

Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes
December 20, 2016

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 20, 2016, at the Council Chambers located at 707 W. Acequia Street, Visalia, California. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Carla Calhoun at 5:32 p.m.

Present: Carla Calhoun, Shann Blue, Ben Filiponi, Steve Woods and Rick Eastes (A)

Absent: Peter Thomas and Justin Sweet (A)

Staff: Jeannie Greenwood, Tim Skobel, Jeff Fultz, Laurissa Roggenkamp and Susie Brown

2. Review and Approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting, November 15, 2016. Commissioner Woods moved to approve the minutes (two minor edits), Chair Calhoun seconded the motion.

MOTION

Motion passed 4-0

3. Public Comment:

Email from Bill Huott, member of North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NVNAC), provided comments and CDBG funding suggestions.

Mr. Bill Huott was present and spoke at the meeting. He thanked the City Council and this Commission, along with VPD for all the work and improvements made in the north side of Visalia. He specifically mentioned the Lincoln Oval Park and its new children's play structure. He thanked staff for Make-a-Difference Day and the Lincoln Oval Tree lights and lighting ceremony. He enjoys taking pride in the area he lives and watches out for kids playing who might not have parents watching or present. He expressed thanks for the support of the Wittman Center and mentioned approximately 20 kids showed up to speak at the NVNAC meeting on smoking in public parks.

4. Annual Park Maintenance Report and Presentation. Mr. Tim Skobel, Park Maintenance Supervisor, provided a Powerpoint presentation to the Commission.

Chair Calhoun - asked about types of trees. Mr. Skobel reported there are White Alder trees and Redwoods that shouldn't be planted in parks due to water issues. There are great trees that work well in our parks, for instance, Chinese pistache trees. He reported that no maples have died off.

Chair Calhoun - What trees are located in Community Campus? Mr. Fultz stated that Sycamores, Chinese pistache and Oaks do really well here.

Commissioner Eastes – Pistache have great color. He asked about Sycamores, and if there is a problem with Red Spider Mites.

Mr. Skobel – There have not been problems with Spider Mites. Mr. Fultz reported the Sycamore can get an airborne spore and unfortunately not much can be done when that happens, same with Spider Mites. He stated proper fertilizing and irrigation will help trees fight disease.

Commissioner Eastes – When will Miki Park be completed? Mr. Skobel stated in about a month. The lights are due to arrive and should be installed next week.

Director Greenwood reported there is a Japanese delegation (Sister City) coming in April (22nd) 2017, and the city will have a ribbon cutting ceremony in conjunction with the annual Earth Day Celebration traditionally held at St. John's. This year's event will be held in the parking lot across from Miki City Park at Mineral King and Stevenson.

Commissioner Eastes – The Environmental Committee is working on vendors to participate and this will make it a great event.

Chair Calhoun – Is the site for storing transient belongings still being used?

Mr. Skobel – There was a tin shed at the old CalTrans property still being used but it was getting broken into so now seatrain containers are there. There are policies for storing and disposing of these belongings which are being followed. Possessions that are thought to be personal items are held for 90 days, trash is disposed of.

Commissioner Eastes – Reminded staff there has been legal action in southern California (LA) with taking or disposing of items belonging to transients.

Mr. Skobel reported that he educates his staff on the existing policy and health and safety standards which do not allow food, items with bugs or pests or wet bedding.

Mr. Fultz stated if it's rolled up and looks cared for we see it as a possession, if balled up it looks like trash and may be disposed of. Staff works directly with Code Enforcement to ensure that personal belongings are protected and that the City is in compliance with current rules, policies and laws.

Director Greenwood asked Chair Calhoun if she was referring to the personal storage program that the City was offering in conjunction with the Visalia Rescue Mission. Chair Calhoun confirmed that this was the storage program that she was referring to. Director Greenwood informed the Commission that the program is no longer available.

Mr. Skobel talked about shopping carts in the parks and that confiscating shopping carts is suggested from Code Enforcement.

Mr. Skobel concluded with employee service awards and recognized Park Maintenance staff member Chuch Hulsey for 25 years of service. After discussion, Chair Calhoun stated that she will have a card for Mr. Hulsey at the business office tomorrow for the commissioners to sign.

5. Discuss Project List for Future Community Development Block Grant Funds.

Director Greenwood reported there is a small amount of CDBG funds available for parks, \$70k for FY 2017. She requested the Commission prioritize the list they compiled last meeting.

Chair Calhoun – Commented there are fewer funds than features suggested. She called for public comment.

Public Comment: Mr. Bill Huott, asked about the length of Oval Park for a meandering path?

Mr. Fultz stated it would be less than Plaza Park walking path, which is 940', the Oval is far less. Mr. Huott would like to advocate for Oval Park walking path and active amenities at the park. He suggested Spanish signage, and for a north side park sign at the park, to be seen by those approaching the park from the north.

Commissioner Woods – He stated that asking for a chess board seemed pie-in-the-sky considering the funds available, but he would like to contact the local chess club(s) for fundraising. He would like to have staff provide an estimate for a 24' x 24' concrete slab/board. He will work on fundraising with the Visalia Chess Club.

Commissioner Eastes – Asked if walking paths would be concrete? Decomposed granite (DG) is a great form to use, compacting is just like concrete. Mr. Fultz stated yes, to concrete and vs. DG depends on the area of use.

Mr. Fultz provided a few estimated costs from previous projects. Walking paths \$53/linear foot, shade structures \$15-20k each, exercise equipment at Rotary Park was \$10k plus install another \$6k, arbors \$22-32k, playgrounds \$40k plus \$15k to install and park benches start at \$5k.

Commissioner Blue – Asked if they should focus on a more efficient use of funds like to use DG in all parks, or would it be better to focus on one amenity, instead of focusing on multiple parks?

Chair Calhoun – If we focus on walking paths at a number of parks, this would be a nice thing for our parks, and will raise awareness for folks to exercise.

Mr. Fultz – reported that all walking paths would have to be concrete and Village Park is too small for a walking path, but agreed that shade structure should be on the top of his list.

Commissioner Woods – Stated that shade is needed at Village Park.

Chair Calhoun – Agreed that shade in all parks can be a continued focus. She also mentioned Fairview site has a rental space and could use an arbor.

Mr. Fultz - Recreation Park needs shade, but it is not in a CDBG funded area and there is no walking path at Recreation Park, which is five acres. Lincoln Oval could do a portion of a sidewalk, possibly split the funds up and make it an east or west sidewalk.

Commissioner Eastes – Reported there is bocce ball at the Italian Hall but it wasn't being maintained and is no longer being used. He suggested Parks could use a bocce ball court, and that it could bring in revenue. He reminded the Commission that the pickleball people raised funds to help with costs. He would like a three lane court, and stated that there are ways to lower costs.

Chair Calhoun – Reviewed the priorities as shade at Village Park, a walking path at Lincoln Oval, Fairview Arbor and not sure where a bocce ball court would go. She asked Commissioner Woods if the Foundation could possibly get behind fundraising for bocce ball. Woods reported being willing to take quotes and estimates to the Foundation. A final suggestion for a half-court basketball court for Lincoln Oval Park.

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

Upcoming Recreation Programs & Special Events. Ms. Roggenkamp passed out a calendar for the upcoming month and event flyers. She reported the following:

- Senior Games 2017 registration has opened and we have four registered.
- Senior Center Holiday Luncheon, Friday, December 23rd.
- Manual Hernandez received Toys for Kids for their upcoming holiday party.
- Enchanted Ice Rink –at Garden Street Plaza, passed out calendar page for times available to skate. Movie nights were mentioned and she reported on the rink construction. This is a purchase along with the skates so we can offer this more often.
- December 30th is a New Year lunch at Senior Center.
- Father Daughter tickets will open to everyone on January 1st.
- Winter Trout Derby will be held at Plaza Park in January.

Upcoming Parks & Urban Forestry Projects, Programs & Special Events. Mr. Jeff Fultz, Parks and Urban Forestry Manager, reported on the following:

- Slow season allows for catching up. Ruiz Park lights are being repaired.
- Lions have a bench donated and will install soon.

- Miki City Park – lights are in Fresno and a Tuesday install is anticipated. Urban tree will come back and finish up with bark and the park should open end of January.
- Lincoln Oval – added plants along new fence on east side, and this eliminated a valve so irrigation needs to be updated.

Director’s Report on Administrative Items. Director Greenwood reported the following:

- Pickleball renovations are going to bid, and there has been a lot of fund raising with a \$20k Commitment. The City will add netting on SW side and a new pole, which is a recycled signal light, and will be adding a additional sidewalk. Completion by Senior Games (March).
- Facility management has been a challenge, Freddy Arias will take over Adult Sports and athletic facility management including facility use requests. There are not enough soccer fields and baseball overflows to the soccer fields in the spring making it even more challenging to meet soccer needs.
- Measure N – The City will move forward with the conceptual design for a future Southside Community Center near District 2 by Target (Mooney), and this item will come back here for input, once contracts are in place.
- Phase 5 at Riverway Sports Park for Softball, 35% drawings are due January 27th from architects.
- The P&R Foundation – There hasn’t been a meeting since October, but busy working on a Saucony Grant application for a running program at MHC for at risk kids. And Carol is working on a grant from Walgreens for Senior Games.

Director Greenwood passed out a handout from the City Council meeting. This is an implementation plan on Measure N, along with several deadlines for implementing the plan. There is work needing to be done in the way of establishing budgets and setting-up a Review Committee 14 VPD officers will be hired the first year, implementing the hiring of cadets from the Academy. A new fire truck, which takes one year to have built is also included in the first year plan. July 1, 2017 is the first funding available, so roads won't see upgrades (contractor work) until end of 2017. Measure N will provide two new Park Maintenance employees, \$250,000 in additional budget for maintenance and Recreation will get one coordinator.

7. Commissioner’s Requests & Comments:

- **Parks & Recreation Foundation.** Commissioner Woods stated there was no meeting due to no quorum.
- **Waterways & Trails Committee Report.** Director Greenwood reported the WWTC received the same presentation on Active Transportation Plan as this Commission. She stated there were no new issues since their presentation.
- **North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee.** No report

Commissioner Woods inquired as to the outreach efforts to inter-faith communities, specifically for using parks for specialized faith or cultural events. Director Greenwood stated no outreach has been made specific to religious or cultural groups.

- 8. Adjourn to the regular meeting, Tuesday, January 17, 2017, at the Council Chambers located at 707 W. Acequia Street, at 5:30 p.m.** Commissioner Blue moved to adjourn at 7:06 p.m., and Commissioner Woods seconded the motion, and unanimous.

MOTION

Motion passed