

# Inside City Hall

Beyond the headlines

**FEBRUARY 23, 2011**

## **PLANNING COMMISSION, COUNCIL DISCUSS PROPOSED CODE**

**CHANGES:** During a joint work session, members of the Visalia Planning Commission and City Council heard information on proposed code changes first addressed at the Council's Feb. 5 Strategic Workshop. Changes are proposed in the land-use permitting processes to provide more flexibility and streamline the process. One of the proposals is to create a "zoning administrator" function to designate a hearing officer to consider and make decisions on routine, minor land use permits which could be appealed to the Planning Commission. This process for hearing minor permits could save applicants both time and money by streamlining the review while still providing adequate neighborhood input.

**COUNCIL OKS RAWHIDE IMPROVEMENTS:** The City Council authorized amending the existing agreement with Recreation Park's Top of the Third, Inc., (Visalia Rawhide Baseball Club) to include the following:

- Use future revenues generated from the revenue-sharing program above the \$84,527 baseline (established in 2010) to reimburse Top of the Third, Inc., for the upfront costs of a 150-seat family deck to be constructed this year. The maximum reimbursement is not to exceed the estimated cost of \$120,000. The new seating will assist in expanding the seating capacity of the ballpark and generate new revenues.
- The City, in partnership with Top of the Third, Inc., will construct new player batting cages in 2011. The City will pay for the first \$25,000 of the estimated \$40,000 cost of the project, and will pay 50% of the remaining cost.
- The City will seek estimates for energy-efficient athletic lighting improvements related to player safety concerns. The original light structures were established in the 1940's. The cost of the new lighting system is estimated to be \$350,000.
- Direct staff to explore options to sell the stadium.

## **EXTENSION OF PREFERRED RISK POLICIES FOR FLOOD**

**INSURANCE NOW IN EFFECT:** City residents with properties that are now in the Special Flood Hazard Area and are required to purchase flood insurance may be entitled to a lower premium. Here are some FAQ's courtesy of Rona Swanson, insurance specialist from American Insurance Co.:

**What is the extension of the Preferred Risk Policy eligibility?** Effective Jan. 1, 2011, FEMA extended eligibility for its low-cost Preferred Risk Flood Insurance Policies (PRP) for qualifying properties remapped on or after October 2, 2008 (Visalia's revised flood maps were put into effect June 30, 2009). The extension is available for up to a 2-year period.

**How do I know if I qualify for a 2-year premium reduction?** Buildings that have been designated within a Special Flood Hazard Area (High Risk) from a non-Special Flood Hazard Area (Lower Risk) due to a map revision on or after October 1, 2008 and before January 1, 2011 may be eligible. In addition, the building must meet the PRP loss history criteria—if there are two claims or disaster relief payments for flood loss of \$1,000 or more, or three loss payments of any amount, the structure is ineligible.

**What steps should I take?** Contact your flood insurance agent to assist you in determining if your property is eligible for the PRP extension and to complete the required documents needed to take advantage of this reduction.

**DADS, DAUGHTERS TO ENJOY ‘ENCHANTED EVENING’:** Visalia Parks & Recreation Department invite Dads and daughters, ages 4 to 16, for a night of music, dancing and refreshments at the 6th annual Father-Daughter Dance Friday, Feb. 25, from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Visalia Convention Center. This year’s theme is “An Enchanted Evening,” with live music, prizes and a complimentary photograph to make this a night to remember. Tickets are \$45 per couple, \$20 for each additional daughter, and are available for purchase at the Anthony Community Center, 345 N. Jacob St. For information, call 713-4365, or email [mfitzgerald@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:mfitzgerald@ci.visalia.ca.us).

**MUSIC AT THE MAIN WITH A CLASSIC TWIST:** Through the grapevine, you may have heard rumors about the world class chamber music that is coming to Visalia. You may also have heard rumors that the concert venue has exceedingly fine acoustics--bright, full, intimate--perfect for chamber music. Both of these rumors are true. Come hear for yourself. The next concert presents one of the finest chamber ensembles anywhere: the world traveling, award-winning Jung Trio. Come and bring a friend—you will truly be inspired. The concert is at 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 27, at the Main Street Theater, 307 E. Main St., in Visalia. Click the link for a brief music sample of this extraordinary trio. [www.musicatthemain.org/p04.asp](http://www.musicatthemain.org/p04.asp). Tickets are \$12, students are \$6, and are available now at: Valhalla Restaurant, Downtown Visalians, Monet’s, or at [www.musicatthemain.org](http://www.musicatthemain.org).

**APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED FOR CITY’S COMMITTEES:** The City of Visalia is accepting applications from interested citizens for six of its City committees. Applications are accepted on a continuous basis and kept for a period of two years. Visit the City’s website at [www.ci.visalia.ca.us](http://www.ci.visalia.ca.us), under “Committees/Commissions” to view the informational handbook and application or contact the City Clerk’s Office at 713-4512.

The following committees currently have vacancies:

- **Citizen’s Advisory Committee** – Acts as a liaison between the general public and the City Council concerning community issues. The Committee has a current opening for one regular member and is expecting three additional vacancies in June. The committee also has four vacancies for alternate members. Interested persons should file their applications immediately as interviews are expected to take place in March 2011.
- **Environmental Committee** – heightens environmental awareness and conservation in Visalia. Issues addressed include air quality, hazardous waste, recycling, water conservation and all other natural resources. The Committee currently has two regular member vacancies and one alternate member vacancy.
- **Historic Preservation Committee** – administers and carries out the standards and specifications of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and promotes historic preservation including encouraging building owners to initiate preservation efforts. The committee currently has vacancies for two regular members and two alternate members.
- **North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee** – serves as a liaison between the City and the North Visalia community. The Committee has openings for three regular members.
- **Transit Advisory Committee** – researches and analyzes the community’s continuing transit needs, reviews operations, markets the transit program and makes recommendations about the business affairs of the transit system. The Committee currently has two vacancies for alternate members.
- **Waterways and Trails Committee** – advises on matters related to the Bikeway Master Plan and the Waterway and Trail Master Plan. The Committee currently has one vacancy for a regular member.

*You can now self-subscribe to receive issues of “Inside City Hall”. Go to the City’s website at [www.ci.visalia.ca.us](http://www.ci.visalia.ca.us), click on About Visalia and go to Inside City Hall Newsletter. For information, contact Community Relations Manager Nancy Loliva at [nloliva@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:nloliva@ci.visalia.ca.us) or call 713-4535.*