

Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes May 21, 2013

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 21, 2013, at the City Council Chambers, Visalia, California. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Calhoun at 5:31 pm.

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

Absent: Evan Raycraft

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

- 2. 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

- 3. Public Comment:** Mr. Eshawn Lochan Walla said he works with Senior Pastor Demetrius Robinson with Hunger Free America. He said Pastor Robinson runs a clothing and food drive in parks, usually in Hanford and Lemoore, and distributes the commodities to families who are down on their luck. He said the Pastor was told that to set up a drive in Visalia it would cost \$75 as a Special Event. He said he wanted to know if there was a difference between a commercial event and a community service. Chairperson Calhoun stated the Commission could not address the item at tonight's meeting but the Commission could request staff to present a report on the process of requesting a fee waiver.

Ms. Jeannie Greenwood, Recreation Manager, stated that she spoke to Mr. Robinson and the organization is a food pantry and he was requesting to use Oval Park to distribute food. She said City staff does not have the authority to waive fees and any time an organization uses a park a permit is required. She inquired whom the organization desired to serve and Mr. Robinson replied families. She suggested they work with Proteus, a low-income family based organization. She suggested to Mr. Robinson that the Oval Park might not be the best venue for his event, unless he wanted to feed the homeless, and then he should contact the Visalia Rescue Mission.

Ms. Greenwood said she can present a staff report to the Commission with a recommendation or a request from the organization for a fee waiver, which would go before the Council for their approval.

- 4. Proposal to Formally Name the Former BMX Area at Riverway Sports Park "Saputo Sports Field."** Mr. Elizondo stated Saputo Cheese & Protein LLC, a company based in Tulare, contacted the department through our website requesting naming rights to a sports area. He said the information was given to Ms. Hays, Executive Director of the Parks and Recreation Foundation, and she explained the naming rights process to the company representative. The decision was made to donate \$20,000 for the former BMX area at the Riverway Sports Park. The naming rights would be for 20 years, which is consistent with other agreements.

Commissioner Mann made the motion to accept the staff recommendation to name the Saputo Sports Field and to recommend the same to City Council, in accordance with the City's policy on naming park facilities.

MOTION

Motion passed 5-0

- 5. Annual Health and Wellness Report.** Mr. Glick stated that the Health and Wellness program consists of fitness and adult programming. He currently manages youth sports, aquatics, contract management, adult programs, and fitness. His part-time assistant, Joanna Coyne, assists with day-to-day operations at the Senior Center. Health and Wellness consists of fitness and dance instructors, and independent contractors.

Mr. Glick identified Special Events sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department.

- Tule Fog Run: 5k/walk run/10k event, the third year event had 531 participants.
- Spooky Sprint: 5k/walk, the third year event had 200 participants.
- Corporate Games: the fifth year event had 14 companies competing.
- Pickle Ball tournaments: this was a new event this year. The spring double Pickle Ball tournament consisted of 12 teams.

Mr. Glick said classes include yoga, dance, and hiking. The yoga classes were very popular last year. The summer program will consist of morning, evening, gentle, and 50 Rocks advanced yoga. An additional instructor was hired to cover the intermediate, power and chair yoga.

Dance classes are as follows.

Dance Type	Participants
Polynesian	20
Belly	91
Zumba	21
Ball Room	34
50 Rock Tap Dance	13

New dances for summer 2013: Country Waltz, Cowboy Cha Cha, Country Swing, and West Coast Swing.

Walking/Hiking Classes – Mr. Glick said this class was popular, with 64 participants. The Sequoia Shuttle was utilized for three trips, and each trip was full. This summer three trails will be featured: Sugar Pine, Paradise, and Little Holly Trails. Trips will take place in June, July, and August.

Mr. Glick said summer classes include Couch to 5k (a beginning class to teach participants how to run a 5k), a Walking Club, and an Aqua Walking class.

The Healthy Visalia Committee is active and participants are the Parks and Recreation Department, Kaweah Delta Health Care District, Visalia Unified School District, Family Health Care Network, Tulare County Health and Human Services, College of the Sequoias, Tulare First 5, and the Tulare County Office of Education. They meet once per week and share ideas and programing.

Mr. Glick said the Department is also active in the Healthy Visalia Committee. The website is www.healthyvisalia.com and the committee sponsors the Annual Walking Series.

Mr. Glick said one of the goals for 2013-14 is to continue to educate program participants on the benefits of health and wellness. When the division began, aerobic classes were offered but found they were being offered in many community fitness facilities so the decision was made to diversify and offer other types classes.

Mr. Glick said the department is trying to find their “niche.” Corporate Games was very successful in the past, and with a few changes to benefit the companies involved, it should be more so this year.

Commissioner Blue asked why it was not offered last year; he participated in the past and enjoyed it. Mr. Glick responded that staffing levels could not accommodate the program.

Commissioner Mann asked about over-night back packing trips. Mr. Glick answered that it has been explored but a qualified instructor is difficult to find.

6. Pillars of Fame Review. Mr. Bean, Parks and Urban Forestry Manager, stated that in 2007 the Heritage Court Pillars of Fame were established when the Visalia Riverway Sports Park was opened to the public. The original 36 inductees were honored at the grand opening ceremony.

The original honorees were recommended by the sub-committee appointed by the Parks and Recreation Commission. The committee included one Commissioner and a number of local long-time Visalian’s with keen knowledge in local sports history. The task of the committee was to consider any new potential candidates for the Heritage Court Pillar of Fame. The guidelines required a new evaluation process every two to four years.

History

- ✓ March 25, 2009 – new committee met, and after careful consideration, suggested one change to policy. To be considered for the Pillars of Fame, an applicant must have been enrolled in a Visalia Unified School District school for a minimum of 10 years. The original rule was that a candidate must have graduated from a local high school.
- ✓ May 19, 2009, - Park and Recreation Commission approved the recommended change.
- ✓ July 2009 – Department advertised in the Visalia Times Delta and the Valley Voice to recruit new candidate for the Pillars of Fame.
- ✓ The City received 5 nominees.
- ✓ August 31, 2009 – committee reviewed the five nominee’s information. They were as follows.
 - Shirley Bridges – Inducted into the Drag Racing Hall of Fame in 1997.
 - Clay Carl – Professional Rodeo Champion.

- Gorman Stalder – Played professional baseball for the St. Luis Browns from 1939 through 1946.
- John Woods – National Collegiate Athlete Association (NCAA) All American Wrestler, Cal Poly Hall of Fame Inductee.
- Bob Talbot – Played professional baseball for the Chicago Cubs in 1953 and 1954.

The committee recommended the Parks and Recreation Commission that Shirley Bridges, Gorman Stalder, John Woods, and Bob Talbot be inducted into the Heritage Court Pillars of Fame at the Riverway Sports Park.

✓ September 15, 2009 – Recommendation was approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Mr. Bean said several years have now passed since the last inductees were honored and City staff agrees that June would be a great time to start the process again by advertising in the Visalia Times Delta to recruit potential new nominees for the Pillars of Fame. The inductees will be honored at the Riverway Sports Park Phase III grand opening scheduled for September or October 2013.

Mr. Bean said he is seeking two Parks and Recreation Commissioner’s to serve on the new sub-committee, as well as individuals from the community. This committee will review the nominee’s information once received and the committee’s recommendation will be taken to the Parks and Recreation Commission for their approval.

Commissioner Mann and Commissioner Blue volunteered to serve on the sub-committee.

Mr. Bean said the committee review, in the past, only required 1 meeting, 1 hour in length.

7. **Proposed Proclamation Proclaiming July as Parks and Recreation Month.** Ms. Greenwood stated that since 1985 America has celebrated July as the nation’s Park & Recreation Month. The campaign originally began with the National Parks and Recreation Association and the California Parks and Recreation Society has supported it.

Ms. Greenwood said staff recommends the Parks and Recreation Commission approve the proclamation to the City Council for their approval.

Commissioner Calhoun called for a motion. Commissioner Mann moved to accept the staff recommendation as presented and Commissioner Filiponi seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 5-0

8. **Update on City Council Reports & City Staff Announcements:**

- **Upcoming Recreation Programs & Special Events.** Ms. Greenwood reported the following.

- The summer brochure is out and in the mail.
- Swimming registrations have begun.
- Specialty camps will be moved to the Anthony Center.
- Teen Idol tryouts will be held on June 14 and 21.
- Movies in the park begin June 21 at Riverway Sports Park.
- Dive in Movies will begin on June 15th.
- The Summer Night Lights program begins on June 21.

Ms. Greenwood expressed her appreciation to Commissioner Mann for serving on an interview panel for the Recreation Supervisor position and the field of 113 is now narrowed to 2. Our ultimate goal is to have someone on board by July 1.

- **Upcoming Parks & Urban Forestry Projects, Programs & Special Events.** Mr. Bean, Parks & Urban Forestry Manager reported the following.

- The Packwood Trail project is almost complete, and families are already using it. He said there is still minor work going on, but for the most part it is finished.
- St. John’s Trail is open to the public.
- Riverway Sports Park Phase III is on schedule; in progress are the electrical, storm drains, main line irrigation, footings for restrooms, amphitheater, and block work for the tree wells.
- Constitution Park shade structure – the poles have been in for about three weeks, and the cover will be in next week.
- Received money from CDBG for 2 new pickle ball courts for Recreation Park. The courts will take the place of the old valley ball court.
- Southern California Edison approached the department and said that if we would install photocells on the Rain Master lighting controllers we would save 50% on our electrical bills. It has taken the City about 1½ years to complete the project and soon the City should see a 35-40% reduction.

- **Director’s Report on Administrative Items.** Mr. Elizondo said the cell tower is set to go to Council on June 3. He said the Blue Ribbon Committee, a 60+ member group, is working hard. They recently took a tour of City facilities. He said they are tasked with deciding whether a sales tax measure should be placed on the ballot for public consideration. Their recommendation goes to City Council by July or August 2013.

9. Commissioner's Requests & Comments:

- **North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee.** Mr. Elizondo stated the City is proposing, in cooperation with the Police Department and Code Enforcement, an anti- shopping cart ordinance designed to stop the homeless from using shopping carts and leaving them in parks and on trails. This will be on the June agenda.

Mr. Elizondo said the Visalia Rescue Mission (VRM) would like to attend the June Commission meeting to discuss and receive recommendations on how the Oval Park Master Plan should be developed; in cooperation with the North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee. The VRM has been in business in the Service Center for about 6 weeks.

- **Parks & Recreation Foundation Monthly Report.** Commissioner Taylor said Mr. Kreps, a local architect, feels that the shade structures over Garden Street Plaza need to be expanded. However, Ms. Hays, the Executive Director of the Foundation, assured everyone that the Foundation has completed the project. She also informed the Commission that a ribbon cutting ceremony would be held soon. The 4th of July Celebration still needs volunteers and donations.

Mr. Elizondo stated the Fire Department is asking the Foundation to move the fireworks show to another area due to the safety zone of the fireworks. The rockets need space for fall-out from buildings and pedestrians. At Mineral King Bowl there is not enough space, and people and school buildings are endangered. At this time it is an internal debate on where to hold it. Mr. Elizondo said the logistics really change depending on location and since it is not a money-maker for the Foundation they may decide not to continue their support.

Commissioner Taylor noted that the Board discussed the use of the Foundation Trailer. The Board wants the trailer to go to the Parks & Recreation Department but Mr. Salerno, donor, decided he wanted it to go to the VRM because his son works there. She said it is up in the air what is going to be decided, and she will keep the Commission apprised. She informed the Commission that this situation won't happen again because there are donation agreements that state the remainder of any donation goes into the General Fund.

- **Waterways & Trails Committee Report.** Commissioner Filiponi said the normal meeting was pushed back due to the bike to work week. He said he would have more information next month.
- **Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Update.** Commissioner Mann said there was a very small gathering. Discussion included improving menu options and they are looking forward to painting the main room.

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

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

MOTION

Motion passed 5-0

Brenda Miernik
Senior Administrative Assistant