

Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes
August 18, 2015

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, August 18, 2015, at the Council Chambers located at 707 W. Acequia, Visalia, California. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Ben Filiponi at 5:30 pm.

Present: Ben Filiponi, Shann Blue, Jason Kent, George Shelton, Peter Thomas, and Justin Sweet

Guests: Carol Hays, Executive Director, Visalia Parks & Recreation Foundation

Absent: Carla Calhoun

Staff: Vincent Elizondo, Jeannie Greenwood, Jeff Fultz, Laurissa Roggenkamp and Brenda Miernik

- 2. Review and Approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting, July 21, 2015.** Commissioner Filiponi called for a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Thomas moved to approve the minutes as presented and Commissioner Blue seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 3-0

- 3. Public Comment:** None.

- 4. Visalia Parks & Recreation Foundation Annual Report.** Ms. Hays said she has been employed by the Foundation for about 7 years now and the mission of the Foundation is to channel private money and volunteer efforts to enhance Visalia park facilities and recreational programs. She reported the following facts.

- The Foundation is a 501c (3) non-profit corporation.
- The Executive Board has four members: President - Diane Sumpter; Vice President - Tim Ricco; Secretary - Debra Theis; Treasurer - Kristine Herd.
- The Board has 14 active Board Members and 5 Advisory Board Members.
- New members are selected by the Membership Committee and submitted to the Board for approval.
- The Foundation meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at 225 N. Santa Fe Avenue. Everyone is welcome to attend.
- The Foundation holds an annual planning meeting to define Foundation goals.
- The Foundation works closely with the Parks and Recreation Department for the City of Visalia.
- The Foundation employs an Executive Director, which is funded by a grant from the City of Visalia.

Ms. Hays said the responsibilities of the Executive Director include keeping the Board motivated, coordinating projects, is the community representative and serves as the liaison to the City. The Director is also responsible for fundraising and seeking grants. The Director works part time, 20 hours per week, and holds office hours at the Senior Center, primarily on Wednesdays.

Ms. Hays said the accomplishments for 2014-2015 were as follows:

- The final Freedom Celebration remained free to the public and was successful for the sixth consecutive year. 2014 was the final year of the Foundation's sponsorship of the Celebration. It was decided that this effort did not support the Mission of the Foundation, nor did the Foundation have the resources due to the size of its Board. At this time no serious interest has come from any other entity to take over the event. The Foundation has committed itself to assist any sponsor that might arise in the future.

Ms. Hays stated she presented the Celebration to the Tulare County Deputy Sheriff's Association last evening and they are considering being a major donor. The Association asked if the Foundation would consider reinstating the event if the Association would provide the funds. It was noted that Mike Clancy would like to establish a coalition of non-profit organizations who would pay the costs outright so that fundraising would be unnecessary. Ms. Hays reported that nothing definite came from the meeting.

- The Celebration of Life Project continues. This is an ongoing fundraising project, whereby trees are purchased at a cost of \$275, and a tree is planted in honor of a person or life event. A bronze plaque is placed with names on it near the tree. This would include deaths, anniversaries, retirements, the birth of a baby, and any other celebratory event.
- Naming rights for Saputo Field was acquired.
- Improvements were made to Rotary Park through grant funds.

- A Senior Center Cooperation Agreement was established.
- A generator was donated by the Foundation to the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Resulting from a successful fundraiser, an iPad and 2 free-standing kiosks were donated to the Parks and Recreation Department.
- The Foundation initiated a Youth Leadership Council Program with funding from the City of Visalia.
- Funding was received for a memorial bench at Mayor's Park.
- Savemart SHARES are utilized as a funding source for the Foundation's Parks and Recreation Youth Scholarship Fund.
- A new website has been established for the Foundation. The web address is www.supportvisaliaparks.com.
- The Foundation has created a Membership Program.
- The Foundation received a grant from First 5 of Tulare County in the amount of \$42,000, with a project deadline of December, 2015. The funds will be used to purchase a new tot playground, geared for 2 to 5-year olds, for Lincoln Oval Park. The total cost of the playground project is approximately \$115,000, including installation. The Foundation will pay 20% of the equipment and seek funds from the community and City Council to pay the remaining balance. Mr. Elizondo said the plan is to place a 3 foot high wrought iron fence around the playground and place signage stating that adults cannot be in the playground unless accompanied by a child. He said money has been allocated by City Council to place a 4-5 foot high wrought iron fence around the eastern perimeter of the park, parallel to the highway. This will direct foot traffic to the designated street crossing, providing more safety for pedestrians. Money has also been allocated for improving lighting at the park and adding security cameras.

Commissioner Thomas asked if the grant amount would change in the future. Ms. Hays said it would only change if the final equipment purchase price differs from the original estimate. The grant will not pay for installation or associated administrative costs.

Ms. Hays said future goals of the Parks and Recreation Foundation include the following:

- Focus on building the Randy Zeeb Endowment Fund to ensure future financial stability.
- Increasing membership to provide a pool of volunteers and potential Board Members.
- Seeking donations and volunteer efforts for hard improvements to parks as well as assisting with ongoing Department needs.
- Working toward solid support of recreation programs such as Concerts in the Park and Movies in the Park.
- Increasing funding for scholarships.
- Establish a more visible and accessible presence in the community such as a new office location and office hours, and partnering with other non-profits for high profile projects such as the Oval Park Christmas Tree Project.
- Increase the Foundation's social media exposure and website accessibility.

Mr. Elizondo said the City and staff appreciates the work Ms. Hays does on the City's behalf. He said that for approximately 10 years the Foundation did not have a paid director and it floundered. Mr. Elizondo said entities that donate to the Foundation receive a tax break and the Foundation can apply for grants that the City cannot; it is advantageous for cities to have a Foundation. He said the Visalia Parks & Recreation Foundation has been asked for tips and pointers for starting a Foundation many times.

- 5. Annual Report on Adult Sports, Programs, and Classes.** Mr. Glick stated that his responsibilities include tennis, adult sports, athletic facility management, special events, fitness classes, dance classes and adult enrichment classes. He said his current staff is Ramsey Ochoa, Recreation Coordinator, hourly staff, fitness and dance instructors, and independent contractors.

Mr. Glick reported the following information:

Tennis Lessons are sanctioned by the United States Tennis Association. In 2013-14, 161 tennis lessons were taught. In 2014-15, 185 lessons were taught. Fall, spring, and summer lessons were taught at Plaza Park, ages 5 to adult. A new match play tennis league was created and there were 38 participants.

Mr. Glick stated the Derrick Shaw Memorial Skate Competition is scheduled for October 17, 2015, at Provident Skate Park. He said the security cameras have been successful in curtailing graffiti and vandalism. The surveillance company calls the police and they respond as appropriate.

Adult Sports includes men's and coed softball, adult basketball, coed volleyball and coed and women's soccer. He said his staff conducted surveys, researching programs through the National Recreation and Parks Association and the California Parks and Recreation Society and found that modified adult sports leagues were beginning to trend due

to having fewer games, modified rules (number of team players) and smaller courts or fields. Implementing our findings resulted in 79 new teams with new revenue of \$22,600.

- ✓ Softball – In the spring and summer 102 teams played, in the fall 97 teams played and the new winter league had 49 teams. In 2014 men’s coed had 282 registered, and in 2015 there were 350 registered.
- ✓ Adult Basketball: Games were played in the Anthony Community Center with 78 teams in 2014, and 118 teams in 2015. There were 2 divisions. 4 on 4 leagues were held in the fall, spring, summer, and winter.
- ✓ Adult coed volleyball - Games were played in the Anthony Community Center with 2 divisions. In 2014 there were 91 teams, and in 2015 there were 95 teams. Leagues were held in the fall, spring, summer, and winter.
- ✓ Adult coed soccer – League games were played at Riverway Sports Park and Jefferson Park, league were held in the fall, spring, and summer. In 2014 there were 78 teams, and in 2015 there were 81 teams.

Mr. Glick said he manages the Mangano Soccer Complex, the CR Shannon Baseball Complex, Plaza Park, Whitendale Park, Jefferson Park, and Fairview Park athletic facilities. The athletic fields are closed for maintenance for approximately 10 weeks out of the year to prepare them for play. He said he also manages the athletic facility rentals at Riverway Sports Park and Plaza Park. In 2013-14 rental revenue for the Sports Park was \$99,000, and 2014-15, it was \$98,000. In 2013-14 the rental revenue at Plaza Park was \$19,000, and for 2014-15 it was \$11,000.

Mr. Glick said he manages the contracts for Baseball and soccer. Baseball contracts include Visalia Youth Baseball, Visalia Little League National, and the fall/winter baseball programs. Soccer includes the San Joaquin Valley Soccer League, Visalia Soccer League, Odyssey South, AYSO, Visalia Galaxy, Visalia United, and VUSD High School Use.

Mr. Glick said he is in charge of Adult Enrichment Programs. This includes Special Events, fitness classes, dance classes, adult enrichment classes and community programs. He provided the following information:

- Tule Fog Run – In 2013-14 there were 347 participants; in 2014-15 there were 313 participants.
- Spooky Sprint – In 2013-14 there were 156 participants; in 2014-15 there were 141 participants.
- Corporate Games – In 2013-14 there were 12 teams; in 2014-15 there were 14 teams.
- The Derrick Shaw Memorial Skate Competition, in 2013-14 had 16 participants; in 2014-15 there were 15 participants.

Mr. Glick said Yoga classes in 2013-14 had 456 participants and in 2014-15 had 447 participants. Fitness classes in 2013-14 had 185 participants, and 2014-15 had 260 participants. He said Dance classes in 2013-14 had 325 participants and in 2014-15 had 198 participants. Adult classes in 2013-14 had 152 participants, and in 2014-15 had 280 participants.

Mr. Glick said he participates in the Healthy Visalia Committee along with the following entities: Kaweah Delta Health Care District, Visalia Unified School District, Family Health Care Network, Tulare County Health & Human Services, College of the Sequoias, Tulare First 5 and the Tulare County Office of Education. The Annual Healthy Visalia Festival, held at Riverway Sports Park, and Walk with a Doc are also offered by the committee.

Mr. Glick said he oversees the Community Garden of Visalia. It is cared for by participants from the Southeast Asian community and the season runs from March through October. There are 15 plots with revenue of \$23 per plot per month. The fee includes tilling, water and electrical needs. He said drought issues have impacted the garden.

Mr. Glick stated the goals for 2015-16 include maximizing facility usage, recruiting great instructors and teachers, and researching and finding new successful programs.

Commissioner Kent expressed his thanks for the Zombie run. He said he participates in the Fresno run and they end it with a zombie bar crawl and it is funny to watch. He said these are very popular.

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

- **Upcoming Recreation Programs & Special Events.** Ms. Greenwood introduced Arianna Ornelas, a student from Sacramento State who is doing an internship with the department this summer. Her project is Senior Games. The event has nine events so far and over 50 pickleball participants are registered. She said the Opening Ceremony will take place at Riverway Sports Park with a torch-lighting. She said excitement is building.
- Last Friday was the deadline for the Youth Football League and current registration is 463 participants, which is 83 more than last year.
- Volleyball registration deadline is Friday.
- The Parks & Recreation Foundation’s Race Night at Plaza Park was a few weeks ago and 334 attended the event; it was a win-win for all involved. The monies received will go into the Foundation scholarship fund.
- Senior Games registration opened a week ago Friday. The way it works is that a person registers and can play in various games. We have 52 registered participants but they will do several different sports. This is a good start. The department is now a member of the California Senior Games Association and they will advertise for us throughout the state. We are receiving emails daily.
- School began last week with after school care available at Hurley, Oak Grove, Shannon Ranch, and Manual Hernandez. Currently we have 168 enrolled.
- Ms. Greenwood handed out flyers for the Teen Idol competition with tickets attached. The level of talent for this contest is amazing. This event is on September 19, at 6 pm, at the LJ Williams Theatre.

- Tiny Tots Olympics will be held this year on September 5, at Perry Family Park. It's been over 10 years since it has been held and it was a largely successful event. The age group is from 2 to 5 year olds.
 - The Senior Center Open house will be held September 9. This is the fall event; it begins at 4 pm, and ends at 7 pm.
 - The fall brochure should be out this weekend.
7. **Upcoming Parks & Urban Forestry Projects, Programs & Special Events.** Mr. Fultz reported the following:
- Riverway Sports Park is prepared for the opening tournament of AYSO this weekend.
 - Work has begun at the Lincoln Oval Park. The department will install new wrought iron fencing to guide pedestrian traffic in alignment with traffic flow. Mr. Fultz said he is working on the installation of the new tot playground.
 - With funding received from the Rotarians, the department will be installing fitness equipment at Rotary Park and new signage will be installed as well.
8. **Director's Report on Administrative Items.** Mr. Elizondo announced the following:
- City Council appointed Mr. Thomas as a voting Commissioner, and Mr. Sweet as a Commission Alternate.
 - After much discussion on the Eastside Regional Park and Groundwater Recharge Facility Master Plan, Council voted unanimously for Plan B.
 - AT&T has a contract with the City to install a cell tower at Riverway Sports Park and, although it has yet to be installed, AT&T is paying the lease payments. The City is currently in negotiations with Verizon to place another cell in the opposite corner of Saputo Sports Field. In the future, the Commission might want to make a recommendation to the City Council about how the revenue from these two leases might be used. Mr. Elizondo stated that, in light of Mr. Fultz's reported vandalism at the Sports Park (someone caused a fire in a restroom and part of a concession stand), hiring a security service for after-hour surveillance might be a good idea to prevent vandalism and graffiti. Staff will research the costs of this service.
 - At the July 2010 Council meeting there was an agenda item seeking approval to file a Notice of Completion on Phase II of the Riverway Sports Park. At this meeting, discussion took place regarding the future softball complex at Riverway Sports Park, specifically, adult versus a youth softball complex. Following the discussion, a motion was made to direct staff members to develop Phase IV with a youth softball complex. Some Council members took issue because the item had not been presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission so, at a later meeting, the item was directed back to the Parks and Recreation Commission for consideration. When presented to Commission no action was taken because Phase IV was years away from completion. This will be an item on the September Agenda for further discussion.
9. **Commissioner's Requests & Comments:**
- **Community/Aquatic Center Ad Hoc Committee.** Commissioner Blue said the committee is waiting for a meeting notice.
 - **Senior Citizens Advisory Committee.** *VACANT.*
 - **Parks & Recreation Foundation.** Commissioner Kent said he had nothing to add to Ms. Hays report.
 - **Waterways & Trails Committee Report.** Commissioner Filiponi said he attended the meeting and it was great to see Don Stone there. His wealth of knowledge is invaluable. Next month the committee will be going on a tour of Modoc Ditch and some of the trails projects in progress.
 - **North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee.** Commissioner Thomas said he did not attend the meeting but the Committee is aware of the funding from First 5 of Tulare for the Lincoln Oval Park tot playground.
10. **Adjourn to the Regular Meeting, September 15, 2015, at the Council Chambers located at 707 W. Acequia Street, Visalia, CA.**

Commissioner Kent moved to adjourn and Commissioner Blue seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 4-0

Brenda Miernik,
Senior Administrative Assistant