

APPROVED

**Visalia Park & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes
July 16, 2019**

Call to Order/Roll Call

The Visalia Park & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, July 16, 2019, in the Council Chambers, at City Hall West, 707 W. Acequia. The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Shann Blue at 5:30p.m.

Present: Shann Blue, Patrick Lozano, Rick Eastes, Lisa Walsh (Alternate Commissioner) and Nancy Hawkins (Alternate Commissioner).

Absent: Ben Filiponi, Steve Woods

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

Guest: Ken Richardson, Visalia City Attorney

1. Public Comment – None

2. Review and Approve Minutes

The minutes of the June 18, 2019 regular meeting were motioned for approval by Commissioner Eastes and seconded by Commissioner Lozano. The motion carried 3-0.

3. Review Park Ordinance Draft – Presentation by Ken Richardson, Visalia City Attorney

Visalia City Attorney Ken Richardson presented the first reading of revised City Park Ordinance Number 2019-07 presented to City Council the previous evening.

Commissioner Eastes – In reviewing the ordinance draft did not see what defines shelter.

Mr. Richardson – There is a definition for ‘available shelter’.

Alternate Commissioner Walsh – Asked for clarification, that a religious organization related shelter was not considered an ‘available shelter’ under the law if it requires participation. Mr. Richardson confirmed.

Alternate Commissioner Walsh – Asked if Mr. Richardson would advise on park areas to be designated for overnight camping.

Mr. Richardson – It is possible. We don’t have to allow it in all places at all times. Designating parks could lead to problems specific to certain parts of town.

Alternate Commissioner Walsh – Asked if it is true that anyone can sell anything on a public property, unless there is a contracted concessionaire in a particular park, and not be required to have the same regulations as everyone else; not have to have permits to sell or meet other compliances.

Mr. Richardson – That activity is covered by different municipal code. Certain types of street vendors under certain circumstances, if they go through the permitting process, separate from the Parks Department permit process, will be allowed to vend. If there is an exclusive concessionaire in a park then other sellers can be prohibited.

Alternate Commissioner Walsh – Asked if the Parks and Recreation Department could enter into a contract with a single concessionaire to cover all parks. Mr. Richardson confirmed that it is possible.

Public Comment -

Theresa Dias (Hanford, CA) - What enforcement is there when encampments have to be cleaned up by 6:00am?

Mr. Richardson – The Visalia Police Department, H.O.P.E. Team, Code Enforcement, Park Rangers and Parks Staff.

4. Request from Pickleball Visalia to Restrict Use of the City's Eight Pickleball Courts – Staff Report and Power Point Presentation by Jeannie Greenwood, Parks and Recreation Director

Parks and Recreation Director Jeannie Greenwood presented Power Point presentation, as requested by the Commission, in response to a letter presented by Johanna Coyne on behalf of Pickleball Visalia at the May 21, 2019 Park and Recreation Commission meeting during Public Comment. The directive from the Commission for the report was to include history of Pickleball, the status of the program and reasons for having Youth Tennis lessons on the Pickleball courts.

Commissioner Eastes – When the Pee Wee Tennis lessons started was anyone in Pickleball consulted that this program was coming? Was any input received from Pickleball?

Director Greenwood – Not to my knowledge; I received an email a year ago from MJ Eastes asking why the lessons were being held on the court. I explained to her per the Facility Use Policy if the courts were not reserved they were available for use and we opted to schedule our program there.

Commissioner Eastes – But as stakeholders did you consult Pickleball?

Director Greenwood – We did not. Facility users at other City facilities are not consulted prior to scheduling City programs.

Alternate Commissioner Walsh – We don't have a Pickleball Commission in our City, correct? Are there other committees that we would reach out to?

Director Greenwood - Cal Ripken has a volunteer board. They generally have a board president that we communicate with. When multiple users will be utilizing a facility a meeting is held giving organizations opportunity to submit a request for use based on availability. Scheduled bookings are awarded according to the Facility Use Policy.

Alternate Commissioner Walsh – Do those groups pay fees and provide volunteer work within the parks and donate to assist in maintaining equipment on an on-going basis?

Director Greenwood – The groups that have the in-kind contributions are organizations with whom the City has a Facility User Agreement, primarily the youth groups. The adult groups pay the standard Council approved rental rate and provide a certificate of insurance.

Commissioner Lozano – Have we been presented with a board of directors, point of contact or president for Pickleball?

Director Greenwood – We coordinate with Johanna Coyne who is the ambassador for this area to U.S.A.P.A., and we work with M.J. Eastes.

Commissioner Lozano – Are they formulated like other organizations that actually have boards?

Director Greenwood – To my knowledge they just have a designated contact person.

Commissioner Blue – Pee Wee Tennis is a City program, correct?

Director Greenwood – Correct

Commissioner Eastes – Does Pee Wee Tennis pay money?

Director Greenwood – They pay a registration fee.

Commissioner Eastes – But they don't have any capital investments?

Director Greenwood – Recreation programs are not charged a capital surcharge.

Commissioner Lozano – Are the Pickleball courts at Recreation Park being used?

Director Greenwood – Yes they are.

Commissioner Lozano – If we're not collecting fees is that on us? Why aren't we getting rental fees?

Director Greenwood – The organization uses the facility without reservation.

Commissioner Lozano – Is it the contention of the Department that this reverts back to a first come first serve basis?

Director Greenwood – The Department’s suggestion is that they are an organized user group and they fall under the provisions to having to have a permit to use the courts.

Commissioner Lozano – If the courts were reserved and paid for there wouldn’t be conflict of usage. If the courts remain first come first serve then City programs takes priority?

Director Greenwood – That’s correct. If the courts aren’t reserved then there’s no reason not to utilize them for a City program. If Pickleball Visalia wants designated private use of the facility they can do that by obtaining a permit and paying the user fee of \$5.00 per hour per court.

Commissioner Blue – If Pickleball Visalia reserved courts and it’s time to schedule the Pee Wee Tennis classes, how is this handled?

Director Greenwood – If we have an ongoing user who has reserved a series of dates staff would see that the facilities aren’t available and would move the program to the tennis courts, costing the City extra staffing to set up the tennis courts.

Commissioner Lozano – A logical conclusion is the money spent on extra staffing would be recovered through revenue from the reservation.

Commissioner Blue – It would not eliminate Pee Wee Tennis?

Director Greenwood - No

Public Comment -

Johanna Coyne (2001 E. Victor, Visalia) – Ms. Coyne read exerts from a written request which she left copies of to distribute to the commissioners.

Pickleball Visalia is requesting Pickleball courts not be used for City programs when tennis courts are not being used. The tennis courts are already enabled with the lines for youth play, and the nets are adjustable.

Rarely are all six tennis courts in use when Youth Tennis is scheduled.

Pickleball players have nowhere else to go when Youth Tennis is using the Pickleball courts, except chalking tennis courts.

There has consistently been more Pickleball play than Tennis play at Plaza Park.

We have never asked for the Pickleball courts to be dual-use courts in our official request.

We have paid to play indoors.

We would love the City to offer more Pickleball classes, clinics, advanced play, strategic plays, etc.

We are a Facebook group of amateurs with a common interest in a particular sport and have put out a call to those interested. We have almost 600 members. Some of them are retail vendors (around 50). We have at least 400 players that play off and on.

Basically we’re not organized. We don’t have a board of directors. USAPA has sanctioned Ms. Coyne as an ambassador to promote the sport. They can’t do sanctioned tournaments because they don’t have sanctioned referees. No dues. Pickleball Visalia is not a legally constituted organization. Not able to obtain certificate of insurance and enter into legal agreements. No formal or administrative legal structure.

Do tennis players pay any fees besides renting courts?

Director Greenwood – The tennis courts are the same as the Pickleball courts in terms of reservations. Instructors and coaches that teach at the Plaza Park tennis courts pay annual permit fees.

Johanna Coyne - If the City is going to move forward with requiring us to pay to rent the courts are they going to do the same with the tennis players?

Director Greenwood – If they showed up at designated and scheduled times with 30-50 members, yes. This is according to policy.

Johanna Coyne - We have donated significant volunteer hours for event planning and promotion. If we were asked we would do more.

We are putting together a tournament. The Visalia Breakfast Lions Club will be covering the event with their liability insurance. We want to ask for a reduced rate to reserve the courts for the tournament.

Commissioner Eastes – Will that be based on the number of participants? Occasionally we've voted to give people discounts based on some number or value. If you want to make that request you'll have to have participation back up.

Joan Dahlen (Tulare, CA) – Ms. Dahlen talked about other Pickleball and tennis courts locally and in nearby cities, their amenities and fees (if any). Ms. Dahlen doesn't feel safe using the Pickleball courts at Recreation Park. Ms. Dahlen would like to see Pee Wee Pickleball lessons offered. No one who asks to play is denied. They need 8 more Pickleball courts.

Alternate Commissioner Walsh – Recommended Pickleball Visalia carry on their passion through volunteerism and offered to discuss volunteer opportunities through the Visalia Community Enhancement Foundation, which raises money for City of Visalia parks and programs. Encouraged Pickleball Visalia to use the Pickleball courts in Recreation Park as a priority, as the more people out there will deter those not using the facilities. Clarified Pickleball Visalia asked the Commission to direct the Department not to utilize the Pickleball Courts for Pee Wee lessons.

Commissioner Lozano – At some point a large group has to organize. Outside groups that host tournaments do their own marketing and provide their own staff. Recommended the group bring solutions more so than requests.

Kathy Ashford (South Tommy Court, Visalia) – When there are kids using the courts for Pee Wee tennis and 40+ adults have to wait in the bleachers, and the tennis courts are empty, that's not promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Alternate Commissioner Walsh – Asked Parks and Recreation staff how often Pee Wee Tennis occurs and what time of day.

Director Greenwood – Lessons are Saturday mornings for six weeks for two hours, starting at 8am. Usage is posted at the facilities to let the public know that the courts were reserved.

Commissioner Lozano – Pickleball courts are being used when tennis courts sit unused. Is that fair and accurate?

Director Greenwood – This varies.

Commissioner Lozano – When there is Pee Wee Tennis out there and we're putting them on Pickleball courts are there tennis courts not being used that the Pee Wee Tennis participants can use?

Director Greenwood – Yes

Commissioner Lozano – If we can overcome that it takes staff time to prepare the tennis courts, would we be able to strike a balance and not have to use the Pickleball courts?

Director Greenwood – Yes. We are doing that now. We've moved the program to the tennis courts and changed instructors. Why should this group not have to pay to reserve the courts?

Alternate Commissioner Walsh – We have a schedule of fees for almost every entity we have. If a member of the public goes to the Parks and Recreation Department and requests to reserve Pickleball courts for a series of dates and times and is willing to pay, the staff will accept the money, reserve the courts and they are going to post a sign stating that the courts have been reserved. If this customer decides he's going to play Pee Wee Tennis on these courts would there be an argument from Pickleball Visalia? Would this be a discussion if this were a public rental versus the City scheduling something on the courts?

Public Comment -

Mary Jo Eastes – Stated that she believes this is a different avenue. Doesn't believe this would be a problem, but asks if there is an open tennis court to put the kids there.

Parks and Recreation Manager Laurissa Roggenkamp - If there are no rentals scheduled our system will show the courts available for program use. If there is a rental then a facility isn't considered for program use. Having a rental will prevent the City for using the courts for tennis lessons.

Mary Joe Eastes – Proposed that Tennis Courts 5 and 6 be converted to Pickleball courts.

Alternate Commissioner Walsh – Recommended reserving the Pickleball courts. Based on the Facility Use Policy the Parks Director is within the purview of the policy to assign the facility for program use if it isn't reserved. Ms. Walsh invited Pickleball Visalia members to join forces with the Visalia Community Enhancement Foundation in raising funds for projects such as adding more Pickleball courts.

Commissioner Lozano – Doesn't understand if there are open tennis courts why Pickleball courts are being used for City programs. He believes that all of the tennis courts should be used before infringing on Pickleball. Because it is a growing sport he does not want to put up any road blocks.

Alternate Commissioner Walsh – Not looking to put up any road block to a growing sport. She is looking at setting a precedent in one sport over another. Does the Commission need to go back to the City attorney to change the terminology of the Facility Use Policy?

5. Park and Recreation Commission Election for Chair and Vice-Chair Seats – Discussion to be led by Vice-Chair

Commissioner Steven Woods

Commissioner Woods was not present.

MOTION: Commissioner Eastes motioned to table this item to the August meeting, Commissioner Lozano seconded, motion carries 3-0.

**6. Update on City Council Reports and City Staff Announcements –
Recreation Programs and Special Events, Laurissa Roggenkamp, Recreation Manager**

Review of past events -

Movies in the Park and Family Swim Nights had good attendance.

The Freedom Celebration on July 3rd led by Rawhide Baseball Organization was held at Recreation Park. More than 3,000 people attended and more than 4,000 in the stadium.

Upcoming events -

Movies in the Park (last one 7/19), Free Family Swim Nights and Community Pool Parties

7/25/19 – KJUG featuring King Calloway at Whitendale Park

7/17/19 – Catfish Derby at Plaza Park

Cal Ripken World Series Tournament commences the first week of August

8/6/19 – Measure N Clubhouse Open House in the Manuel F. Hernandez Community Center Computer Lab

8/9/19 – Luau luncheon at the Visalia Senior Center

8/16/19 – Around the World luncheon at the Visalia Senior Center, visiting Japanese cuisine

8/21/19 – National Senior Citizens Day celebration at the Visalia Senior Center

Swim lesson enrollment numbers have increased from the prior year, with one session remaining.

Swim teams are winding down. Buccaneers swim team hosted Time Trials at Mt. Whitney High School 7/13/19.

Commissioner Eastes – Is there record of how many interested in registering participants in swim teams that were turned away because there wasn't spots available to register them?

Recreation Manager Roggenkamp – Our software keeps those records through wait lists.

Commissioner Blue – Recommended staff encourage parents to add to the wait lists as to collect those statistics.

Parks and Urban Forestry Projects, Programs and Special Events, *Jeff Fultz, Parks and Urban Forestry Manager*
Annual maintenance contract for the Riverway Sports Park water feature was approved at the previous night's Council meeting.

Park canopies are being repaired. (Riverbend, Plaza and Alejandro Ruiz parks)

S.M.A.R.T. Team staff bi-annual report was approved the previous day. The last 6 months staff spent 193 hours dealing with homeless issues. The hours reported were reduced from the prior year (400 hours). The team is comprised of representatives from City of Visalia Police, Fire, Code Enforcement, Parks Maintenance and other City departments. The second reading of the revised Park Ordinance will be 8/5/19. If it is approved by Council it will become effective in 30 days.

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

Prop 68 Green Infrastructure Program – An application was submitted on 6/28/19 for additional groundwater recharge basins at Eastside Regional Park.

Prop 68 Statewide Park Program - An application is being submitted for rehabilitation of the Goshen Trail. The application deadline is 8/6/19.

Recreation Park was cleaned up three weeks prior to the Freedom Celebration through a massive sting, leading to several drug related arrests. Those who moved from the park have not returned.

2020 is a census year. A Recreation staff member has been assigned to work with the Census group.

Other fall events include Fiestas en la Plaza and another KJUG concert.

Contractor work for the Community Garden Project is almost done. The garden build will be a project for Make a Difference Day in October.

The first phase of the MUSCO lighting system controller conversion of the CR Shannon Baseball Complex at Riverway Sports Park is done.

Information has been submitted for the Prop 68 Per Capita Grant. Amount awarded will come in the fall.

Need to establish selection for Pillars of Fame. This is in a designated area at Riverway Sports Park that recognizes City athletes that have reached the top of their sporting program.

Have an approved C.I.P. for the properties across from Riverway Sports Park (North).

Permits have been received from Cal Trans to continue working on the trail project that goes under Highway 63.

Commissioners Comments and Requests

Visalia Community Enhancement Foundation, *Alternate Commissioner Lisa Walsh*

Foundation didn't have a June meeting.

Bueno Beverage will have a beer garden at the next KJUG concert.

MOTION: Commissioner Lozano made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:19pm. Commissioner Eastes seconded. The motion carried 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Machado
Senior Administrative Assistant