Visalian’s Business Group, the Art’s Consortium, the City Parks and Recreation Department, and plaza user’s. This shade structure is being presented as the best model to meet the needs and concerns of the community.

Mr. Crawford stated the project will be completely funded with private donations. The organizations and funding contributions are as follows: the Porter Foundation \$25,000, the Downtown Property Owner’s Association \$5,000, the Downtown Visalian’s \$2,500, and the Foundation will contribute up to \$20,000 to fund the remainder of the project.

Mr. Crawford said the total construction and materials cost is currently expected to be around \$50,000 and the Foundation will execute a Cooperation Agreement with the City of Visalia to complete the project.

Mr. Crawford requested the Parks and Recreation Commission to approve the City staff report and recommend to City Council to approve the Garden Street Plaza Shade Structure Project.

Ms. Hays, Executive Director of the Parks & Recreation Foundation, said the Foundation has been involved in many discussions over the years regarding shade in the plaza. She said three plans have been presented in the past but dismissed due to cost. She said this project will provide shade at a cost the Foundation, with community support, can provide. The esthetic addition in the plaza will encourage community use and benefit downtown.

Commissioner Mann requested information on previous shade structure maintenance. Mr. Elizondo stated that most shade structures in Visalia are new and no maintenance has been required. He noted that the new shade sails at Plaza Park are very much like the proposed shades for the plaza.

Mr. Elizondo said the construction would take place during the winter months when there are no reservations for the plaza, late November through early February.

Commissioner Mann requested a motion to approve the staff report, Commissioner Boswell moved to approve and Commissioner Filiponi seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 3-0

- 5. Review of Potential Parks & Recreation Commission Members.** Commissioner Mann announced that tonight is Commissioner Boswell's last meeting as he has served his term and has resigned. She thanked him for his service.

Commissioner Mann stated that at the last meeting the Commission had the opportunity to interview three potential candidates for seats on the commission. She said it was possible for the commission to vote or to table the item since Commissioners Calhoun and Doi are not present. After discussion it was the consensus of the Commission to table to the July meeting.

Candidate Dolores Taylor spoke to the commission regarding her interest in the Parks & Recreation Commission.

- 6. Review of Proposed Parks & Recreation Budget, 2012-2014.** Mr. Elizondo stated the City operates on a two year budget and last evening the City Council approved the proposed budget with a few contingencies. He directed the Commissioners to view page 9-1 in his report. He stated it is a status-quo budget. He said City Council asked the department to reduce personnel by two tree trimming positions creating a net savings to the General Fund of \$50,000. The work has been assigned to West Coast Arborists who already perform work for the City. The two employees were reassigned within the City.

Mr. Elizondo stated Ms. Greenwood, Recreation Manager, generates approximately \$1.3 million in revenue and recovers about 60% of the costs of the programming. He said previously the recovery rate was about 39% (roughly 5 years ago).

Project	2012-13	2013-14
Miki City Park & Mill Creek	\$675,000	
Recreation Park Splash Pad	\$400,000	
Basketball Courts Gym Motors	\$36,000	
Park Sidewalk Repairs	\$30,000	
Recreation Park Athletic Lights	\$192,000	
Riverway Sports Park Phase III	\$150,000	
Riverway Sports Park Phase IV	\$396,000	
East Civic Center Park		\$1,200,000

Mr. Elizondo explained future Capital Improvement Projects.

The Miki City and Mill Creek project will be funded by a grant and will occur in the next two years.

City gyms currently have basketball hoops that are hand-cranked and this funding will purchase motors as a safety precaution.

Replacing light standards at the Rawhide Stadium that were installed in 1947. The standards are too short and need to be replaced. This is a multi-phase project.

Riverway Sports Park is funded by donation money. Phase IV consists of renovation funds for the BMX Park, which is no longer functioning.

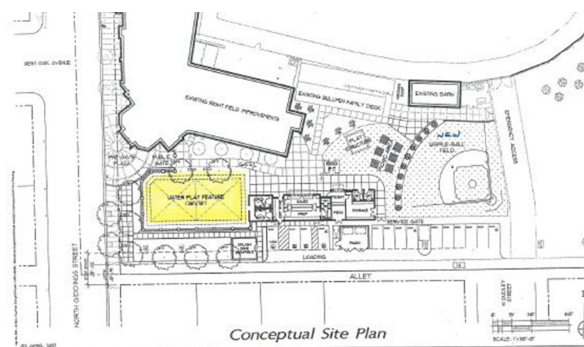
This is the future downtown park, which was going to be funded by a grant. The City wanted to earmark funds for future use.

Mr. Elizondo digressed to the Recreation Park Splash Pad and stated the proposed project will be presented to Council soon. He presented the following points.

Many years ago there was a pool at Recreation Park and it is fondly remembered by many residents of Visalia.

Most cities the size of Visalia have access to a municipal pool.

A diagram of the location of the splash pad was provided for the commissioners.



Advantages of the splash pad would be creating another water element in the City, boosting Rawhide attendance on hot days, a dual purpose would be serving as a public park amenity, possibly creating a new rental amenity during non-Rawhide game days, and it would be a self-sustaining operation. He provided the following information.

Preliminary Cost Estimates:

- Estimated cost: \$400,000
- Rotary donation: \$200,000
- Park Impact Fees \$100,000
- CDBG, grant, or donations: \$100,000
- 80'x 40' pad = 3,200 square foot pad

Operation & Maintenance:

- Est. Annual Operational Costs: \$15,000
- Est. Annual Revenues: \$15,000

Comparison:

- Riverway Splash Pad \$14,000
- Community Campus Fountain \$10,000
- Downtown Fountain \$7,000

Mr. Elizondo reported on other local splash pads: Greystone Park, located in Bakersfield, is so popular schools bus kids to play there. Del Lago, in Tulare, has a shaded splash pad. He said splash pads are very popular because they are less expensive to build and maintain than pools, and lifeguards are unnecessary. There are two water systems used in splash pad projects. The “drain through” system, where the water flows into the storm drain, and the “recirculation system”, which requires the pad to be closed to the public for testing and treatments and the water is constantly reused.

Commissioner Mann asked if use of the splash pad would be free to the public. Mr. Elizondo stated visitors to the Rawhide would have to pay for a game ticket to use it. He said there is a rental possibility for Parks and Recreation in Recreation Park and he says a scheduled time for public use could be discussed. He said plans for this project are still under discussion.

- 7. Appointment of New Youth Soccer Sub-Committee Member to Replace Commissioner Boswell (resignation effective June 30, 2012).** Ms. Greenwood, Recreation Manager, stated the meetings usually take place during lunch time for the convenience of the members. The current agreement with AYSO runs through the end of the season and since that contract a new league has formed who also wants scheduled time at the Sports Park. A new agreement should be approved by August 2013.

Commissioner Filiponi volunteered to serve on the sub-committee.

- 8. Proposed Proclamation Proclaiming July as Parks & Recreation Month.** Ms. Greenwood stated that, in keeping with the new California Parks & Recreation Society (CPRS) theme, July is now Parks Make Life Better Month. This is brought to the commission annually for approval and is presented to City Council for their approval.

Ms. Greenwood said the department has received vehicle decals that promote the Parks Make Life Better theme and Mr. Fultz said placing them on Parks vehicles is about 90% complete. The department is holding photo contest requesting photos in categories that represent how parks make life better for the citizens of Visalia. The categories are gathering places, play, nature, exercise, and positive spaces. The photos will be posted on our Facebook page and ultimately used for advertising purposes. She requested the Commission to approve the proposed proclamation to City Council.

Commissioner Mann requested a motion for approval. Commission Filiponi so moved and Commissioner Boswell seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 3-0

- 9. Update on City Council Reports & City Staff Announcements:**

- **Upcoming Recreation Programs & Special Events.** Ms. Greenwood said the following is on-going this month.
 - The aquatic program is in full force – lessons and swim teams
 - Summer Night Lights will be sponsored by the department this Friday night from 7pm to 10 pm.
 - The department will be partnering with the Parks and Recreation Foundation for the 4th of July Celebration.
 - Adult Softball has 115 teams signed up to play this year.
 - The fall-winter brochure is in process at this time.
 - Day Camp continues to be very successful this year.

Commissioner Boswell asked about the Movies in the Park Program and Ms. Greenwood said that due to staffing levels this has been cancelled. Other cancelled programs include Teen Idol and Corporate Games. Mr. Elizondo said that in the last six years the department has gone from 19 permanent recreation employees to 6, two thirds of our staff has been cut.

- **Upcoming Parks & Urban Forestry Projects, Programs & Special Events.** Mr. Jeff Fultz, Parks Supervisor, substituting for Mr. Bean, reported the following.
 - Blain Park parking lots are scheduled for repair by the end of the year. The south parking lot required extra preparation prior to the repair.
 - The irrigation pump at Recreation Park is installed and working as expected.
 - Two smart controllers were installed, one at Seven Oaks and one at Sunset Park.
 - Park signs that were repaired are Mill Creek Garden Park and Seven Oaks Park. The Crestwood Park sign was stolen and it is on order. A new backing is being put on the signs so they are not so easy to remove.
 - The new basketball court for Recreation Park has been put out for bids.
 - Four tennis courts at Plaza Park have new lighting.
 - Jefferson Park – the department partnered with SCE to install double headed lights on Watson Street, west of right field.
 - A new electrical panel and controller have been replaced at Rotary Park. Soon new irrigation and concrete will replace the restrooms.
 - Riverway Sports Park will be undergoing turf renovation. AYSO donated money to mulch and soil the fields.
- Commissioner Boswell asked when the Sports Park Phase III would begin. Mr. Elizondo replied that it should begin in January 2013, design is 90% complete.
- **Director's Report on Administrative Items.** Mr. Elizondo said Creekside Park, aka Kiwanis Club Park, is on schedule and will open in August.

10. Commissioner's Requests & Comments:

- **Waterways & Trails Committee Report.** Commissioner Filiponi said there will be a meeting June 26 and the Committee was very happy with the results of Bike to Work Week. The committee is looking forward to being part of the discussion on the Oval and a bike lane there. Educating the public about bike lanes is a goal of the committee and they will be holding classes at local schools.
- **North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee.** No report.
- **Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Update.** Commissioner Mann said she will be attending the meeting tomorrow. Ms. Greenwood said Senior Pride Bingo is purchasing new dining room chairs for the facility valued at \$13,000. The computer room is now complete with a popcorn machine, a large screen television and cable service.
- **Parks & Recreation Foundation Monthly Report.** Mr. Boswell said the Foundation has been busy with the shade structure at Garden Street Plaza and they are working hard on the July 4th Celebration at Mineral King Bowl.
- **General Plan Advisory Committee.** No report.

11. Adjourn to Regular Meeting, July 17, 2012, at 707 W. Acequia, City Council Chambers at 5:30 pm.

Commissioner Boswell made a motion to adjourn and Commissioner Filiponi seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 3-0

Brenda Miernik
Senior Administrative Assistant