



**AUGUST 2, 2011**

## **TASK FORCE TO BE FORMED TO CONSIDER BY-DISTRICT**

**ELECTIONS:** By unanimous vote at its Aug. 1 meeting, the City Council took a step toward by-district elections with the creation of a 13-member task force that will make a recommendation to the Council early next year. The task force will be responsible for considering several areas, including:

- Reviewing the types of City Council election formats being used in other cities that comply with federal and state election law;
- Considering whether the Council should consider changing how it is elected, including the implementation of a by-district election process, and;
- Considering the current demographic and voter makeup statistics in the 2010 Census and recent election data, and how these statistics relate to whether and how the City's election process should be changed.

Based on the research, the Task Force would then make a recommendation on if an at-large election is still appropriate for the City, how many districts would be included if a by-district election is recommended, and other changes to the election process.

Applications are due by noon Friday, Aug. 12. For a copy of the application, click [here](#). The application may either be emailed to [cityclerk@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.visalia.ca.us) or delivered by hand or mail to 425 E. Oak, Suite 301, Visalia, Ca 93291.

Mayor Bob Link also recommended interested citizens contact Council members. Mayor Link can be reached at 559-713-4400, Ext. 2313 or by email at [blink@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:blink@ci.visalia.ca.us). Vice Mayor Amy Shuklian can be reached through 713-4400, then enter 8313, or by email at [ashuklian@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:ashuklian@ci.visalia.ca.us). Council Member Warren Gubler can be reached at 559-713-4400, Ext. 3313 or by email at [wgubler@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:wgubler@ci.visalia.ca.us). Council Member Steve Nelsen can also be reached by calling 559-713-4400, Ext. 7313, by email at [snelsen@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:snelsen@ci.visalia.ca.us). Council Member Don Sharp can be reached at 559-713-4400, Ext. 4313 or by email at [don.sharp@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:don.sharp@ci.visalia.ca.us).

Each Council member will appoint two members of the Task Force, and three members will be appointed at random. The Task Force would report back to the Council by Jan. 30, which would allow residents to vote on any changes made and would allow them to take effect by the 2013 Council elections.

## **COUNCIL HEARS ANIMAL CONTROL SHELTER UPDATE:**

Council members heard an update on the progress of the construction of a new Animal Control Shelter. On February 15, 2011, the Animal Control Facility Subcommittee held the "kick off" meeting for the design of the new City of Visalia Animal Control Facility. The subcommittee is comprised of 2 council members, a VOSPCA representative, and several City staff members. Prior to beginning the design of the facility, WLC Architects had to complete the Pre-Design Phase of the project. That first phase consisted of the programming, space planning and building analysis phase, which documented all the programmatic requirements for component spaces. Based on the feedback received from the kick-off meeting, the design firm was able to reduce the square footage allotted for many shelter functions. At the most recent Subcommittee meeting, held on July 18, committee members considered several options for phasing of shelter construction and gave input on options for continued utilization of existing space. They indicated a preference for convertible space, or space that can be used for kenneling in the short term, but can easily be converted to open communal type space in the future. The subcommittee was satisfied that the current program schematic met the needs of the City and contains all of the basic requirements for animal control and directed WLC architects to move onto the Schematic Design Phase. That phase will use the approved program to create the Schematic Floor plan and exterior building elevations, which will be submitted to the subcommittee for review and ultimately to Council for approval prior to beginning construction documents. The Subcommittee will meet again in late August or early September as part of the site analysis phase and Council can expect to see the project back before them in October. The recent direction of the ACF subcommittee allows the architect to develop a detailed floor plan, proposed exterior elevations and full details on construction phasing. Once the project is brought back to Council in October, Council will be asked to give final direction on the layout as well as approve funding of the project based on the incorporated design elements and phasing. Council also approved providing assistance to VOSPCA in its search for a new adoption center, as it will be vacating its Visalia Mall location on Aug. 28. For the complete staff report, click [here](#).

## **DOWNTOWN STREET LIGHT UPGRADE DISCUSSED:**

Downtown street lighting was discussed during a public hearing at the Aug. 1 Council meeting. Much of the street light system in Downtown Visalia was installed in 1938 and needs replacing. The City owns and maintains 225 street lights on seven separate circuits in the area between Willis Street, Edison Street, Mineral King Avenue and Oak Avenue. While the City could contract with Southern California Edison (SCE) to supply street lighting in these areas, the maintenance and operation costs of this option would be much more expensive. Due to SCE policies for street lights owned by them, the options available for pole type, lighting fixture type, and amenities that could be added to the street light system would be reduced. The approximate operations and maintenance cost of the existing system is \$130,000 per year. If a new system were installed and operated by the City, the approximate annual cost would be \$34,000.00 and under Southern California Edison ownership this cost would be \$46,000 per year. The savings in the annual operating and maintenance costs could be used to finance a portion of the construction costs of the new system. Council members approved staff's recommendation to hire a civil engineering firm to further develop existing electrical plans to a level that would allow the City to solicit bids from contractors and replace the lighting system in phases. Construction of the project will probably need to be phased due to construction funding availability. There is currently \$400,000 allocated in a Capital Improvement Program Fund to improve the downtown street lights. This work could be completed over the next six months and provide "shovel ready" documents so the City could take advantage of any future construction funding opportunities. Council also authorized the Mayor to send a letter to the downtown Property Owners Association requesting them to participate in funding the upgrades to the street light system. For more information, click [here](#).

## **HYDRITE JOINS VISALIA'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY:**

Hydrite Chemical Co. has purchased Choice Chemicals, headquartered in Visalia, with the goal of growing the business. Based in Wisconsin, Hydrite is a diversified chemical company with 14 North American locations, and is one of the largest independent providers of chemicals and related services. The company creates tailored solutions for sanitation and food safety for a variety of industries, including dairy, meat and poultry processing.

Hydrite began looking at Visalia two years ago, drawn by the location, the existing food processors and the dairy industry, and the community itself. "We were very aware of the Central Valley and we know our competitors, but when it came to choosing the location, Visalia is a nice community, which will help us attract employees," explained Kirk Moon, Business Group Director for Hydrite.

The merge with Choice Chemical will allow Hydrite to expand product offerings in the dairy, food and beverage industries. Its goal of aggressive growth will result in the creation of jobs for skilled labor and sales. "The jobs in our plant are skilled because we work with chemicals, and we will train," Moon noted. The current Choice Chemical building is approximately 70,000 square feet, on a five-acre site in Visalia's Industrial Park. Visalia Mayor Bob Link added that the food processing industry of Visalia and the region attracted Hydrite's attention, and their expanding presence will generate new agricultural "value added" industries. "We all know that agriculture creates many support or ancillary businesses, and this has been a goal for Visalia for many years," Link noted. "Ag is a huge economic engine, and bringing support services to our city just makes good sense."

## **VICE MAYOR HOLDS OFFICE HOURS AUG. 10:**

Vice Mayor Amy Shuklian will hold her regular monthly office hours on Wednesday, August 10. Office hours will be held from 5 to 6:30 p.m. in the large conference room at City Hall, at 707 W. Acequia Ave. The first hour, from 5 to 5:45 p.m. will be a time for drop-in visits, and appointments can be scheduled in advance for the second hour, from 5:45 to 6:30 p.m. To schedule an appointment, contact Gladys Ruiz at 713-4314. Shuklian can be reached through 713-4400, then enter 8313, or by email at [ashuklian@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:ashuklian@ci.visalia.ca.us).

## **TRANSIT CALL CENTER EXPANDS SERVICE TO KINGS COUNTY:**

The Green Line, a call center for inquiries on public transit in the County, has a new partner. Effective July 1, Kings Area Rapid Transit (KART) entered into an agreement with the Greenline to enhance their service. To date, already more than 100 calls have come through the call Center. "This agreement will facilitate the ease of transit information, gathering and planning within the two counties," said Visalia Transit Analyst Gamaliel Anguiano. Each month, the Greenline accepts more than 4,000 calls for Tulare County transit systems.

## **TASTE OF DOWNTOWN TICKETS ON SALE AUG. 8:**

Mark your calendars For Tuesday, Sept. 20, from 5 to 9 p.m. for the 18th annual Taste of Downtown Visalia. Tickets, \$40 each, go on sale Monday, Aug. 8, and can be purchased at the Downtown Visalia Alliance at 103 N. Court St., or by calling 732-7737. Ticket-holders will gain admission to over 30 participating downtown restaurants and host locations, including entrance to wine tasting at Bank of the Sierra and beer tasting at Visalia Community Bank.

## **NOMINATION PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR NOV. 8 ELECTION OUT:**

Nomination Papers for offices to be voted on at the November 8, 2011 Consolidated Districts Election are now available through Friday, August 12, 2011, in the Elections Division, Government Plaza, 5951 South Mooney Blvd., Visalia. office hours are: 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday thru Thursday; 8 a.m. noon on Friday; and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, August 12. For further information regarding filing for an elective office, call (559) 624-7300 or for information on nomination papers that have been filed, check the current candidate list at [www.tularecolections.org](http://www.tularecolections.org) Two council members and one short-term council members for the Visalia City Council and three board members for Area 5, 6 and 7 for the Visalia Unified School District will be on the November ballot. City Council Members and Visalia Unified School District Members require nomination signatures, which are gathered during the nomination period.

## **GRANT-WRITING WORKSHOP FOR NON-PROFITS SCHEDULED:**

Grant-writing training is being held for eligible organizations wishing to apply for grants through the Non-Profit Program Fund available through the City of Visalia. A subcommittee of the Citizens Advisory Committee, which oversees the grant process and makes recommendations on funding to the City Council, will offer three grant-writing workshops from 10 to 11 a.m. Saturday, August 6, from 6 to 7 p.m. Thursday, August 11, and from 11 a.m. to noon Tuesday, August 16 in the City Council Chambers, 707 W. Acequia Ave., in Visalia. *Applicants must attend one workshop session as a prerequisite for submitting an application unless the agency was an award winner in FY 2010-11.* The Visalia Non-Profit Program Fund is available to qualified non-profit and government agencies with programs or services for people under age 18 in the City of Visalia. The fund is designed to assist agencies in providing gang prevention/intervention programs and for services aimed at improving quality of life for youth, including at-risk youth. The minimum award is \$3,000, and the maximum amount is \$26,000, or 20 percent of the total annual funding for FY 2011-12 of \$130,000. An application for funding can be obtained at City Hall West (707 West Acequia), from the City's website ([www.ci.visalia.ca.us](http://www.ci.visalia.ca.us)), or requested by email ([eybarra@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:eybarra@ci.visalia.ca.us)). The application and all required attachments must be received by 5 p.m. on Friday, August 26, 2011 at City of Visalia/CAC at 707 W. Acequia Ave., Visalia, CA 93291.

## **JAPANESE DELEGATION TO VISIT VISALIA:**

Host families are needed to house visitors from Miki City, Japan, from Aug. 22-27. There are nine women and one male, ages from high school up to early 60s. Those interested in hosting a visitor will be asked to complete a questionnaire in order to best match guests to prospective hosts. Hosts will be responsible for providing a private room for one guest, transportation on a minimal basis during their stay, and some meals. Most activities will be planned and costs covered. Interested families should contact Kathy Rouse at 559-713-4355 or by email at [krouse@ci.visalia.ca.us](mailto:krouse@ci.visalia.ca.us) by 5 p.m. Friday, Aug. 5.

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