

Parks & Recreation Commission
Revised Meeting Minutes
April 21, 2015

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 21, 2015, at the Council Chambers located at 707 W. Acequia, Visalia, California. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Carla Calhoun at 5:30 pm.

Present: Carla Calhoun, Lesa Mann, Shann Blue, Jason Kent, Peter Thomas, and George Shelton

Absent: Ben Filiponi

Guests: Cheryl Vera and Jack Hayslett

Staff: Vincent Elizondo, Jeannie Greenwood, Jeff Fultz, Laurissa Gallardo, Jason Glick, and Brenda Miernik

Commissioner Calhoun welcomed Mr. George Shelton, Commissioner Alternate, to his first meeting. His official term begins July 1, 2015

- 2. Review and Approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting, February 17, 2015.** Commissioner Calhoun noted that the minutes of the February 17, 2015, meeting has been resubmitted with a revision to item #8. She read the revision and called for a motion to accept the minutes. Commissioner Kent moved to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Blue seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 4 -0

- 3. Public Comment:** None.

- 4. Request by the Visalia Youth Softball Association to Close Whitendale Park to the Public, June 5-7, 2015, for the “Best of the West” Softball Tournament.** Ms. Laurissa Gallardo, Recreation Supervisor, stated the Visalia Youth Softball Association (VYSA) has again requested the closure of Whitendale Park for their tournament. She said the “Best of the West” tournament has three divisions; 8 and under, 10 and under, and 12 and under, and it is anticipated that there will be at least six teams per division from across the Central Valley in attendance. Tournament play will take place on Friday between 5 and 7 pm and on Saturday and Sunday between 8 am and 7 pm.

Ms. Gallardo said staff was contacted by VYSA board President, Mr. Gary Alvarez, to schedule the tournament and requested that the organization be allowed to enclose the softball complex with a temporary fencing and to charge for admission. He stated that while traveling to games he has noticed that spectators are always charged an entrance fee and this fee acts as a fundraiser for the host team.

VYSA’s proposal for this year’s event is to place temporary fencing along the west and south sides of the park in conjunction with the permanent fencing on the north and east side of the field. There are two access points at the north end of the park leading into the neighborhood; this proposal closes both access points throughout the weekend. There will be two entrances where spectator fees will be collected on the south side of the park where spectator fees will be collected on the south side of the park where spectators would enter from the parking lot.

Ms. Gallardo said that although VYSA is only utilizing the softball complex for this event, the size and scope of it would impact other park users should they be allowed to co-exist. The impact on parking and restrooms would be significant. For this reason, the Parks & Recreation Department is proposing that all rental arbors at Whitendale Park be secured and paid for by VYSA for Saturday and Sunday, for a total of \$406.00.

Ms. Gallardo informed the Commissioners that the City has a 5-year contract with VYSA, allowing them to use the Whitendale softball complex between the months of March through May. During this time the City does not rent the arbors at Whitendale Park due to the impact on parking. This is a significant loss of revenue to the City; however, it is the best solution to alleviate traffic congestion in this neighborhood park. Since this tournament is being held outside the perimeters of the contract, the Parks and Recreation Department will be unable to rent the park spaces to the public and would like to recover this lost revenue.

Ms. Gallardo stated that City staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation to issue a permit to VYSA to issue a permit to VYSA granting permission for use of the Whitendale Park for the “Best of the West” youth softball tournament on Friday, June 5th through Sunday, June 7, with the following conditions.

- VYSA will pay for the three arbors that will be impacted by the tournament causing a loss to the City due to their use - \$406.
- Security deposit - \$500 for cleaning and damage deposit.
- Portable restrooms – organizer will be responsible for providing adequate number of restrooms and the stocking of required articles of use. Vendor must provide City of Visalia with a certificate of insurance, naming the City of Visalia as additionally insured.
- Refuse/recycling – event organizer shall provide adequate services for trash collection and removal and recycling.
- Health Department Permit – organizer must secure a permit with the Tulare County Health and Human Services and food vendors will have individual permits.
- Commercial & Food Vendors – be preapproved by the Parks and Recreation Department and have a valid City of Visalia Business Tax Certificate.
- Insurance – organizer shall provide the City of Visalia with a certificate of insurance naming the City of Visalia as “additionally insured” listing the date and location of the event.
- Fencing – temporary fencing will be placed no earlier than 8:00 am on Friday, June 4, and removed no later than 5:00 pm on Monday, June 8. The fencing company must provide the City of Visalia with a certificate of insurance naming the City of Visalia as “additionally insured.”
- Other conditions and requirements as deemed necessary by the City.

Ms. Gallardo said the City reserves the right to cancel this event in the case of excessive rain before the event. The City has a vested interest in protecting the park turf from damage and protecting the public interest from injuries related to excessive moisture on the park grounds. Representatives from the City and VYSA will meet during the week to assess the condition of the park but the final decision to cancel the event will be determined by the Director of Parks and Recreation.

Ms. Gallardo stated that last year there were no complaints from neighbors and the impact to the park was minimal. She asked if the Commissioners had any questions.

Commissioner Shelton stated this is a non-profit organization, with limited funds, and the proceeds are used for scholarships. He said he felt the \$406 charges for the arbors should be waived.

Ms. Gallardo said the Guild paid the same fees last year and they are not being charged for the fields they are using, but for the arbors that cannot be used by the public during the event.

Mr. Elizondo stated the fee waiver could be considered if the Commission so desired. He said that typically the Department does not close parks to the public and permission to do so must be granted by the Parks and Recreation Commission. He noted they will be charging for parking, public admission, and fees to participating teams.

Commissioner Calhoun asked if VYSA requested a fee waiver. Ms. Gallardo replied they did not.

Commissioner Calhoun noted that the City has a 5-year contract with VYSA and asked how many years were left. Ms. Gallardo said they are in the 2nd year.

Commissioner Calhoun asked if the City had received any financial information from VYSA. Ms. Gallardo stated they are not mandated to provide the information.

Commissioner Kent asked if there was any information regarding the financial impact to the City stemming from the tournament being held in Visalia. Ms. Gallardo said she would definitely have this information for next year’s report.

Commissioner Mann asked if there was anyone in attendance from VYSA. Ms. Gallardo stated Mr. Alvarez was otherwise detained from the meeting. Commissioner Mann stated, that as the champion for healthy lifestyles, she would very much like to suggest that healthy food options be made available to the children by the vendors; i.e. water, fruit, and fruit juices. She said fried foods are popular but the City of Visalia wants to be a leader in healthy food choices.

Commissioner Calhoun called for a motion to authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation to issue a permit to VYSA for the “Best of the West” Tournament, closing the park June 5 through 7, with conditions as presented, including serving healthy food options.

Commissioner Mann so moved. Commissioner Kent seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 4 -0

5. **Request by the Visalia Optimist Club for a Fee Waiver for the Annual Fishing Derby to be held at Plaza Park on Saturday, May 23, 2015.** Ms. Greenwood, Recreation Manager, stated the date of the event is incorrect on the agenda but is correct on the staff report – May 16. She said the Visalia Optimist Club is planning their 37th Annual Fishing Derby at Plaza Park. The first derby took place after the Plaza Pond was completed at the park in 1978. The Optimist Club initiated the fishing derby and provided a free soda, bag of chips, bait, and a fishing pole made of bamboo for those children who did not have a pole.

Ms. Greenwood said in 1993, the City of Visalia water conservation coordinator offered to combine efforts with the Club to promote Water Awareness Month. The California Water Service (Cal Water), the City of Tulare and the City of Visalia formed a Water Awareness Committee who joined forces with the Optimist Club to provide the annual fishing derby. From 1993 through 2006, the City of Tulare and the City of Visalia each provided half the funds to stock the pond, purchase bait, and advertise the event. The City, through the Recreation Department, also provided the facility, as well as labor and logistical support.

After 2006, the City of Visalia Water Conservation Division discontinued sponsorship of this event. Since that time, the Optimist Club has continued to organize the derby with the City's contribution being free use of the pond. For the last several years, City staff has taken this request for a fee waiver to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Ms. Greenwood said the stocking of the pond and cost of bait is currently funded by the City of Tulare and Cal Water. The Optimist Club continues to coordinate the event, provide insurance, and prizes. Each year the event stocks the pond with over \$1,000 worth of catfish, and after the event the community receives the benefit of a stocked pond. She said the Optimist Club is asking the Commission to waive the rental fee of \$130.

Ms. Greenwood stated City staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission consider the request for a fee waiver from the Visalia Optimist Club for the purpose of their 37th Annual Fishing Derby and, if appropriate, forward the Commission's recommendation for a fee waiver to City Council. She said staff also recommends the Commission to authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation to issue a permit to the Optimist Club granting overnight camping at Plaza Park in the pond area. In years past, the club has experienced theft of the fish between the time of stocking and the start of the Fishing Derby. The Optimist Club would like to pursue ways to protect their investment such as having a local Boy Scout Troop camp out overnight or to have Club members stay overnight in their personal travel trailers/recreation vehicles. She said the Optimist Club will comply with all conditions and permits set forth by the City of Visalia Special Events Committee and pay a \$250 cleaning/damage deposit.

Mr. Jack Hayslett, Event Chairman, said the Optimist Club has enjoyed putting on this free event for over 30 years. He said the excitement of the children when they catch a fish keeps the spirit of the event alive. He said the event starts in the morning and the competition consists of three divisions – the smallest fish, the most fish caught, and the largest fish caught. He said he is aware of the healthy food options and at this time the kids will only get water while they fish.

Commissioner Calhoun congratulated Mr. Hayslett for his dedication to this event for so many years.

Commissioner Blue asked how many participants are expected for this event. Mr. Hayslett replied from 150 to about 350 kids. Commissioner Blue said he would like to donate oranges for the event.

Commissioner Mann also congratulated the Optimist Club.

Commissioner Blue moved to accept the staff's recommendation for the Fishing Derby and to approve the fee waiver request. Commissioner Mann seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 4 -0

6. **Request by the Guild of St. Mortimer to Host the Tulare County Renaissance Faire at Plaza Park on May 2-3, 2015.** Mr. Jason Glick, Recreation Supervisor, said the Guild of Saint Mortimer requests to use Plaza Park for their 26th Anniversary of the Renaissance Fair. This will be the 16th consecutive year in Plaza Park.

Mr. Glick said the Faire t will open at 10 am and close at 6 pm, Saturday and Sunday. The organization will also utilize the park on Thursday to layout the site, mark booth locations, install perimeter fencing, and begin bringing in supplies and equipment to the site. Members of the Guild will also be on-site on Friday for set-up and will use Monday for breakdown and cleanup. The park will be closed to the public beginning Thursday, April 30 and will re-open to the public on Monday afternoon, May 4.

Mr. Glick reported that this event is one of the largest events in the City of Visalia. It draws thousands of people throughout the Central Valley each year. With over 1,000 performers, actors, and vendors, a significant amount of

money is spent in town, and generates a lot of revenue for the City and its merchants. Mr. Glick said the event is historically accurate as well as educational and entertaining. The Guild added jousting and armored combat demonstrations several years ago (in a fenced area), which have been hugely successful with festival attendees.

Event statistics:

- The event draws approximately 5,000 to 6,500 attendees in two days.
- It is estimated that approximately \$50 to \$75 per person is generated in tourist revenues to the City.
- Using these figures, between \$125,000 to \$250,000 will be spent in the community during the faire.

Mr. Glick said event set-up will be similar to previous events with the addition of a request to use the turf on Field 5 for parking. The Guild is also seeking permission for overnight tent camping in the grass area along Plaza Arena and RV camping on the east side of Plaza Drive. The admission fees will remain as last year: \$8 for adults, \$5 for seniors, military, and children. According to the Guild the operations budget is roughly \$42 to \$45,000 per year.

Mr. Glick stated City staff will be imposing the following fees:

- A rental fee of \$2,100 for a one day of set up and for the two days of the event.
- A cleaning and damage deposit of \$1,000.
- An additional fee of \$100 per day for items that are left in the Park beyond Monday, 5/4.

Mr. Glick said City staff provides a significant amount of resources to this event.

- Parks Maintenance staff must mark all sprinkler heads and control boxes so that vendors do not damage irrigation equipment.
- Staff meets with the organizer to do walk-throughs before and after the event.
- Staff coordinates services such as irrigation shut-off, mowing schedule, and custodial services.
- Staff performs unannounced visits to the event during all stages to see how the event is proceeding.

Mr. Glick stated the staff recommendation is that the Parks & Recreation Commission authorize the Director to issue a permit to the Guild of St. Mortimer granting special permission to do the following. Allow animals in the park, allow vehicles on the park, allow noise that exceeds 60 decibels, allow glass containers, and allow overnight parking and camping in the park. In addition the City will condition the applicant to provide the following.

- The appropriate general liability insurance to include liquor liability, an ABC license to sell alcohol.
- Security guards as required by the Visalia Police Department.
- Provide portable restrooms.
- Provide additional portable trash receptacles and bins.
- Provide health permits for the food concessionaires and obtain City business licenses for commercial vendors.
- Obtain an assembly permit.

Mr. Glick said the City reserves the right to cancel this event in the case of excessive rain. Representatives from the City and the Guild will meet during the week to assess the condition of the park. The final decision to cancel the event will be determined by the Parks and Recreation Director.

Ms. Cheryl Viera, President of the Guild of St. Mortimer, said she has been with the Guild for 20 years. She said the Guild is presenting the Knights of Mayhem again, which has been a big draw for the community. She said a joint venture between the Farmersville and Exeter Police Explorers will be in charge of the parking this year and in return a donation will be made by the Guild for their time. She also stated that flyers will be passed out to local schools with a discount ticket of \$2. She said adults will receive \$1 off their admission if they bring in a non-perishable can of food for donation. She said next year they are planning to have a farmer's market on site but it just wasn't available this year. Ms. Viera said the Guild donated two scholarships last year with their proceeds.

Mr. Elizondo asked her to explain how the alcohol will be made available to the public.

Ms. Viera said that near the raceway they will have a beer garden. She said it will have a barrier surrounding the area and two Exeter Police Officers will be on duty at all times. A play area will be provided for children to play, and all identification will be checked on entry to the beer garden.

Commissioner Calhoun said she is excited about the farmer's market.

Commissioner Calhoun called for the motion to authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation to issue a permit to the Guild of St. Mortimer with the special permissions as stated in the staff report. Commissioner Blue so moved and Commissioner Mann seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 4 -0

7. **Annual Review of the City's Park Ranger Program.** Mr. Jeff Fultz, Parks and Urban Forestry Manager, stated the Park Ranger Program was initiated in 2007, and we currently have two rangers that perform specific law enforcement duties in all City parks.

Mr. Fultz said the full-time ranger works a 40 hour week schedule. Twenty-four of those hours are spent in Park Maintenance, Wednesday through Friday. Sixteen hours are spent as a Park Ranger.

In July 2011, a second part-time ranger was added. The position works 1000 hours or less annually, weekends and/or holidays, with a maximum of 600 hours per season. The ranger's schedules overlap in order to extend the hours of coverage during the weekends, which has proved beneficial to the users of the parks. Each ranger has the authority to issue citations for specific violations, but is not armed.

Mr. Fultz said the Park Rangers spend the majority of their time in four of the City's larger parks: Blain, Plaza, Whitendale, and Riverway Sports Park. These parks experience many reservations and have heavy usage. Both rangers work on weekends during the active warm season months- typically March through October.

The following is an outline reflecting the types of issues the rangers face while on the job. The following is for the specific period of February 15, 2014, through November 22, 2014.

Citations – Notice to Appear: 68. Includes illegal parking, non-permitted commercial activity, illegal vehicle on park, and illegal use of alcohol.

Written Warning – Notice of Violation: 0.

Verbal Warnings/Incidents Noted: 1,250. Includes, but not limited to, dogs off leash, smoking near/inside the playground, homeless issues, child in dog park, property in need of repair, damage/litter to arbors and in the park, non-permitted bounce house activity, reckless driving, suspicious person in playground, lost child.

Assistance Rendered by Rangers from Visalia Police: 13. Includes illegal use of alcohol, illegal parking, hazardous games/activity/injury, homeless, and armed person.

Assistance Rendered by Ranger from Animal Control: 2. SPCA officers continue to assist us in our parks with various issues. Includes dog off leash and dead bird.

Emergency Medical Services Rendered by Rangers: 0.

Mr. Fultz noted the visibility of the Park Rangers has been an asset in the consistent enforcement in the parks during both the week days and the weekends. He said the following are some of the benefits of the Park Ranger Program since its inception.

- ✓ Reduction of vandalism, which has led to the savings of material and labor.
- ✓ Reduction in loitering and violators of park rules. Families are returning to our parks and feeling safer about the park atmosphere.
- ✓ Increased satisfaction to our arbor renters. The presence of our Rangers has been an asset when dealing with rental issues, bounce houses, and alcohol consumption.
- ✓ Enhanced the relationship between the Visalia Police Department, park users, and the Parks and Recreation Department.
- ✓ The Park Rangers number one goal is to educate the public of park rules to help facilitate a better relationship between the public, recreation staff, and park maintenance staff.

Mr. Fultz said the future needs of the Park Ranger Program include attending annual training on citation writing and procedures, which will be held by the City of Visalia's Code Enforcement Department. He said rangers will continue to attend PC 832 – Laws of Arrest training course. He also said he would like to see the program expanded.

Mr. Fultz reported that since the inception of the program verbal warnings have increased and a reduction of parking violations has decreased. He said this is due to the addition of the second ranger to the program.

Commissioner Kent asked if it would be possible to expand the ranger program with the increased acreage of our parks.

Mr. Elizondo replied it would be possible in the future by showing the benefits and cost savings to the Council.

Commissioner Shelton asked if the Rangers wore a badge. Mr. Fultz said they wear a badge and use two vehicles with the star logo and Park Ranger on the door. He said one is a utility truck and the other is a re-used Visalia Police vehicle.

8. **Recommendation to Approve the Annual Review of Recreation Program Fees & Charges.** Ms. Greenwood, Recreation Manager, said that each City department is required to submit a schedule of rates and fees annually. In 2008-09 City staff 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 Fee Philosophy that allows fees and charges for programs and activities to be set based on a benefit system. Programs with very individual benefits are priced at a higher cost recovery than programs and services that have a community benefit. She summarized the categories as follows.

Category A – Community Benefit. Programs, facilities, and services that benefit the community as a whole. These programs, facilities, and services can increase property values, provide safety address social needs, and enhance the quality of life for residents. The community pays for these basic services and facilities through taxes and may utilize free of charge. Such programs or services can include parks and open space, educational programs, health and wellness activities, community wide special events, family activities and gang prevention programs. Some examples: parks, open space, & trails. Community wide events, family walks, Manuel F. Hernandez Center Drop In-Program, and the Loop.

Category B – Community/Individual Benefit. Programs, facilities, and services that promote individual physical and mental well-being and provide recreation skill development. These are the more traditionally expected services and beginner instructional levels. These programs, services, and facilities are typically assigned fees based on a specified percentage of direct costs. These costs are partially offset by both a tax subsidy to account for the community benefit and participant fees to account for the individual benefit. Programs, facilities, and services in this tier shall recover 50% of direct program costs. Some examples: youth sports (baseball, soccer, basketball, volleyball), tiny tot sports, public swim, swim lessons, Senior Meal Program, and senior citizen programs and classes.

Category C – Individual/Community Benefit. Services that promote individual physical and mental well-being and provide an intermediate level of recreational skill development. This level provides more individual benefit and less community benefit and should be priced to reflect this. Programs and services in this category shall recover 75% of direct program costs. Some examples: day camps, enrichment classes (dance, art, martial arts, and music), After School Activity Program, and tiny tots.

Category D – Mostly Individual Benefit. Specialized services for specific groups and may have a competitive focus. In this category, programs and services may be priced to recover 100% of direct costs. Some examples: Father/Daughter Dance, specialty camps & sports camps, Kendo, adult sports (soccer, softball, basketball, and volleyball), swim teams, and diving classes.

Category E – Highly Individual Benefit. Programs or services that have a higher revenue potential and may fall outside of the core mission. In this category, programs and services are priced to cover all direct and indirect costs. Some examples: elite athletic programs, food concessions, trips, certification courses, and the ViTri (triathlon).

Ms. Greenwood said that in 2009, an amenity based fee structure for park rentals was also introduced and approved by 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. In 2013, staff proposed adding fees for some neighborhood parks that are not available for rent during the year. She said this allowed the opportunity for more rentals during peak times such as Easter weekend.

Ms. Greenwood said the department is recommending some changes to the Picnic & Special Use Reservation Fee Schedule for fiscal year 2015/16. They are as follows.

- Based on consistent requests, we are recommending that Kiwanis, Perry Family, Lions, and Soroptimist Parks be listed as areas available for reservation with the user paying to have a portable restroom delivered to the location for their use. The fee for the restroom (\$96) would be added to the rental fee and is represented in the fee schedule.
- The department recommends adding fees for use of the new Special Events Promenade at the Riverway Sports Park.
- We have also added a new area at Plaza Park which we are calling Area #12. This area may now be reserved in conjunction with the horseshoe pits.

Cherry Meadow Park - Area #1, \$29

Constitution Park - Area #1, \$20

Houk Park - Area #2, \$20

Kiwanis Park - Area #1, \$175

Lions Park - Area #1, \$79

Perry Family Park - Area #1, \$175

Plaza Park - Area #9 \$28, Area #10 \$22, Area # 11 \$22, Area #12 (horseshoe pits) \$28

Riverway Sports Park Promenade - Up to 50 people \$45, 51 to 100 people \$75, 100 + people \$315

Soroptimist Park - Area #1, \$158

Ms. Greenwood said in 2011, the Commission and Council adopted new fees and charges related to facility use and special events in City parks. There are no proposed changes for fiscal year 2015-16.

Ms. Greenwood said the department is requesting a fee increase for field rentals from \$14 to \$15 per hour to offset growing costs of facility maintenance. Additionally, there is a new fee for the new Saputo Sports Field and the new Pickleball Courts at Recreation Park.

Ms. Greenwood noted that all activity and program fees, with the exception of one, are calculated based on the benefits based fee philosophy. The exception is the Senior Meal Program. The current fee of \$3.50 per meal (\$4.50 for non-seniors) was established approximately seven (7) years ago and has not been increased since. She said in 2014, a Request for Proposal was released and a new vendor was selected resulting in a meal cost increase of fifty cents per meal. The City maintains one (1) part-time employee to provide food service and provides paper products, janitorial, and beverage supplies to sustain the program. She said based on the increase in the meal contract, and the rising costs of goods and services, City staff is recommending an increase in the Senior Meal Program as follows.

\$4.00	Visalia Senior - Resident Discount Rate
\$5.00	Seniors age 55+ (non-resident)
\$5.00	Guests under the age of 55

Ms. Greenwood stated that because residents of the City of Visalia contribute to the overall financing of the Parks and Recreation Department by way of property taxes, Council has asked staff to create a policy in which non-residents contribute additional funds to assist with financing recreation programs, activities, and classes. The City proposes the following Non-Resident Policy Fee, effective July 1, 2015.

- Residents – those who live or own property within the City of Visalia city limits
- Team Registration – 60% of maximum number of team members must be considered residents to receive the resident discount
- Temporary Youth Resident – visiting children family members
- Non-Resident Fee = 20%, rounded to nearest dollar

Ms. Greenwood stated City staff recommends that the Commission approve the following attachments, receive an oral staff report, and approve a recommendation to be submitted to City Council.

- Attachment A: Parks & Recreation Department Fee Policy.
 - Attachment B: Picnic & Special Use Reservation Fee Schedule.
 - Attachment C: Indoor Facilities Reservation Fee Structure.
 - Attachment D: Athletic Facility Proposed Fees.
 - Attachment E: Non-Resident Fee Policy, effective January 1, 2016. Changing this policy mid-season is not feasible.
- The increase to the Senior Meal Program.

Commissioner Calhoun said she had concerns regarding the non-resident fee. She said it might be feasible in large urban areas but Visalia is surrounded by many poor, rural, unincorporated communities with no resources. She said she does not feel this is consistent with the fee philosophy. She said she also sees an impact to staff; verification processes are time consuming, and the staff will receive negative feedback from the community. She said she was uncomfortable approving this without further study and comparing other rural areas to Visalia. She stated that Tulare County has one of the highest poverty rates in the state. It seems inappropriate to penalize poverty stricken families.

Commissioner Kent said he agrees, especially since his Commission goal is “access to everyone”; especially to seniors coming to Visalia to receive a meal discount that is not available in their own community. He stated he felt more study was required.

Commissioner Blue said he agreed but would like to know, other than the Senior Meal Program, how the non-resident fee would affect other programs and activities.

Ms. Greenwood said without reports from our computer system, she would say we do experience people from outlying areas, i.e., Tulare, Exeter, Farmersville, Goshen and Ivanhoe, receiving services in Visalia. She pointed out that our goal is to register residents and non-residents rather than to lose participants and/or the class entirely.

Commissioner Blue stated our goal as a Commission is to provide services to the City of Visalia and the surrounding areas.

Commissioner Mann stated she felt it is completely wrong to charge people from outlying areas more money to use our services.

Commissioner Shelton asked how the registrations would be tracked.

Ms. Greenwood stated the software system we use does have the ability to set up resident and non-resident fees. She said the question is - what triggers implementing the different fees. She said there are many Visalia addresses that are not actually in Visalia. She said she will have to research new software and learn more about this if this is what we decide to do in the future.

Commissioner Blue moved to approve Attachments A, B, C, and D, inclusive of the Senior Meal Program. Commissioner Mann seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 4 -0

Commission consensus was to disapprove of the Non-Resident Fee Policy at this time. It was agreed to re-evaluate in 2016.

9. Update on City Council Reports & City Staff Announcements.

- **Upcoming Recreation Programs & Special Events.** Ms. Greenwood reported the following.
 - You are invited to the 25th Annual Dia de los Ninos & Dia de los Libros event, which will take place at the Manuel F. Hernandez Community Center Sunday, April 26, 2015. We are collaborating with the Tulare County Office of Education and the event will focus on healthy living, literacy, and playing. Each child will receive a book and entertainment is scheduled throughout the event.
 - Arbor Day is Saturday, April 25, 2015. Join us at St. Johns Riverwalk for tours, gardening information, and cleanup projects.
 - On May 1 we will have a booth at Senior Day in the Park to promote our programs and services.
 - A thank you went to Commissioner Mann for attending the Senior Center Open House a few weeks ago. There were over 300 participants and 50 booths.
 - The summer brochure will be out next Thursday.
 - The spring season is in progress. Participants are as follows: 235 in tiny tots programs, 385 in adult programs, 345 in family programs, 299 in senior classes, and 1,336 in our youth enrichment programs.
- **Upcoming Parks & Urban Forestry Projects, Programs & Special Events.**
 - Earth Day & Arbor Day events will be held at Ben Maddox, St. John's Riverwalk. They start at 10 am.
 - We have been working with the Rotary Club at Rotary Park during the last few years. A Master Plan has been created with a fitness area. The walking path is used a lot.
 - At Plaza Park there are some pipes sticking up along the golf course and the pond. This is part of a reclaimed water project.
 - We have been working on replacing some of our retirement positions in parks. Victor Escamilla will soon retire with 36 years of service.
- **Director's Report on Administrative Items.** Mr. Elizondo said that last evening Council authorized a \$10,000 donation to the Houston Neighborhood Park Project. Ms. Stephanie Bartsch and Neighborhood Church initiated this project at the Houston Elementary School. He also said he was contacted by the California Association of Park and Recreation Commissioners & Board Members (CAPRCBM) this week and they are interested in hosting a workshop in the valley. He said he does not have a date for it yet and will inform the Commission when he receives the information. He said Mr. Tom Link and Mr. Bill Dillberg served on this Board when they were Commissioners. Mr. Elizondo informed the Commission that the Miki City Park is moving along. He said the creek improvements have been completed, which was Phase I. Phase II will begin next week when Tyson Carrol, from the Urban Tree Foundation, will begin on creating the amenities of the park. Mr. Elizondo said Phase IV of the Riverway Sports Park, consisting of 18 acres, will be developed as a girl's softball complex. He said Council approved moving forward with this phase in January at their annual retreat. The City will be working with HLA for the design and should be receiving a proposal soon. This will take place in the next 6 to 9 months and will be coming before the Commission to present their design. Mr. Elizondo stated the drought is impacting the state, with the governor announcing an emergency legislative package to deal with it. He said it is trickling down to the cities and means we are going to have to conserve even more in our parks, light and landscape areas, and green spaces. Council has asked the department to create a plan for more conservation efforts.

Commissioner Calhoun suggested the City to consider the trees. An average tree cleans 330 pounds of carbon dioxide every year while emitting enough oxygen for a family. Damaging trees has a long term effect that lead to greater environmental problems.

10. Commissioner's Requests & Comments:

- **Eastside Regional Park Task Force:** Commissioner Calhoun said the last meeting was held on March 26 and it was a design charrette. She said it was fun. Maps were presented showing the basins and open space areas. Amenities, consisting of soccer fields, basketball courts, and other items suggested in prior meetings, were drawn to scale for placement on the map by the attendees. She said the participation was very good. She said the next design meeting is in June. She encouraged everyone to participate.
- **Community/Aquatic Center Ad Hoc Committee.** Commissioner Blue said the committee meets next week.
- **Senior Citizens Advisory Committee.** Commissioner Mann said Senior Pride Bingo and the Gadabouts have been using the Senior Center for many years and the time they use overlaps. Some people come very early to their programs and it is causing conflict. Choices were suggested and a written notice was sent to each group but

no results have occurred at this time. Commissioner Mann said she hopes the groups can come to an agreement. She reported that the Open House was good, had a good energy. She said a mural is still under discussion. Commissioner Mann thanked the department for providing water for the meetings and stated she is an advocate for healthy options. She said she was impressed with the Tulare County Renaissance Faire being a “family friendly” event.

- **Parks & Recreation Foundation.** Commissioner Kent said the Foundation is having a fundraiser with Rosa’s Restaurant. There is a flyer in your packets. He reported they have a new board member, Ms. Diane Walters, and they have another interested party, Roberto Brady. He said the membership drive is going well. He said the Foundation website is going live next week and they funded a memorial bench in Mayor’s Park. They are also applying for grant funding from First 5 for a playground at Oval Park and there is a shoe company, WSS, seeking sponsorship for a program or a naming rights agreement.
- **Waterways & Trails Committee Report.** Mr. Elizondo stated that Don Stone, a major trail enthusiast, has recently been appointed to this committee.
- **North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee.** No report.
- **Public Arts Task Force Report.** Commissioner Mann said she has not yet been contacted about an upcoming meeting.

11. Adjourn to the Regular Meeting, May 19, 2015, at the Council Chambers located at 707 W. Acequia Street, Visalia, CA.

Commissioner Blue moved to adjourn and Commissioner Kent seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 4-0

Brenda Miernik,
Senior Administrative Assistant