

**Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**January 15, 2019**

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, January 15, 2019, at City Council Chambers, City Hall, 707 W. Acequia. The meeting was called to order by Commission Chair Filiponi at 5:33 p.m.

**Present:** Ben Filiponi, Steven Woods, Shann Blue, Rick Eastes, Patrick Lozano and Lisa Walsh

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

**Guests:** Mikaila Smith, Guild of Saint Mortimer

1. **Review and Approval Minutes:** The regular meeting minutes of December 18, 2018 were motioned for approval by Commissioner Lozano, seconded by Commissioner Eastes, motion carried 5-0.
2. **Public Comment/Correspondence:** Visalia resident Bill Huott submitted public comment via email extending his compliments to City of Visalia Graffiti Abatement staff (Joe Cote, 'Vince' and 'Rene').
3. **Request to close Plaza Park for the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Tulare County Renaissance Faire 4/13/19-4/14/19 – Report by Laurissa Roggenkamp, Recreation Manager**  
Recreation Manager Roggenkamp provided a staff report for the Guild of Saint Mortimer's request for use of Plaza Park for the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Tulare County Renaissance Faire. The event is scheduled for Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> and Sunday April 14<sup>th</sup>. The guild is requesting additional usage Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup> for planning and layout and Friday April 12<sup>th</sup> for set-up. The park will reopen Monday, April 15<sup>th</sup>. Typical attendance is 5000-6500 over the course of the two day event. Admission is charged to festival goers. In addition to park use, the guild is requesting use of Softball Field #5 for event parking. The guild is seeking permission for overnight tent camping in the grass area along the south end near Plaza Raceway. City staff will be imposing a rental fee of \$3,110 in accordance with City Council approved rates and fees, plus \$1,000 damage deposit. A portion of the previous year's deposit was withheld due to damage to a drinking fountain. In preparation for this event Park Maintenance marks sprinkler heads, controller boxes and stop irrigation a few days prior to the event to alleviate some of the turf moisture. City staff meets with the event organizers prior to the event to do a walk-through, and then again afterwards checking for damage.

Staff is recommending that the Parks and Recreation Commission authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation to issue permits to the guild, granting them special permissions as follows:

- Allowing animals in the park, specifically horses for the jousting event. Horses must be in a fenced secured area when not performing. There is to be a fence perimeter between the spectators and the performances.
- Allowing vehicles in the park for loading and unloading, and for the attendee parking on Softball Field #5.
- Allowing noise that exceeds 60 decibels pertaining to the black powder cannon shots that signal the event's opening and closing each day. Commissioner Eastes expressed concern for potential environmental harm from smoke emitted from the black powder. He asked if it is necessary, and if this could be done by means other than use of black powder. Ms. Roggenkamp introduced Mikaila Smith from the Guild of Saint Mortimer to the Commission and invited her to respond to Commissioner Eastes' inquiry. Ms. Smith explained that the charges from cannons use a minimal amount of black powder for sound, and not enough to force any projectiles. She said that she would speak with the cannon masters to see if other means could be used.
- Allowing glass containers in the park. Replica glass bottles and items used during the Renaissance period are sold by vendors. Event staff will promptly clean up any broken glass. There have not been any reported incidents of Park Maintenance finding broken glass from this event in the past.
- Allow overnight parking and camping in the park. An 'Actors' Camp' will be located in the grassy area adjacent to the racetrack.

Ms. Roggenkamp shared via Power Point examples of the event layout.

In addition to the requested special allowances placed before the Commission, the event will go before the Special Events Committee and will be required to provide evidence of liability/liquor liability insurance naming 'City of Visalia' additional insured and provide evidence of an ABC license for the sale of alcoholic beverages. The Police Department representative from the Special Events Committee helps by dictating security and beer garden requirements. Tulare County Health Permits will need to be obtained for all food concessionaires. City of Visalia Business Tax licenses will be required for all commercial and food vendors. An Assembly Permit will be processed

through the Special Events Committee. The Fire Department will perform an inspection of the facility to closely monitor temporary structures, generators, access to fire extinguishers and safety measures related to outdoor cooking.

Commissioner Woods motioned to authorize the Director of Parks and Recreation to issue the permit for the dates and times as specified and to allow the special allowances as requested. Commissioner Lozano seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion carried 5-0.

**4. 2017/2018 Annual Graffiti Report – Power Point presentation by Joe Cote, Senior Buildings Maintenance Technician**

Senior Buildings Maintenance Technician Joe Cote presented the Fiscal Year 2017/2018 Graffiti Abatement Program report.

Commissioner Eastes asked how the Solid Waste Fund is funded.

Parks and Urban Forestry Manager Jeff Fultz explained that he didn't have the information at that time and could bring it to the next Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

When graffiti is reported, they strive to get the graffiti removed within 24 hours. They work with Code Enforcement as well. 'Hot spots' are reported to the Visalia Police Department or the Gang Suppression Unit if gang related.

Commissioner Eastes asked if people have been caught in the act of causing graffiti at a location.

Mr. Cote stated that 1-2 a year get caught, with restitution back to the City.

Commissioner Lozano commented that the quick response is a good deterrent.

Commission Chair Ben Filiponi shared the written correspondence received from Bill Huott that was also presented during the public comment portion of the meeting.

**5. 2017/2018 Annual Park Maintenance Report – Power Point presentation by Tim Skobel, Park Maintenance Supervisor**

Supervisor Skobel provided a PowerPoint presentation of the 2017/2018 Park Maintenance Report.

Commissioner Eastes asked if anything has come about on how to address the 'homeless issue' in terms of ordinance?

Director Greenwood stated that the City attorney continues to look at how the courts are deciding on the cases of this sort. He is still reviewing our ordinance. Saint Paul's Church recently opened up a warming center which is available over night. There are no restrictions for use of that facility. Because it is not at capacity we can enforce the no camping in parks again.

Parks and Urban Forestry Manager Jeff Fultz answered that there are some things in the current ordinance that can deter 24/7 park occupancy. The more aggressive subjects in Recreation Park require Visalia Police Department assistance when they refuse to work with park staff.

Commissioner Eastes stated that in a recent visit to Hollister he learned that through a bond issue they have a gone to using artificial turf for athletic programs because their fields are subject to rainy muddy conditions during the rainy season. He asked if artificial surfaces are something that has been considered for our athletic fields, considering the heat and the previous discussion of constantly running irrigation pumps and over use of the fields.

Director Greenwood stated that artificial turf is about six times the cost, and that we can't afford it. We've tried a couple of grant projects, but just haven't been able to.

Commissioner Lozano added that on the subject of homeless problems artificial turf is being cut and used for warming material. This is a good reason to not use artificial turf in our parks.

Parks and Urban Forestry Manager Jeff Fultz added that schools have their artificial turf fenced and behind locked gates. He added that the irrigation systems would still need to be used to wash and cool down the artificial turf, especially in the summer heat, it still requires maintenance.

Director Greenwood added that there are a couple of locations where artificial turf has been installed because the projects were small. These locations are the Visalia Senior Center patio and in Miki City Park.

**6. 2017/2018 Annual Ranger Report – Written Report and Power Point Presentation by Jeff Fultz, Parks and Urban Forestry Manager**

Manager Fultz provided a PowerPoint Presentation on the 2017/2018 Ranger Report.

Commissioner Lozano asked why drones are unlawful to operate in a City park.

Mr. Fultz's response was that the stance that the City has taken in the ordinance is that there is potential for injury to other park users.

Director Greenwood added that staff is looking for a location to designate for drone use, possibly during designated

locations and times.

Commissioner Eastes asked if staff have moved forward with licensing a concessionaire to be in the parks.

Director Greenwood stated that staff has not had to time to work on this.

Commissioner Eastes asked why the number of reservation conflicts shown in the report had doubled.

Mr. Fultz stated that conflicts could range from park reservation signs not being posted, transients using the arbor, or community members setting up in the wrong arbor.

**7. Discussion of Topics for the Joint Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council Meeting Scheduled for Tuesday, March 12, 2019 – Discussion lead by Jeannie Greenwood, Parks and Recreation Director**

Director Greenwood informed the Commission about a joint Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. She asked the Commission what topics they would like to have on the agenda for this meeting.

Director Greenwood suggested the Aquatic Survey as a topic as the Commission was assigned this by Council. Additionally she requested to schedule a Special Parks and Recreation Commission meeting in order to prepare the report to Council.

Alt Commissioner Walsh inquired about the Parks and Recreation Department budget, wanting to know if it had received an increase recently. Mr. Fultz explained that it has increased in some areas, and Measure N has provided additional funding.

Commissioner Woods agrees that the Aquatics facility needs to be discussed at the meeting, would like to ensure that the focus is on the Aquatics Survey results.

Alt Commissioner Walsh would like to discuss the legal support needed due to the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court ruling.

Commissioner Woods would like to discuss the need for Park vehicles. Commissioner Eastes stated that funding to maintain current assets needs to be addressed.

Alt Commissioner Walsh questioned if Council would bring up the Volunteer Rangers program which was discussed at the last joint meeting, but has still not been created. Director Greenwood stated that a meeting will occur within the next few weeks with the Public Works Director, who oversees Parks, to discuss this program.

Director Greenwood stated that she believes the Commission has developed three topics to place on the agenda Aquatics Survey, need for legal support, overall needs including vehicles and maintaining assets.

Staff will assist Commission in developing reports on these topics.

**8. Aquatic Facility Review – discuss adding a Special Meeting in late February to complete recommendation to Council – Discussion lead by Jeannie Greenwood, Parks and Recreation Director**

Director Greenwood proposed some dates for Commission to meet. Commissioners selected Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. to meet.

**9. Select Commission member to work with City Staff to Review Fees & Charges – Discussion lead by Jeannie Greenwood, Parks and Recreation Director**

Director Greenwood stated at last year Commission indicated that they would like to have a more active role in reviewing the Rates and Fees for FY 19/20.

Alt Commissioner Walsh stated that she would be interested, but would need to know the time commitment.

Director Greenwood stated that she believes it would take about two meetings.

Commissioner Woods stated that he would like to sit on the sub-committee.

**10. Update on City Council Reports and City Staff Announcements:**

**Upcoming Recreation Programs and Special Events, Laurissa Roggenkamp, Recreation Manager**

- Past Events:

Senior Center Christmas Luncheon served 149 seniors

Trout Derby at Plaza Park had 147 participants

- Upcoming Events:

1/23/19 - Riverway Sports Park Phase 5 Groundbreaking Ceremony

1/23/19 - Senior Games Committee Meeting at Senior Center

1/25/19 - Spring Live & Play Guide will be out

1/28/19 - Community Garden Public Meeting at Wittman Community Center

2/15/19 & 2/16/19 - Father Daughter Dance at Convention Center

**Upcoming Parks and Urban Forestry Projects, Programs and Special Events, Jeff Fultz, Parks & Urban Forestry Manager Parks and Urban Forestry**

- Staff is currently working on updating equipment, getting items ready in the parks for the rental season.
- Meeting for CIP project at Plaza Park for arbor replacements.
- Jefferson Park project, install of turf has been stalled due to rain.

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

- Update on sale of Children's theatre downtown, sale does not impact Garden Street Plaza
- Riverway Sports Park Phase 5 Pre-Construction meeting will be held on January 23<sup>rd</sup> with work starting on January 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Community Garden has 50% conceptual design drawings due on January 25<sup>th</sup> with a follow up public meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Parks and Recreation Commission meeting in February will be held at Administration Building off of Santa Fe.
- Attended the Disability Advocacy Committee meeting and received feedback on the parks
- Attended a meeting of the Breakfast Kiwanis club gave a presentation. Also, department is partnering with the club to install a book exchange program at Anthony Community Center.
- Cal Ripken has begun their planning for hosting the 2019 World Series event at CR Shannon.
- Council has scheduled their retreat meeting for February 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Staff is working with the Foundation to submit a First 5 Grant for Mill Creek Trail and a tot lot at Ruiz Park.

**11. Commissioner's Requests & Comments**

Waterways and Trails, Commissioner Filiponi: Meeting was not held.

Parks & Recreation Foundation, Commissioner Wood reported:

- Love your Park Day is being advertised
- Partnering with KJUG for summer concert series, co-sponsoring
- Senior Center Mural has raised \$1,600

North Visalia Advisory Committee: Commissioner Lozano reported: Report was given at 7 p.m., Commissioner Lozano needed to leave meeting early.

- The group would like a fence to be installed around the Lincoln Oval Center to help preserve it. A temporary fence and then permanent fencing that matches the other fencing around the park.

**Motion to adjourn** at 7:53 p.m. by Commissioner Woods, 2nd by Commissioner Blue, motion unanimously carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Kathleen Machado  
Senior Administrative Assistant