

**Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2019**

Call to Order/Roll Call

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 21, 2019, in the Council Chambers, at City Hall West, 707 W. Acequia. The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair Ben Filiponi at 5:30p.m.

Present: Ben Filiponi, Steven Woods, Shann Blue, Rick Eastes, Patrick Lozano and Lisa Walsh (Alternate Commissioner)

City Staff: Jeannie Greenwood, Laurissa Roggenkamp, Jeff Fultz and Kathleen Machado

Guests: Alvin Jenkins of Visalia Youth Softball Association, Nancy Hawkins and Carol Hoppert Hays of the Community Enhancement Foundation

1. Public Comment

Johanna Coyne (Visalia resident), representing Pickleball Visalia – Ms. Coyne requested the Plaza Park pickleball courts be only used for pickleball play and tennis courts only used for tennis. Ms. Coyne asked the Commission to guide the Parks and Recreation department to put further thought into use of the pickleball courts for Pee Wee tennis classes. Ms. Coyne also provided her petition in writing. The document was distributed to each of the commissioners.

Brent Winn – Mr. Winn expressed opinion that the Plaza Park pickleball courts be used for pickleball play only.

Hilda Fischer – Ms. Fischer expressed opinion that tennis instruction should be done on tennis courts.

Commissioner Woods – Mr. Woods said that he had visited the Plaza Park pickleball courts a couple of weeks previously to evaluate the situation. He noticed that there were 4-5 empty tennis courts and half of the pickleball courts were in use for tennis lessons. Two of them in use for lessons, the other two weren't in use at all. At the same time pickleball players were laying down tape on two different tennis courts in order to play, even while there were empty courts in the pickleball area. Mr. Woods would like this added to the June meeting agenda for further discussion.

Commissioner Lozano – Mr. Lozano requested a staff report explaining why this issue is occurring.

Alternate Commissioner Walsh asked that the reason tennis lessons are being played on the pickleball courts be included in the staff report.

2. Review and Approve Minutes

The minutes of the April 16, 2019 regular meeting were motioned for approval by Commissioner Eastes and seconded by Commissioner Lozano. The motion carried 5-0.

- 3. Best of the West Softball Tournament** – *Written and oral report by Laurissa Roggenkamp, Recreation Manager*
City Staff is recommending that the Parks & Recreation Commission authorize the Parks and Recreation Director to issue a permit to Visalia Youth Softball Association (VYSA) to close Whitendale Park to the public for the Best of the West youth softball tournament and authorize VYSA to charge admission. Conditions of use include payment of a \$500.00 deposit and \$440.00 to reserve the picnic areas for Saturday and Sunday, portable toilets be placed in the park, trash and recycling receptacles be added in addition to the temporary fencing. Any vendors at this event are to be City approved and food vendors must obtain the necessary Tulare County Health permits. They must provide evidence of liability insurance naming City of Visalia as additionally insured. The temporary fencing is to not be put up prior to 8:00am Friday, 5/31/19 and must be removed no later than 12:00pm Monday, 6/3/19. VYSA is required to post signage throughout Whitendale Park at least 7 days prior to the event, notifying park users of the closure.

MOTION: Commissioner Wood motioned to accept the staff recommendation to authorize the Parks and Recreation Director to issue a permit to VYSA for the closure of Whitendale Park for the Best of the West Softball Tournament Friday, 5/31/19 through Sunday, 6/2/19 with the conditions as stated, seconded by Commissioner Eastes. The motion carried 5-0.

- 4. Visalia Senior Games Recap** – *Presentation by Jeannie Greenwood, Parks and Recreation Director*

Director Greenwood presented a Power Point report on the 2019 Visalia Senior Games events.

Commissioner Eastes stated that pickleball event participants commented that the event was posted late; that because it had been posted late other players had committed to other events, thus reducing participant enrollment. In response Director Greenwood stated that the pickleball event registration opened November 1, 2018 and that the event information was posted on pickleballtournaments.com shortly after.

Commissioner Blue asked if awards were distributed after each event. Director Greenwood confirmed. Mr. Blue asked if thought had been given to hosting one award ceremony for all events. Director Greenwood said that

competitors had expressed that they had other obligations, but added it was something that could be looked at. Commissioner Eastes asked why revenue from the first year was higher. Director Greenwood explained Humana had been a sponsor that year, donating \$2,500, but have not returned. Dates for 2020 Visalia Senior Games will be March 21st-22nd and March 28th-29th. Save-the-date cards will be going out to other Senior Games events this year. Commissioner Lozano asked if there had been consideration to offer senior adult sport leagues. Director Greenwood responded that we've offered senior sports leagues prior to Visalia Senior Games, but there has not been adequate interest. Free agent lists are available to those interested on an ongoing basis.

5. **Commission Discussion of Recognition of Bob Ludekens** - *discussion lead by Commissioner Patrick Lozano*
Parks and Recreation Director Jeannie Greenwood provided the Commission with the Visalia City Council Ceremonial Document Policy and if appropriate and desired by the Commission, the next step would be to complete the Resolution/Proclamation Request application. Commissioner Lozano volunteered to complete the application and provide a draft document to be reviewed at the June meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Woods motioned for Commissioner Lozano to complete the application and provide for review at the June meeting. Commissioner Blue seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

6. **Commission vote to recommend to the Council three candidates to fill Commissioner positions for the term of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021** – *discussion led by Commission Chair Ben Filiponi*

Incumbent Commissioners Blue, Eastes and Lozano expressed their interest in serving on the Parks and Recreation Commission another term. Alternate Commissioner Walsh indicated that she was also interested in becoming a voting member.

Director Greenwood introduced Parks and Recreation Commission applicant Nancy Hawkins to the commissioners. Ms. Hawkins shared her background and expressed her interest in waterways and trails to the Commission. Alternate Commissioner Walsh recommended Ms. Hawkins as she had worked with her on a project at the Visalia Senior Center.

Commissioner Blue expressed that the sitting Commission is diverse and added that her background would be a good addition.

Director Greenwood recommended that the Commission interview all five candidates for the three Commission positions and two Alternate Commission positions, Commissioners could then vote for their top three choices, and that the Commission make a recommendation to the City Council to appoint three members to the Commission and two candidates as Alternate Commissioners for Council appointment.

Commissioner Lozano stated that he has a diverse background, loves the direction that Commission is moving in and would like to retain his seat as a commissioner. Commissioner Blue stated that he is entering his final term, wants to finish it and likes the direction that the Commission is moving in. Commissioner Eastes stated that he has enjoyed his participation with the Commission; that he has learned a lot and would like to continue. Alternate Commissioner Walsh – Ms. Walsh stated that she would like to stay on with the Commission, would like to be a voting member but would stay on as an alternate. Ballots were distributed to the five voting members.

Ballot results:

Shann Blue – 5 votes

Richard Eastes – 4 Votes

Patrick Lozano – 4 Votes

Lisa Walsh – 2 Votes

MOTION: Commissioner Woods motioned to recommend to the Council that Commissioners Blue, Eastes and Lozano be appointed to an additional term. Commissioner Lozano seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

MOTION: Commissioner Lozano motioned to make a recommendation to Council to appoint Ms. Nancy Hawkins as the 2nd Alternate to the Parks and Recreation Commission, Commissioner Woods seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

7. **Update on City Council Reports and City Staff Announcements:**
Recreation Programs and Special Events, Laurissa Roggenkamp, Recreation Manager
- 5/25/19 Movie in the Park, “Mary Poppins Returns” at Riverway Sports Park
- 5/27/19 City of Visalia offices will be closed in observance of Memorial Day
- 5/28/19 Committees and Commissions appreciation dinner at Visalia Rawhide Baseball Stadium
- 5/30/19 Senior Health and Fitness Day at the Visalia Senior Center
- 5/30/19 KJUG Concert in the Park at Whitendale Park

- 6/8/19 Mother-Son Campout at Burke Park
- 6/8/19 Summer programs start
- 6/14/19 Father's Day Luncheon at the Visalia Senior Center
- 6/14/19 Movie in the Park, "Small Foot" at Riverway Sports Park
- 6/18/19 Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting at City Hall West
- 6/21/19 Movie in the Park, "Lilo & Stitch" at Riverway Sports Park
- 6/21/19 Summer Night Lights at Manuel Hernandez Community Center
- 6/22/19 Free Family Swim Night at Mt. Whitney High School Pool
- 6/22/19 Visalia Teen Idol Auditions at Anthony Community Center

Commissioner Woods stated that he is available to be a judge for the Teen Idol auditions if needed. Commissioner Blue requested practice schedules for the three recreation swim teams be sent to him so that he can go to the pools to observe coaches.

Parks and Urban Forestry Projects, Programs and Special Events, Jeff Fultz, Parks and Urban Forestry Manager

- Riverway Sports Park, Plaza Park, Whitendale Park and Jefferson Park aerations are finished.
 - Cable fencing at Whitendale Park has been adjusted for the KJUG Concert in the Park event.
 - Continuing to address issues arising from camping in the parks. Waiting on directive from subcommittee.
- Commissioner Lozano asked about recent removal of tents and belongings at Lincoln Oval Park. Manager Fultz explained this was an effort by the City Park Ranger, HOPE Team and Code Enforcement to enable the Parks Division to perform their maintenance and other related tasks. Commissioner Lozano asked if the same efforts were being made at Recreation Park. Manager Fultz stated that there are still tents along the Rawhide fence, but that activity near the playground has moved on.
- Commissioner Eastes mentioned that he noticed police presence at Blain Park, addressing subjects in a positive way. Alternate Commissioner Walsh asked Manager Fultz if his division meets with the Visalia Police Department regarding park inhabitants. Manager Fultz stated that the division meets with the SMART team (City of Visalia Code Enforcement, Police Department, Fire Department, Parks, Solid Waste and Cal-Water). Commissioner Walsh asked if the Park Ranger communicates with Visalia Police Department. Manager Fultz confirmed that he does.

Director's Report on Administrative Items, Jeannie Greenwood, Parks and Recreation Director

- 6/6/19-6/8/19 Clyde Soto Baseball Tournament at CR Shannon Baseball Complex.
- The City of Visalia was selected for grant funding through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. A project at the East Side Regional Park has been recommended and forwarded to the National Parks Department for approval of a \$2.48 million grant that will add over 30 acres of groundwater recharge basins and over 50 acres of developed park area as well as over 2 miles of a walking/running trail with a 10 station par course and an 18-hole disc golf course. Director Greenwood is currently working with The Urban Tree Foundation and the City Engineering Division on a grant from the Green Infrastructure Program under Prop 68 and administered by the California Natural Resources Division. If successful, this grant would add additional groundwater recharge basins and walking/running trails at East Side Regional Park. Proposals for this program are due June 28th.
- We are also considering submitting two applications for the Statewide Parks Program Grant also funded under Prop 68 and administered by California State Parks. Applications are due in August. The first application is for a rehabilitation project at Plaza Park that would replace the existing and update all athletic lighting for the softball complex, tennis courts and pickleball courts. The project would also include pond rehabilitation and running a new domestic water service to the park to facilitate the tertiary water conversion. The second application under this program would be to refurbish the Goshen Trail.
- Internal Homeless Focus group had the first meeting on Friday, 6/24/19
- Visalia Rawhide is partnering with Spirit Radio and Momentum Broadcasting to host a Freedom Celebration event on July 3rd for the community. The event would include free public swim at the Redwood Pool followed by a community event with entertainment and vendors in Recreation Park. The evening would conclude with a game at Rawhide stadium followed by a fireworks show. Those not attending the game can enjoy the festivities in the park until the show. The Rawhide is requesting closure of Recreation Park a week prior to the event for cleaning and beautification projects.
- 5/23/19 tickets for the Committees and Commissions appreciation baseball game will be available for pick up at the City Administration Building.
- Softball field poles and lights are getting installed at the Riverway Sports Park Phase 5 project. The central core parking lot will be completed soon.

- Director Greenwood signed the Community Garden Contract 5/21/19, construction to start soon and a Community Build day will be scheduled.

Commissioner's Requests and Comments

Visalia Community Enhancement Foundation – Commissioner Woods

- The first Chalk Walk had 14 participants. Professional category winner was awarded \$200; the amateur \$125. Because of the volunteers and participants at this event the Foundation was given 10 Disney passes to utilize for fundraising.
- KJUG Concert Series flyer handed out to commissioners and staff
- Looking for \$5,000 in mural sponsorship by September
- Fromage Frolic work starts in June
- Looking for Foundation members
- Need amounts for City projects, particularly Naming Rights projects
- Fundraiser at Rosa's Italian Restaurant in August
- Carol Hoppert Hays, Visalia Community Enhancement Foundation Director announced that money will be coming from Kaweah Delta Healthcare District for the archery range. Ms. Hays also mentioned need to spread the word of the Fromage Frolic.

MOTION: Commissioner Blue made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:18pm. Commissioner Eastes seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted by,
Kathleen Machado
Senior Administrative Assistant