

**Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**August 15, 2017**

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, August 15, 2017, at Visalia City Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order by Chair Filiponi at 5:32 p.m.

**Present:** Chair Ben Filiponi, Vice Chair Steve Woods, Shann Blue, Peter Thomas, Rick Eastes, Lisa Walsh and Patrick Lozano

**Staff:** Jeannie Greenwood, Laurissa Roggenkamp, Jeff Fultz, and Freddy Arias

1. **Review and Approval Minutes** – The regular meeting minutes of July 18, 2017, were motioned for approval by Commissioner Blue, and second by Commissioner Thomas, motion passed 5-0.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** City Councilmember Greg Collins was present and addressed the Commission stating the outcome of an aquatics community meeting held recently. There is a great need for pool time, especially when other community pools are out of commission for maintenance and repairs. He is asking for members of the Commission to volunteer and participate in an Aquatics Committee that will be seeking researching the feasibility of an aquatics facility in Visalia that could include a 50 meter competitive pool, a 25 yard splash pool for lessons and classes and a recreational pool. Tasks that the committee will focus on include facility design, location and funding for construction and on-going operation and maintenance costs.

Ms. Maria Gonzalez, member of the North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NVNAC), reported that in February, Ms. Haynes with the City of Visalia Community Development Department asked her to participate in the community input process of the Action Plan for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. Several prior recommendations for the Lincoln Oval Park have been met. As a Committee person and citizen she is concerned other recommendations have been swept under the rug such as the walking path and outdoor stage at Oval Park. The Lincoln Oval is in Census Tract 11, and seen as the gateway to cultural diversity, and a jewel in the rough that needs more attention. She is asking for redirection of funding for Lincoln Oval Park. She expressed thanks to the Commission.

Chair Filiponi commented Item 4 on agenda will cover this.

Mr. Bill Huott submitted written comments. Written comments submitted by Mr. Bill Huott related to Lincoln Oval Park were distributed to the Commission.

3. **Annual Report on Adult Sports, Programs and Classes** – Recreation Supervisor, Freddy Arias provided a powerpoint presentation to the Commission providing participation numbers and financial figures for programs under his supervision in Adult Sports, Fitness, Adult Enrichment Classes and Athletic Facility Management.

Vice-Chair Woods asked if there is a computer lab, and would there be an interest in instruction on

Google Docs? Mr. Arias reported yes, at the Senior Center. Commissioner Woods stated that he would be willing to teach a Google Docs class in an upcoming season.

Commissioner Lozano asked of other types of special interest courses that staff is seeking to offer. Mr. Arias reported there could be a variety of classes such as prenatal yoga, or core training. Commissioner Walsh asked about reduced attendance, and suggested that classes may be more successful if classes were offered after 6pm so that those who worked during the day could attend. Mr. Arias reported it has a lot to do with instructor availability and that staff would continue to look for instructors who could conduct evening classes.

Chair Filiponi asked if Corporate Games will offer large business and small business divisions. Mr. Arias stated this year there will not be large business or small business brackets. He stated that last year some smaller companies did combine to form a larger team, and the majority who participated said they will come back this year.

Vice Chair Woods asked if the TCOE signed up yet. Mr. Arias did not know for certain.

#### **4. Recommend Park Projects to the City Council for Housing Related Park (HRP) Grant and CDBG Funds.**

Director Jeannie Greenwood provided a powerpoint presentation and reviewed available grant funds for park projects and locations that are eligible. There is \$132,190 in Housing Related Park (HRP) funds and an additional \$50,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to be dedicated towards park improvements. Ms. Greenwood explained that HRP funds could be utilized for parks within Census Tract 11, namely Village Park and Lincoln Oval Park. In addition, CDBG funds could be used at six different parks. Ms. Greenwood reviewed the parks and projects previously identified by the Commission.

She reported that per City Council, HRP funds would not be spent on Lincoln Oval Park and the HRP grant application focused on a project at Village Park and the vacant lot #4 at Community Campus. At the time of the application, it was thought that up to \$600,000 could be awarded to the City of Visalia and a project was created accordingly. Now that the actual amount of funding has been defined, a smaller scale project needs to be submitted to the Council for approval. Several project options were mentioned and staff is seeking a recommendation from the Commission on a project that can be completed within the awarded funds. In prior discussions, a shade structure at Village Park playground was a priority piece of the project. This was included in the staff report as a potential HRP project as well as adding water and electrical service to Community Campus Lot #4 and turning the site into a community garden location. Other projects included adding a Parcourse and re-surfacing the basketball courts.

CDBG funds could be utilized to complete the prior Lincoln Oval Park project. The prior project included the installation of security cameras however the project ran out of funds before this could be completed. In addition, staff would like to see the softball field at Jefferson Park modified so that the area can be of multi-use. The current softball field has a dirt infield. By adding irrigation and turf to the infield and by removing dugouts and foul line fencing, Jefferson Park could be utilized for soccer, football and other types of activities as well as baseball and softball. This lighted facility is no longer used for adult softball and the availability of lights makes this an attractive venue for youth sports teams to practice.

Chair Filiponi opened the meeting to public comment.

**Public Comment** – Ms. Maria Gonzalez, NVNAC, asked why the Lincoln Oval playground wasn't included in the PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Jeff Fultz reported that funding spent at Lincoln Oval included the First Five Grant for the playground. Ms. Gonzalez requested a bench for parents at the playground at Lincoln Oval. She commented that an awning off the Oval building, for events, and a half-court basketball was recommended, but not funded. Director Greenwood commented the original plan did not include the half basketball court and that staff is not supportive of the outdoor concert venue that was proposed several years ago when the Visalia Rescue Mission wanted to have concerts at the Oval. Ms. Gonzalez asked if the meandering walkway would be ADA compliant, and could there be an ADA picnic table to be accessible from the path. Mr. Fultz answered that there currently is not an ADA accessible table in the park. Mr. Fultz commented the design for the pathway to be added would be ADA compliant. He stated the tables there now might not be accessible. Director Greenwood reported that the tables that were once located under the gazebo were requested to be removed from NVNAC, along with the bench in playground at Lincoln Oval.

Vice Chair Woods stated the fencing along the playground is usually filled with transients.

Ms. Roggenkamp stated that when we place benches, we look for designs that deter people from laying on them, such as armrests in the middle of the bench.

Bob Ludekens – NVNAC, and associated with the Boy Scouts, thanked the Parks & Recreation Commission and staff for all the work at the Lincoln Oval. He commented the pathway should meander through trees. He commented on the benches inside the playground, and VPD have done a wonderful job, as undesirables inside playground doesn't exist any longer. The new signs have worked. He commented that benches might not be a problem, and the cameras in will help. He would like to see the neighborhood churches to use the parks more. He has seen lots of improvements, and thanked the Commissioners.

Commissioner Walsh asked how to get churches involved, and has anyone approached rescue mission?

Mr. Ludekens commented that CSET, Proteus, and Boy Scouts were asked about adding programs at the area previously. He has talked with churches, but there is a reputation, and he has not talked with the rescue mission. It would be great to see businesses participate.

Chair Filiponi closed public comment.

Chair Filiponi recommended the cameras to finish the project at Lincoln Oval.

Commissioner Walsh stated that if this the cameras were promised before, and will benefit the area, it should go forward.

Commissioner Blue commented to finish what we started, cameras need to get done.

Commissioner Lozano asked the reasoning in keeping the backstop at Jefferson.

Director Greenwood stated it would keep the field as a multi-use and would allow practice with backstops.

Vice Chair Woods supports both Lincoln Oval cameras and Jefferson Park field work.

Commissioner Thomas asked how long can funds be held for CDBG. Director stated the funds are dedicated and should be allocated now.

Commissioner Lozano stated there have been a lot of resources that have benefited Lincoln Oval, and

all parks on the North Side.

Commissioner Filiponi asked the group for recommendations on what to use the remaining \$30k CDBG on.

Vice Chair Woods asked what a walking path at Summers Park would cost?

Commissioner Thomas is there a need for the \$70k Parcourse, and where would that go in Village Park?

Director Greenwood stated wasn't sure how much we have to stick to the submittal within the HRP application. Perhaps add security cameras to Village Park.

Commissioner Blue commented on building new vs. maintain and upgrading old. And is building new piling on added maintenance? Mr. Fultz stated there is 10 year old equipment and in areas without grant funded census tracts.

Commissioner Walsh is it possible to take the items listed for Village Park, and remove the first 4-5 items on list, the remaining items would total \$97k needed.

Commissioner Lozano commented half of the funds to one project seems like a lot when walking trails are needed. Childhood obesity is huge and perhaps there is a better structure that could work.

Vice Chair Woods are concrete pads and Par Cor back in discussion? Suggested install one tall pole light in garden area on Village Park.

Chair Filiponi asked for a motion to allocate HRP funds to the Village Park Improvements, while omitting the first four items on the Village Park list, the remaining HRP funds to be spent on Community Campus Lot 4. \$4k of the CDBG funds to be spent on the Lincoln Oval camera project to be completed, with the remaining CDBG funds to add to the HRP projects above.

Motion by Commissioner Blue, seconded by Vice Chair Woods, and unanimous.

Commissioner Thomas departed at 7:17 p.m.

## **5. Updates on City Council Reports & City Staff Announcements:**

***Upcoming Programs and Events*** – Recreation Manager, Roggenkamp reported on the following:

- Successful summer and are already four days into ASA programs at school sites.
- Events calendar – Summerlan Ranch, Mother and Son Dance on Saturday is close to selling-out
- Fall adult soccer sign-ups and softball at Plaza Park
- Invite Commission to Grandparents Day at the Senior Center, Sept 8<sup>th</sup>
- LJW is the location of Teen Idol – Tickets were handed out
- Senior Fall Open House, September 13th
- Movies in the Park are completed with Summer, but Beauty and the Beast will be Sept 16<sup>th</sup>.

She mentioned that although youth sports participation numbers for the prior year were down, this year's numbers for Flag Football and Fall Volleyball are currently over prior year while we are expecting further attendance.

***Upcoming Parks & Urban Forestry Projects, Programs & Special Events*** – Mr. Jeff Fultz reported on the following:

- Make-a-Difference Day, Oct. 21, Sat. The main project to be the piano basin with trail around on Doe Street, east of Shirk Road.
- Lincoln Oval Park planting on the NW corner is planned, and Rotary will have events at their park. There is a church group of approx. 200 people ready to be assigned to piano basin.

***Director's Report on Administrative Items:*** Ms. Jeannie Greenwood reported on:

- Congrats to the reappointed members and the new alternates.
- Wittman Center will be added to Make-a-Difference day event, and a church is committed.
- Riverway, northern homes have been demolished, a garage structure is still there and will be kept for storage. The basin is being filled in, and the roundabout is completed. We are still looking for an archery range.
- Urban Tree Foundation to add benches, a sign, and a fence to Miki City Park.
- Senior Games are underway and staff is working on preparation.
- Staff had a three hour demo for a new Recreation Management System vendor, and next week is another one.
- Meeting scheduled with Cal Ripken representatives for a world series event, next year
- Recreation Coordinator position, (Measure N) interviews have happened, goal is to have on board after Labor Day
- Pickleball tournament is October 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>
- The new EOC is due to open Sept. 20th

**6. Commissioner's Requests & Comments:**

- 7. Foundation** – Vice Chair Woods reported a meeting was held on July 27<sup>th</sup> and Fromage Frolic plans are moving forward. Commissioner Woods has presented a proposal to the Foundation to choose a day to call “Love Your Parks Day”. On this date, local businesses could designate a percentage of sales to go towards parks. Program would be promoted through the Chamber of Commerce.
- 8. Waterways & Trails** – Chair Filiponi did not attend last meeting. Director Greenwood stated that there are two new members and group has been reduced to seven members with two alternates. The Jennings Ditch Trail is being looked at and a naming recommendation will be forwarded to the Council.
- 9. North Visalia Advisory** - Commissioner Thomas (out)
- 10. Park Ordinance Review** – Vice Chair Woods reported the group looked at alcoholic beverages in parks; they are working toward “findings” type of area. They reviewed law enforcement animals in parks, camping, smoking, and handouts/leaflets or canvassing in parks. Commissioner Lozano asked about K9 in parks. Vice Chair Woods commented that the added language states that law enforcement will release dogs in parks in accordance with procedures. Commissioner Lozano explained why K9 officers need to decompress and run. Mr. Fultz asked when K9s are being decompressed, does PD go somewhere where there are no people activity.
- 11. South Side Community Center** - Commissioner Blue reported there will be a meeting scheduled for Aug 17<sup>th</sup>. The last meeting was months ago, but they are back on track.

Next Meeting will be Tuesday, September 19, 2017, 707 W. Acequia, City Council Chambers

- 12. Motion to Adjourn at 7:45 p.m. by Commissioner Blue and seconded by Commissioner Eastes.**

Respectfully submitted by,  
Susie Brown  
Office Assistant