

Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes November 18, 2014

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, November 18, 2014, at the City Council Chambers, located at 707 W. Acequia St., Visalia, California. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Carla Calhoun at 5:30 pm.

Present: Carla Calhoun, Lesa Mann, Shann Blue, Ben Filiponi, and Jason Kent.

Absent: Peter Thomas

Staff: Vince Elizondo, Jeannie Greenwood, Jeff Fultz, Allison Lambert, and Brenda Miernik

2. Review and Approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting, October 21, 2014. Commissioner Calhoun called for a motion to approve the October 21 meeting minutes. Commissioner Mann moved to approve the minutes as presented, and Commissioner Kent seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 5 -0

3. Public Comment: Mr. Bill Huott presented the Commission with a flyer announcing sponsorship opportunities to support Houston Neighborhood Park, located at Houston Elementary School. He thanked the Commission for the work they have already done on the project. He also noted that the “Night of Worship with John McMillan” held Thursday, October 23, 2014, at the Lincoln Oval Park, was very successful with over 900 attendees.

4. Introduction of Eric Ferreira, new Recreation Coordinator. Ms. Jeannie Greenwood, Recreation Manager, said she is pleased to present Mr. Eric Ferreira as the new Recreation Coordinator. She said he grew up in Tulare, attended Long Beach State, and he majored in Recreation Administration. While in his final year of school, he actually worked as an intern for the department. Once he completed his education he worked for four years in Lemoore and he has an aquatic background. He will be Coordinator for Youth Sports under the supervision of Laurissa Gallardo.

Mr. Ferreira said as a youth he was involved with sports and aquatics and he looks forward to working for the City of Visalia. He said he was excited to be back in Visalia, closer to home, and he asked if there were any questions.

Commissioner Mann asked what his responsibilities were in Lemoore. Mr. Ferreira said the department was very small and he was involved with everything from programming to events. He said he worked with one assistant and a few part time employees.

5. Annual Graffiti Report. Mr. Ray Palomino, Building Maintenance Supervisor, said the Graffiti Abatement Program was established in Visalia in November 1999, and since 2006 has been operated by the Buildings Division, and funded by the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund.

Mr. Palomino stated the purpose of the Abatement program is to provide prompt removal of graffiti on city and government property within Visalia. This includes City parks, buildings, street signs, sidewalks, and block walls. He said it is the responsibility of private property owners to remove graffiti from their property within 15 days of notification by mail, or within 3 working days by personal notification, or by notifying the appropriate property management company.

Mr. Palomino provided the following statistical information.

<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>FY 12/13</u>	<u>FY 13/14</u>
<i>Hours Worked</i>	2,090	2,823
<i>Sq. Feet Cleaned</i>	189,000	268,000
<i>Hot Line Calls</i>	2,460	1,720
<i>Work Orders</i>	2,374	1,661
<i>City Wide</i>	157,526	159,567
<i>Community Projects</i>	40,840	3,870

Materials used (2 years): Paint 1,538 gallons, Cleaners 49 gallons, Aerosol Paint 1, 215 cans, Abrasive Media Blast 43 bags.

Mr. Palomino stated the reduction in graffiti in 2014 was due to the following reasons.

- The department continues to work closely with the Visalia Police Department. While officers are in route through the City they fill out a “Graffiti Pass Along” form to notify the Graffiti Abatement team of where graffiti is located.
- The Graffiti Abatement Program operates seven days a week and graffiti is removed as soon as possible, which helps to lower the amount of graffiti.
- City standard colors were instituted in FY 10 & 11, which reduced the square footage that is required to cover graffiti.

Mr. Palomino said the abatement team consists of four hourly employees who work 1,000 hours each annually; five hours per day, 20 hours per week, and seven days per week.

Mr. Palomino says he manages the Graffiti Abatement Program, including, but not limited to, scheduling, making community contact, reviewing work, and setting goals. He said the support staff includes Joe Cote, Senior Building Maintenance Worker, and the Graffiti Office Assistant. Mr. Cote organizes the Graffiti Operations staff with daily briefings and collaboration; he orders supplies, develops procedures, and maintains the equipment. The Office Assistant answers the Graffiti Hotline, generates work orders, maintains statistical records, and works closely with the Police Department, Code Enforcement, and the Downtown Visalian’s.

Mr. Palomino reported the following additional work performed by the Graffiti Abatement team.

- They assist Traffic Safety, Solid Waste, Code Enforcement, and the Police Department with graffiti removal.
- They work with volunteers that assist in covering minor graffiti within the community.
- They incorporated measures to help reduce graffiti vandalism with neutral colors throughout the City.
- The Downtown Visalian’s have one employee who removes graffiti within the areas of School Street to Mineral King, and Johnson Street to Santa Fe Street.
- Cal-Trans is responsible for removing graffiti on highways under their jurisdiction.



Types of graffiti in the community:



Ongoing goals for the Graffiti Abatement Program are to remove graffiti in 48 hours or less, to increase property owner collaboration and volunteer support, to increase community contacts, to attend community events, to participate in community projects and department projects. These projects include Church Clean-up Days, Earth Day, and Make a Difference Day.

Mr. Palomino asked if the Commissioners had any questions.

Commissioner Calhoun asked if there has been any decrease or increase in the amount of staff for the Abatement Program. Mr. Palomino replied that he began with two employees, and now has four.

Commissioner Kent noted that hours worked and square footage cleaned increased this year, but there were fewer hot line calls, he asked Mr. Palomino to explain. Mr. Fultz responded that total hours worked includes required maintenance, as well as work generated from the hotline.

Commissioner Calhoun asked how trees were cleaned. Mr. Palomino responded that they are pressure washed.

Mr. Elizondo said the City Abatement Program does not clean private property; however, they will assist in alley ways and highly visible areas. He said profanity is a priority - removed as quickly as possible.

Commissioner Calhoun said she knows of groups who engage people who like to tag illegally to do murals and other community beneficial projects. She said one group she knows of, is called the Urbanist Collective, and she has seen them at City events displaying their art. She asked him if he knew of any of these. Mr. Palomino said he did not.

Commissioner Mann asked if anything had changed dramatically in 2014. Mr. Palomino said graffiti can be cyclical with school seasons.

Mr. Elizondo said gangs also influence occurrences of graffiti, but the most current issue is the homeless.

6. Review Annual Park Rental and Facility Management Report. Ms. Lambert said key areas for facility management are park reservations, facility reservations, contract management, and facility improvements. The City has 37 reservable areas throughout 16 City parks. New areas for 2014 were Arbor #4 and the Special Events Promenade at Riverway Sports Park. She said park amenities include arbors, barbeques, play areas, and walking trails.

Ms. Lambert stated facility management resources consist of the front office staff, which includes two full-time staff members and two hourly Office Assistants. Also on staff, are one Building Attendant II and eleven Building Attendants.

Park & Trail Bookings Annual Comparison

	<u>Bookings</u>	<u>Total Revenue</u>
2014 YTD	1,112	\$73,218.00
2013	1,007	\$69,249.00
2012	877	\$67,850.00

Ms. Lambert stated that bookings are available at the Anthony Community Center, the Whitendale Community Center, the Manuel F. Hernandez Community Center (MHCC), the Visalia Senior Center, the Rawhide Room, and the Trulli Building. She said the facilities are utilized for department classes and programs, parties, faith-based functions, meetings, and a variety of community uses.



Annual Comparison

	<u>Bookings</u>	<u>Total Revenue</u>
2014 YTD	3,088	\$62,245.00
2013	3,094	\$79,022.00
2012	4,988	\$94,980.00

Ms. Lambert said facility improvements included fresh paint in the Anthony Center Main room, MHCC received new paint and crash pads thanks to 4 Creeks Church volunteers, the Visalia Senior Center received new tables from Senior Pride Bingo and a new cement planter box was created by Geno Acecedo, of Boy Scout Troup 321.

Ms. Lambert said she manages the following contracts.

- Proteus – Operates the Wittman Village Community Center.
- Tulare County Office of Education – Uses MHCC and the Fairview Center for day care operations.
- The Y – Uses the Whitendale Park.
- Visalia Rescue Mission – Operates the Lincoln Oval Service Center.

She asked the Commissioners if they have any questions.

Commissioner Calhoun asked if the Trulli Building had been used much. Ms. Lambert said the City has received many phone calls for it but it has only been used once. Commissioner Calhoun asked what the rent was. Ms. Lambert said a 2-hour booking is required at \$30 per hour. She said a building attendant is required due to the artifacts that are in the building and no more than 6 people are allowed at one time.

Commissioner Mann asked how someone could see the artifacts and visit the building. Ms. Lambert said she would be happy to arrange a tour of the building for the Commission.

Commissioner Kent asked about budget items that were discussed at a previous meeting. The baby changing tables versus the hand drying machines in restrooms. He asked what the outcome was.

Ms. Greenwood stated two baby changing stations were approved for Whitendale, for both male and female restrooms.

7. **Review Annual Senior Center Fee Waiver Report.** Ms. Jeannie Greenwood stated this is the eighth year that City staff has worked with the Senior Advisory Committee to better understand the services and needs of non-City programs offered at the Visalia Senior Center. She said as a result, a process has been established for designating free and/or reduced fees at the facility. The process consists of organizations submitting facility use applications by a deadline, review of it by the City and the Senior Advisory Committee, and the Committee making a recommendation to the Parks & Recreation Commission, who in turn makes recommendations to City Council for their approval.

Ms. Greenwood stated the criteria for fee waiver consideration is as follows.

- The program must meet the needs of Visalia Seniors.
- It must be affordable and within the means of seniors.
- If fees are charged, where are they applied and for what purpose? Are they used for non-profit activities?
- The facility request must meet the needs of the program.
- The City must not incur additional expenses from the program.
- The program must be fair and consistent.

Ms. Greenwood stated requests came from the following groups, with the following results.

- Visalia Gadabouts – This is a travel club that is not limited to seniors. It is a non-profit and there are no fees collected at meetings. The service is consistent with the City’s mission to provide programs and services to seniors, and the recommendation is to continue the fee waiver for 2015, a value of \$1,452.
- Senior Pride Bingo – This group is a non-profit and the service is consistent with the City’s mission to provide programs and services to seniors. The group has made the following contributions to the Senior Center.
 - 2014 - They purchased chairs in the amount of \$14,000.
 - 2013- -they purchased tables in the amount of \$14,000, and they purchased two flat screen televisions for the Center.
 - In past years they were instrumental with a kitchen renovation, a stage renovation, and they purchased a sound system.The recommendation is to continue the fee waiver for 2015, at a value of \$35,196.
- Saturday Night Dance – Fees from this program are self-supportive, i.e., band, rent, insurance. The service is consistent with the City’s mission to provide programs and services to seniors. They have made contributions to the Senior Center and the recommendation is to continue the fee waiver, at a value of \$13,000.
- Senior Squares – This group submitted their application after the deadline and after the Senior Advisory Committee review. The instructor charges fees to offset his personal travel expenses. The group did not go through the process in 2014 and the group is absent more than 50% of the scheduled dates. This group does not participate in the Senior Advisory Committee and the recommendation is to deny a fee waiver for 2015.

Conditions of use include: Insurance, participation in the Senior Advisory Committee, notification of change in financial status, best use of the facility, informational page submitted, and the group must reapply annually by submitting a use application by October 15.

Ms. Greenwood said that City staff recommends accepting the recommendation from the Senior Advisory Committee, as presented, for fee waivers for 2015 and directs staff to forward the recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Commission to City Council to continue fee waivers as follows: Gadabouts – fee of \$1,452 waived. Senior Pride Bingo – fee of \$35,196 waived. Saturday Night Dance – continue the reduced fee of \$100 per night, a fee waiver of \$13,000. She said the fee waiver for the Senior Squares would be denied.

Mr. Bill Dillberg, Chairman of the Senior Advisory Committee, said several years ago there was a lot of contention between the seniors and the City. He said he felt it was due to a lack of understanding and communication between them. Thus, the Advisory Committee was implemented and great strides have been made since that time. Issues still come up, but now there are procedures in place to solve them without coming before the Commission or City Council.

Mr. Dillberg invited the Commissioners to visit the Senior Center and experience the improvements made through community donations. He said the seniors are pleased with the changes. He noted the Senior Pride Bingo organization helps individual seniors financially when they have issues with paying their utility bills. He said the Advisory Committee meets tomorrow and invited the Commissioners to attend.

Commissioner Calhoun asked if the Visalia Gadabouts, Senior Pride Bingo, or the Saturday Night Dance group were in danger of outgrowing the facility. Ms. Greenwood said not independently, but the Gadabouts and Senior Pride Bingo does overlap a bit. She said parking at the Senior Center has become tighter because of a new business opening nearby.

Commissioner Calhoun asked for verification that the Senior Squares did not use the facility 14 out of 27 days, and this was within the last 6 months. Ms. Greenwood verified that this information is correct; and said the group requires 8 people to make a square and they logged 12 to 15 participants generally.

Commissioner Calhoun called for a motion. Commissioner Filiponi made a motion to forward the staff recommendation to continue the fee waivers for the Visalia Gadabouts, Senior Pride Bingo, and the Saturday Night Dance group, and denying the fee waiver for the Senior Squares. Commissioner Mann seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 5 -0

- 8. Request to Appoint a Member of the Parks and Recreation Commission to Serve on the Planning Task Force for the East Side Regional Park Master Plan.** Mr. Elizondo stated City Council approved the staff report dated November 3, 2014, regarding the Eastside Regional Park Master Plan. The request was to begin a process to select a 13 member Task Force to work with Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group in the development of the master plan for the Eastside Regional Park and Groundwater Recharge Project. He said the proposed Task Force would be comprised of one individual from the following commissions and committees: the Planning Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Citizens Advisory Committee, the Environmental Committee, the Disability Advocacy Committee, the Parks & Recreation Foundation, and a Water Resources representative. He said each Council member would select a community representative to serve also.

Mr. Elizondo said the committee will possibly meet 9 to 10 times over a 5 to 6 month time period, and he expected the meetings to be during the week, after work hours.

Commissioner Calhoun asked the Commissioners if there was anyone interested in serving the Task Force.

Mr. Elizondo stated the Environmental Committee chose a primary individual and an alternate.

Commissioner Calhoun suggested doing that also. She and Commissioner Filiponi expressed interest in the Task Force.

Commissioner Blue made a motion that Commissioner Calhoun be the Primary Member for the Planning Task Force for the Regional Eastside Regional Park and Commissioner Filiponi serve as the alternate. Commissioner Filiponi seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 5 -0

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

- **Upcoming Recreation Programs & Special Events.** Ms. Greenwood thanked the Commissioners for their support at the 75th Anniversary Special Event held on November 1 at Plaza Park.

She reported the following.

- Next Wednesday, November 26, is the Senior Center Thanksgiving luncheon. Please feel free to attend.
 - Thanksgiving week the department will host a 3-day camp for kids.
 - Youth basketball registration concluded last Friday. There are 661 registered currently.
 - The Senior Center will also host an "Old Fashioned Christmas" luncheon on December 19, 2014. This is a great event.
 - A holiday Recital will be held on December 16, which will showcase the wonderful dance and enrichment classes that have been held. Time is 5:30 to 6:30 pm at the Enchanted Playhouse Theater.
 - The spring schedules are almost complete. The brochure goes to print in the middle of December.
- **Upcoming Parks & Urban Forestry Projects, Programs & Special Events.**
 - The Pickle ball courts are complete and should be painted by the end of next week. There will be a grand opening and the Commission will be notified of the date.
 - The four Children Only park signs for Village Park have been installed. The gate has been locked that goes into the Community Campus, which will eliminate traffic in the playground.
 - Make a Difference Day held on October 25, was successful and the projects completed.
 - The department is working with Engineering and the Urban Tree Foundation on the Mill Creek Ditch at the Miki City Park. Plans are being reviewed and will be before the Commission next month.
 - The candidate for the Parks Maintenance Supervisor is on board and will come before the Commission next month.

- **Director's Report on Administrative Items.** Mr. Elizondo stated the CPRS Conference for 2015 will be held in Sacramento on March 10-13. He said departure will take place on Tuesday, March 10, at noon, and return on Friday, March 13.

10. Commissioner's Requests & Comments:

- **Community/Aquatic Center Ad Hoc Committee.** Commissioner Shann said the second meeting is forthcoming.
- **North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee.** No report.
- **Senior Citizens Advisory Committee.** Commissioner Mann said the meeting is tomorrow. She also noted that two Special Events have taken place at the Oval Park, the Mariachi Opera and the John Mark McMillan concert. She said she was unable to go and asked if anyone had attended. She said she heard that there were 900 attendees at the concert.

Mr. Elizondo said Ryan Stillwater, from the Visalia Rescue Mission, told him that both events were well attended and successful.

Commissioner Calhoun said that prior to both of those events a family picnic was held at the Oval Park and she attended briefly. She noted a good turnout and it seemed to go well.

Mr. Elizondo said the next event is the Christmas tree lighting on November 30.

- **Parks & Recreation Foundation.** Commissioner Kent reported that the Foundation is selling raffle tickets and will have the drawing on December 3. The membership drive is on-going.
- **Waterways & Trails Committee Report.** Commissioner Filiponi said he did not attend the last meeting but he doesn't think the Council report has been presented yet. He said he would provide a copy to the Commission once it is presented.
- **Public Arts Task Force Report.** No report.

Commissioner Mann complimented the staff on the November 1st Anniversary celebration and said it was great, in spite of the rain.

11. Adjourn to the Regular Meeting, November 18, 2014, at the Council Chambers at 707 W. Acequia Street, at 5:30 pm.

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

MOTION

Motion passed 5-0

Brenda Miernik,
Senior Administrative Assistant