

Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes April 16, 2013

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 16, 2013, at the City Council Chambers, Visalia, California. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Calhoun at 5:30 pm.

Present: Lesa Mann, Carla Calhoun, Robert Doi, Ben Filiponi, Dolores Taylor, Shann Blue, and Evan Raycraft.

Guests: Carol Hays and Bill Dillberg

Staff: Vince Elizondo, Jeannie Greenwood, Jim Bean, and Brenda Miernik.

Review and Approve the Minutes of the Regular Meetings, March 12, 2013. Commissioner Calhoun called for a motion to approve the April 12 minutes. Commissioner Mann said she moved to approve as presented and Commissioner Doi seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 5-0

2. Public Comment: Mr. Bill Dillberg said he received the letter from the Commission thanking him for his work on donations for the Visalia Senior Center and he said it was nice to be recognized. He thanked the Commission for their thoughtfulness.

Mr. Bill Huott, citizen, sent a statement reiterating his thoughts for a park on the north side of Visalia.

3. Parks & Recreation Foundation Report. Ms. Hays, Executive Director and President of the Parks and Recreation Foundation, said the Foundation works hand-in-hand with the Department to organize volunteer efforts, raise funds for projects, and apply for grants. She said the board consists of 15 volunteers and meets once a month at the Chamber of Commerce in the main conference room at noon; and they meet the fourth Thursday.

Ms. Hays said she is paid by the Foundation (part time) through a grant from the City and dedicates herself to Board motivation, coordinating Board projects, and acts as a community-wide representative. She is the liaison to the City and she dedicates time to fundraising and grants.

Ms. Hays said the Foundation's mission is "to channel private money and volunteer efforts to enhance Visalia park facilities and recreational projects." She said the board meets annually to establish a list of projects for the ensuing year. The Foundation has completed the following projects since 2011.

1. July 4th Freedom Celebration: estimated attendees 9,000, free to the public, and self-sustaining.
2. Celebration of Life: for a donation of \$275, members of the community can have a Valley Oak tree planted to celebrate a life, a new baby, an anniversary, death, retirement, etc. This project is on-going.
3. Perry Family Park: the Perry Family, owners of San Joaquin Valley College, purchased the naming rights to this park. The donation will net \$72,000 to the City over a 5-year period.
4. Garden Street Plaza: This project is the culmination of over 12 years of planning by the Foundation. Through collaboration with the following participants the shade structure is a reality today.
 - ❖ Downtown stakeholders
 - ❖ Chris Crawford, City Engineer
 - ❖ Paul Olsen, Quality Landscaping and a Board Member of the Foundation
 - ❖ The Porter Foundation
 - ❖ The Downtown Property Owners' Association
 - ❖ The Downtown Visalian's Foundation

Ms. Hays said commemorative markers will be placed and a ribbon cutting ceremony will be scheduled soon for this improvement, which is a gift to the citizens of Visalia.

5. Shannon Baseball Complex: CRS Farming purchased the naming rights for the CR Shannon Baseball Complex in Riverway Sports Park which has netted \$45,000 to the City.
6. East Visalia. Brian Blain donated \$100,000 for the future development of the property located in East Visalia.
7. Greenway Project. Grants in the amounts of \$50,000 from Southern California Edison and \$10,000 from the Gas Company were procured for the initial planning of this project.
8. Rotary Park: a comprehensive plan for both short and long term improvements to this park has been established through coordination with the Rotary of Visalia; approved by the City of Visalia.
9. Senior Center: the Foundation has partnered with the Senior Center by setting up a fund to receive donations and fund improvements to the Center.
10. Movies in the Park: the Foundation previously provided funds to purchase an inflatable movie screen and new sound equipment in order to expand this program and provide sponsorships.

Ms. Hays said the future goals of the Foundation include the following.

- Work to build the endowment fund to establish a signature event to launch our efforts and to honor those contributing to the fund.
- Support scholarships for young people seeking services with the Department who cannot afford to pay for them.

The annual budget only provides for the salary of the Executive Director and operating costs which are approximately \$35,000. All other costs are project driven. The total current assets of the Foundation total \$62,606.37.

Ms. Hays stated that many communities continue to look to the City of Visalia as a model for the successful partnership between the City and the Parks and Recreation Foundation. The Foundation remains committed to their goals and mission statement and looks forward to a long, mutually beneficial partnership with the City.

Commissioner Calhoun stated that in 2014 the Parks and Recreation Department will celebrate 75 years of service to the City of Visalia. She suggested that would be a good time to raise funds for the Foundation, and Ms. Hays agreed.

Commissioner Calhoun also asked if the Foundation had a list of people or businesses wanting to name parks. Ms. Hays replied no, that typically a person or a business lives close to a park or has a tie to the park who wants to donate. She said recently the Saputo Processing Plant in Tulare contacted her saying they wanted naming rights to a sports field in Visalia. She said Mr. Elizondo suggested the former BMX area at Riverway Sports Park and a donation packet was delivered to them for consideration. She said they agreed and a contract was sent to them for \$20,000 for the improvement.

Mr. Elizondo noted that naming rights fees are ten percent of the total project costs. The \$20,000 represents a cost of \$200,000 for the former BMX area at the Riverway Sports Park.

Commissioner Mann asked how the funds are distributed, and Mr. Elizondo stated it would be deposited into a Park Development Fund approved by City Council, for future parks.

Mr. Elizondo stated the Foundation has been doing business for about 20 years and Ms. Hays has been the Executive Director for 5 years. He said other cities call the department for information and advice on how to develop a foundation, which is notable due to the success of our Parks & Recreation Foundation.

- 4. Annual Review and Approval of Fees and Charges.** Ms. Greenwood stated that as part of the bi-annual budget process, each City department is required to submit a schedule of rates and fees for City Council approval. She noted that over the past several years, City staff has worked with members of the Parks and Recreation Commission to review fees and charges for programs and facilities. In May 2009, Council approved the Commission's recommendation to adopt a Benefit Based Fee Philosophy that allows fees and charges for programs and activities to be based on a benefit system, i.e., programs with very individual benefits are priced at a higher cost recovery than programs and services that have a community benefit.

Ms. Greenwood cited examples of each category.

- Category A: Community Benefit - programs, facilities, and services that benefit the community as a whole, i.e., parks, open spaces, trails; community wide special events, egg hunt, Dia del Nino, Tamale Festival, family walks, the Loop Bus. 100% City subsidy.
- Category B: Community /Individual Benefit – traditionally, these are expected services and beginner instructional levels, i.e., youth sports, tiny tot sports, public swim, senior meals, and senior programs and classes. Goal – 50% cost recovery.
- Category C: Individual/Community Benefit – services that promote individual physical and mental well-being and provide an intermediate level of recreational skill, i.e., day camps, enrichment classes (dance, art, martial arts and music), After School Care, Tiny Tots Pre-school Program. Goal – 25% cost recovery.
- Category D: Mostly Individual Benefit – specialized services for specific groups and may have a competitive focus, i.e., Father/Daughter Dance, specialty camps and day camps, Kendo, adult sports, swim teams, and diving classes. Goal – 100% City cost recovery.
- Category E: Highly individualized benefit – programs or services that have a higher potential and may fall outside of the core mission, i.e., elite athletic programs, food concessions, and trips; the Haunted House, Photos at the Mall, bus trips, and certification courses. Goal – 100% cost recovery.

Ms. Greenwood said City staff is not recommending changes to these fees at this time, but a new proposed fee of \$100 is being recommended for athletic events on City trails.

Commissioner Calhoun said she is happy to see this proposal because people should understand the value of trails as a community benefit.

Ms. Greenwood stated in 2009 an amenity based fee structure for park rentals was also introduced and approved by the Commission and Council. This fee structure adds value and cost to park areas with certain amenities or features. This allowed for an increase in cost for high demand park areas and decreased some fees for less desired areas. Ms. Greenwood said some additional fees were approved in 2011. These include permits for alcohol (not all parks), bounce houses, water slides, and amusements, i.e., train rides. A special event fee is now charged for personnel services. Another proposed fee is that select parks (Cherry, Jefferson, Kiwanis, Lions, Perry, Soroptimist, and Sunset) be rented for busy holiday weekends or special events as determined by the Director of Parks and Recreation.

Ms. Greenwood stated that new facility fees were also added in 2011. These include stage access, alcohol, podium, and kitchen use. Renters have the ability to rent decoration time, usually a 2-hour period, for a \$15 fee. A proposed fee is that renters will be charged half of the hourly rental rate for room decoration.

Ms. Greenwood introduced the following fees for athletic facility rentals. *In order to close City facilities the Parks and Recreation Commission must authorize private or event use.*

- ✓ Softball tournament fees - \$100 per field per day, \$25 per hour for lights, and \$15 per hour for field attendant.
- ✓ Athletic field rentals - \$13 per hour per field, \$15 per hour for lights (CR Shannon Baseball Complex), \$25 per hour for lights for all other athletic lights, and \$100 per day for concession stand.
- ✓ Pool rentals – 2 hour minimum rental, \$100 deposit. These are Visalia Unified School pools.

1 to 25 people	\$140 first two hours	\$60 per additional hour
26-60 people	\$180 first two hours	\$80 per additional hour
61-100 people	\$220 first two hours	\$100 per additional hour
101-150 people	\$260 first two hours	\$120 per additional hour
151-200 people	\$300 first two hours	\$140 per additional hour
201 + people	\$340 first two hours	\$160 per additional hour

- ✓ Tennis Courts - \$4 per hour.
- ✓ Dog Park - \$200 per hour, new proposed fee.
- ✓ Skate Park - \$200 per hour, new proposed fee.
- ✓ Trails - \$100 event fee, new proposed fee.

Commissioner Blue asked if the pool rentals included a life guard. Ms. Greenwood said yes.

Commissioner Taylor asked if the dog park fee was so high. Ms. Greenwood said it was for cleaning and because it would be closed to the public. She said many renters are promoting dog owner events and having outside vendors on site, which involves a higher fee.

Commissioner Calhoun asked if the fee for trails would be limited to running events. Ms. Greenwood said this would be a special event, i.e., athletic event, or must be appropriate to the use of the trail.

Regarding rentable parks, Commissioner Taylor asked if parks without restrooms have been rented. Ms. Greenwood said holidays are very busy so around Easter Sunday those parks were rented with portable toilets and it was very successful. Due to the fact that it was not advertised, park rentals were at 75% capacity.

Ms. Greenwood said City staff recommends the Parks and Recreation Commission review the fee policies as set forth and recommend adoption to the City Council.

Commissioner Calhoun asked for a motion to approve the Fees and Charges Policy as presented. Commissioner Mann so moved, Commissioner Filiponi seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 5-0

5. **Splash Pad Concept Review.** Mr. Elizondo, Director of Parks and Recreation, stated a part of the 2012-14 City budget, the City Council approved the splash pad in Recreation Park with an estimated budget of \$400,000. It is a cooperative venture with the Visalia Rotary Foundation and the Visalia Rawhide. Splash pads are becoming a popular choice for municipalities as an alternative to operating more costly municipal pools.

Splash pad project.

- 3,200 square foot splash pad in Recreation Park.
- Secured by fencing and available for use during Rawhide baseball games and to park users.
- Revenue plan developed to offset the costs of operating and maintaining the facility.

- Funding - \$200,000 donated by the Rotary Foundation, \$100,000 financed by Recreation Impact fees and \$100,000 secured through CDBG funding.
- No General Fund monies are being proposed to build this project.

Mr. Elizondo said that at the January 14, 2013, Council meeting, by a 3-2 vote, the City Council approved the following actions in support of the splash pad project.

A. Rotary Donation Agreement.

Delivery to the City of \$100,000 by the Rotary by June 30, 2013.

Delivery to the City of additional \$100,000 by the Rotary by June 30, 2014.

Splash Pad will be named the Rotary Splash Park for a period of 25 years for naming rights associated with the donation. As requested by the Rotary Foundation, the City will schedule certain times during the summer that the splash park will be open to the public without charge. However, the City will have the right to rent out the splash park for private parties, or charge an admission fee at other times for general public use to help defray the operational costs of the splash park.

B. Amendment #3 to Rawhide Lease Agreement.

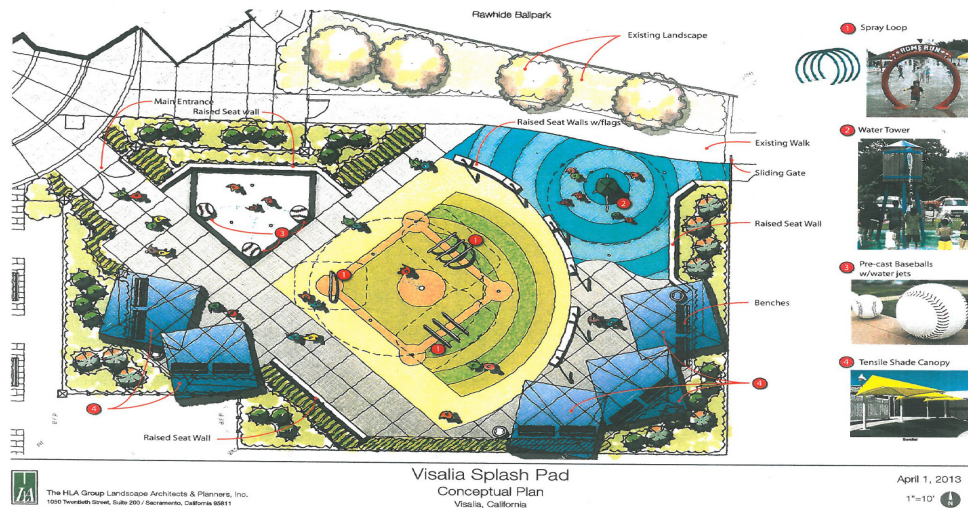
Rawhide has the right to operate the splash pad when the stadium is open on game days during baseball games. Rawhide will pay the City a rental fee, initially proposed to be \$100.

If approved by the City, Rawhide may also use the splash pad for non-baseball special events. Rawhide will also pay the City the rental fee for their use.

During the off-season (non-baseball months), defined as October 1 through March 14, Rawhide will continue to pay 100% of the utility costs.

C. Award a Professional Services Contract to the HLA Group.

The City Council authorized the City Manager to execute a professional services contract with the HLA Group of Sacramento for an amount not-to-exceed \$41,690 (includes reimbursable) to design the splash pad. The Group has extensive experience in designing splash pads, including the pad at Riverway Sports Park.



Design Elements for the New Splash Pad.

Activator – triggered by the touch of users and sends a signal to the Command Center, which releases potable water to the play products based on preset sequences and timing. The activator can be set for 30, 45, 50, or 60 minutes and will stop after the time expires. It has to be touched again to reactivate the flow of water. Ultimately this will conserve on water consumption.

Council mandated that the City incorporate a percolation system into the design, which allows water to be captured and re-used to replenish the natural water table beneath the splash pad, effectively conserving water. The annual estimated costs for this system are roughly \$8,000. Again, the water does not have to be chemically treated or checked on a daily basis.

The addition of a percolation system will add roughly \$80,000 to the overall project cost, as a flow through system would be required anyway as part of the base design.

Mr. Elizondo recommended that the Commission accept the City staff report, accept public testimony, and provide feedback on design elements for the splash pad concept plan.

Questions asked by Commissioners:

- What is the maximum occupancy of the pad? Approximately 150.
- How much will the Rawhide pay for their use? Rawhide plays 70 home games per year, which is \$7,000.
- Have the fees been set for public use? No, the Commission will set those fees at a later date.
- Will public use be infringed upon by rentals? No, as specified in the Rotary contract.
- Will the pad be supervised? Yes, at times.
- Are there other types of water systems? Yes; recirculation, sewer drainage, percolation, and one in which water runoff is stored in tanks, retreated, and used for irrigation. The initial expense is high.
- Will the project be self-sustaining? Yes, funds will be used for operation and maintenance costs.
- Vortex was chosen by HLA due to their splash pad experience, but are they creative in the equipment they choose? Vortex is a very responsive contractor with information, and turning plans around quickly. They also offer a wide variety of play equipment to choose from.
- Are there many sporadic spraying devices? The equipment is computerized, and the water sprays and gushes sporadically. The tower is a constant stream. Dumping towers take 30 minutes to fill up. The commissioners preferred three dumping buckets that dumped sequentially.
- How do you keep the kids from running and getting hurt? The concrete has a broom finish that will not be slippery.
- Commissioner Blue stated the flags might be revenue generators.
- Could picnic tables be considered under the awnings for parties? An existing area will hold 100 people.
- When the splash pad is rented to the public what areas will they have access to? The bullpen area and the splash pad. Porta potties will be utilized and they can bring in their own food.
- There is a water cannon on the pitcher's mound. Commissioners wanted to know if Vortex places them in water parks occasionally, or are they predominate entertainment.
- A waterfall was suggested.

6. Review of Joint Meeting with City Council, Tuesday, March 19, 2013. Mr. Elizondo stated the meeting went well and a lot of information was communicated to the Council, every Commissioner participating in presenting the Commission Goals. He asked the Commissioners if they had any comments or observations to discuss, or if they had anything to forward to the Council.

Commissioner Calhoun expressed her appreciation to the Council for the annual joint meeting.

Commissioner Mann said she spoke to the Senior Advisory Committee regarding the Joint Meeting. She mentioned to them that a few of the Council members said they would like the Senior Center be modernized outside, including a new sign. She asked if there was a budget for this, or would it require donations.

Mr. Elizondo said it should be taken to the Committee and a plan of action created. Costs will then be considered and funding sources explored.

Ms. Greenwood said the Committee should work with City staff on this project.

Mr. Elizondo said he would author a letter to the Council expressing the Commission's gratitude for the Joint Meeting for Commissioner Calhoun's signature.

7. Update on City Council Reports & City Staff Announcements:

- **Upcoming Recreation Programs & Special Events.** Ms. Greenwood reported the following.
 - The Eggstravaganza was held on March 30, with 800 participants. It was noted that Commissioner Calhoun attended.
 - The Mother/Son Campout was held at Sunset Park with 160 participants.
 - Youth baseball has begun with 24 teams.
 - Youth volleyball has 30 teams.
 - Swim team tryouts are next Saturday and a discount registration day.
 - The 22nd Annual Dia de Los Ninos & Dia de Los Libros will be held at Mooney Park on April 27.
 - Spring season is in full force and we have 1,610 participants in our youth enrichment classes.
 - The spring brochure will be out to homes soon.

Commissioner Filiponi said his wife and son participated in the campout. He said the restrooms were not sufficient and the sprinklers came on in a different section of the park but the mist came over to the kids and they were cold.

- **Upcoming Parks & Urban Forestry Projects, Programs & Special Events.** Mr. Bean, Parks & Urban Forestry Manager reported the following.
 - The Neighborhood Church worked with the City on Serve Visalia Day, April 7. The City had three large projects planned. Roses were planted down town. 20,000 grass plugs were planted at St John's Riverwalk. Urban Tree Foundation assisted in planting trees and shrubs at Modoc Trail. The day was successful.

- Black top is being installed at St. John's Trail.
- Constitution Park is receiving shade structures.
- **Director's Report on Administrative Items.** Mr. Elizondo said Council Member Collins brings up the Houston School project often at Council Meetings. Councilman Nelsen informed him that there is an active subcommittee, and the school gate is open for the children to play. He said the next meeting of the Houston School Subcommittee is scheduled and he just wanted the Commission to know that the topic has reached the City Council.

Mr. Elizondo said City Council is exploring the possibility of forming a Sales Tax Measure Committee. The issue is whether to raise sales tax, and by what percent. He said the Council will want the Parks and Recreation Commission to participate in this project.

Mr. Elizondo stated the Visalia Rescue Mission held their grand opening on April 4 in the Oval Service Center. Part of their goal is to provide resources and counseling to the homeless.

8. Commissioner's Requests & Comments:

- **Parks & Recreation Foundation Monthly Report.** Commissioner Taylor said the Foundation met at the Chamber of Commerce building in the main conference room on Thursday, April 25. They now meet on the fourth Thursday of every month.
- **North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee.** Commissioner Doi said he attended the meeting last week and there was a presentation by Rhonda Haynes regarding a 48-unit multifamily development on Highland Avenue. Self Help is developing the site. Mr. Elizondo said there is open space, a basketball court and a barbeque area in the center. Mr. Doi said the committee is focusing on artificial turf and a shade structure at Village Park. He said they are also working on a Master Plan for the Oval Park.
- **Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Update.** Commissioner Mann said she would like to see senior events on the front of the brochure. She asked Jeannie to give an update on the Supervisor position that is open. Ms. Greenwood replied the recruitment is out for the position through the National Recreation Parks Association, a statewide publication. The ad closes next Thursday and she anticipates about 300 applications. Commissioner Mann said Mr. Bill Huott (citizen) issued a challenge to the Commission to walk from the Sciacca orchards to Fairview Park. She walked it in 10 minutes, versus the 45 minutes he said it took him. She said Fairview is a beautiful park and very large. When she returned his e-mail he asked if she would walk her children in that neighborhood. She replied that she would, she found the neighborhood very quiet. Commissioner Mann also said, that in speaking with the Senior Advisory Committee about the Open House, they have decided some things can be done better. She said 75% of the vendors represented funeral homes, convalescent hospitals, and hospice services. She said it was very depressing. Commissioner Mann also said bocce ball courts are needed in our community. Commissioner Calhoun said she believed this sport will gain popularity in the City of Visalia.
- **Waterways & Trails Committee Report.** Commissioner Filiponi said the committee is recruiting board members. He said they are working on connecting Cutler Park and he will report to them that the county is working on this also. Commissioner Filiponi said the committee is assisting the Oval project by reviewing the traffic and bike lanes, which are separate from the park amenities. The bike map is currently reviewed for changes. Commissioner Calhoun asked if Commissioner Filiponi would please bring any handouts from the design meeting to the commission meeting. He replied he would email Adam and ask if he can get that information before the meeting.
- **Houston Elementary School Sub-Committee Report.** Commissioner Taylor said the next meeting will be in May.

9. Adjourn to Regular Meeting, May 21, 2013, at the Council Chambers at 707 W. Acequia Street, 5:30 pm.

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

MOTION

Motion passed 5-0

Brenda Miernik
Senior Administrative Assistant