



Visalia City Council

Visalia City Council

Meeting Minutes - Final

Visalia City Council
707 W. Acequia
Visalia, CA 93291

Mayor Brett Taylor
Vice Mayor Liz Wynn
Council Member Steve Nelsen
Council Member Emmanuel Hernandez Soto
Council Member Brian Poochigian

Monday, February 3, 2025

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers

ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Brian Poochigian, Mayor Brett Taylor, Council Member Steve Nelsen, Council Member Emmanuel Hernandez Soto, and Vice Mayor Liz Wynn

CALL TO ORDER WORK SESSION - 4:00 PM (Unless otherwise noted)

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Citizens are now invited to comment on issues within the jurisdiction of the Visalia City Council and items listed on the Closed Session agenda. The Council asks that you keep your comments concise and positive. Creative criticism, presented with appropriate courtesy, is welcome. Each speaker will be allowed three minutes, and a timer will notify you when your time is expired. Please begin your comments by stating and spelling your name and providing your city of residence.

A resident handed documents to the City Clerk.

WORK SESSION AND ACTION ITEMS (as described)

1. Presentation by the Streets Maintenance Division - Presentation and updates from the Streets Maintenance Division's annual tasks and accomplishments. [24-0608](#)

Public Works Director Nick Bartsch and Public Works Manager Danny Galindo provided an overview of the Streets Maintenance Division and an update on their projects and activities over the last year. Staff responded to questions and comments by the City Council.

2. Receive Report - Receive Industrial Land Inventory Analysis report and presentation. [24-0570](#)

Director of Planning & Community Preservation Paul Bernal and Economic Development Manager Devon Jones provided a presentation on the Industrial Land Inventory Analysis that was prepared highlighting the major findings on opportunities, key challenges, and recommendations. Staff responded to questions and comments by the City Council.

A motion was made by Council Member Steve Nelsen, seconded by Council Member Brian Poochigian, to approve. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Brian Poochigian, Brett Taylor, Steve Nelsen, Emmanuel Hernandez Soto, Liz Wynn

3. Riverway Sports Park Fencing Project - Request approval on the proposed location and design of the new fencing to be constructed at Riverway Sports Park [24-0603](#)

Parks & Recreation Director Jason Glick and Parks & Facilities Manager Alvin Dias provided an overview of the Riverway Sports Park and Phases I, II, III, IV, and V that have been completed. Phase VI is currently in development. Proposed fencing is recommended to protect the park and fields from vandalism and during maintenance. Staff responded to questions and comments by the City Council.

Eric Ramirez enjoys the Sports Park and would like to see clarification as to whether this is strictly a sports park or is it also a community park for other activities. He is concerned about the type of fence around the perimeter that could be dangerous. The park should be for everyone and be available for multiple purposes.

A motion was made by Council Member Brian Poochigian, seconded by Council Member Steve Nelsen, to approve. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Brian Poochigian, Brett Taylor, Steve Nelsen, Emmanuel Hernandez Soto, Liz Wynn

4. Project Funded Fence Relocation for Sidewalk Construction: [24-0519](#)
Authorize City staff to coordinate with Cen-Cal Construction to relocate private fencing along the south side of Riggin Avenue between Divisadero St. and Conyer St. as part of the project for a cost of \$68,873.93, to allow for the construction of sidewalk as designed with the Riggin Ave Widening Project from Mooney Blvd. to Conyer St.

Engineering & Building Director Jason Huckleberry, City Engineer Chris Crawford, and Senior Civil Engineer Diego Corvera provided an overview on the outreach conducted looking at a frontage road as an option for the existing houses along Riggin between Divisadero and Conyer. Staff discussed the proposed sidewalks due to the widening of Riggin. Residents with fencing along the street will be impacted and the fences will need to be relocated to allow construction of the sidewalk.

A resident provided a packet of photos to the City Council.

A gentleman spoke on someone else's behalf and the impact it will have on his property and the location of a motor home with the fence being removed and the costs associated with the improvements.

Mr. Irvin expressed concern about the dangerous traffic conditions with that area being developed.

Rosa Hernandez (Spanish speaker) does not have the means to pay for a fence and would like staff to go to her house and discuss the location of the fence with her.

A property owner (Spanish speaker) that lives along Riggin is in favor of the sidewalk but stated that his fence will be affected and would like the City to pay for the cost of the fence.

Elsa Lopez stated that a nice fence was built there years ago to allow room for a brick sidewalk that the owner installed. A lot of property owners have added nice landscaping and fences in front of their homes to protect their homes.

Brian Coulson requested some additional flashing lights to increase safety during construction.

A resident expressed concern about new traffic patterns that will affect Giddings and how dangerous it already is with a lack of speed limit signs or street lights and speeding.

Staff responded to questions and comments brought up by the property owners and the City Council.

The Council discussed their preference for Option 1 to relocate fencing using project funds.

A motion was made by Council Member Brian Poochigian, seconded by Council Member Steve Nelsen, to approve. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Brian Poochigian, Brett Taylor, Steve Nelsen, Emmanuel Hernandez Soto, Liz Wynn

ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION - 6:00 PM (Or, immediately following Work Session)

Mayor Taylor adjourned to closed session at 6:20 p.m.

Council Member Nelsen recused himself due to a conflict of interest.

CALL TO ORDER REGULAR SESSION - 7:00 PM

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

SPECIAL PRESENTATION / RECOGNITION

1. Visalia's 2023-2031 Housing Element Certification Recognition [24-0541](#)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

This is the time for general public comment on issues within the jurisdiction of the Visalia City Council. Each speaker tonight may speak for up to 3 minutes during this general comment period on a matter that is not on this agenda.

The public may also make one comment for up to 3 minutes prior to the consideration of the Consent Calendar, and immediately before any regular agenda item is heard. The Council asks that you keep your comments concise and positive. Creative criticism, presented with appropriate courtesy, is welcome.

Each speaker will be allowed three minutes and a timer will notify you when your time is expired. Please begin your comments by stating and spelling your name and providing your city of residence.

Irene Lapin expressed concerns about animals being impacted by fire works and loud noises. She spoke in opposition that a couple of Council Members attended the Presidential inauguration even though they paid for it themselves.

Maria Guillen encouraged the Council to support the ceasefire in Gaza and to protest ICE activity against immigrants.

Adina Escarsega spoke on the past negativity in California and Visalia directed towards minorities and immigrants.

Bumpy Munoz expressed his concern about how some residents were treating those that were protesting along Mooney Blvd. and wants the City to keep these other individuals in line and not put others in harms way.

April Lancaster briefly commented on the upcoming meeting regarding an amendment to the ordinance impacting the Farmer's Market. and is hopeful for the community.

Efrain Beccera commended the police department for keeping them safe. He asked Council to embrace the diversity in the community and let them know you are here for them.

Raven commented on ICE targeting immigrants and racial profiling and wanted to speak for those that don't feel like they can speak up.

A gentleman spoke on his experience as a farm laborer and that no one else will do this work except the Mexican immigrants. He asked that the City help them.

Steven Lopez commented on behalf of the illegal immigrants and expressed their concerns about their families be torn apart.

Stacey Boyce commented on the positive things that a diverse community can bring and asked that the City stand by them. She urged that Visalia be a sanctuary city.

Taylor wanted to show solidarity with the immigrant population and wants Visalia to become a

sanctuary city. She would like the city to support legislation to make documentation easier.

Ms. Cruz spoke on her personal fears growing up and now she has fears for her students and those attending church. She wants Visalia to be a sanctuary city.

Angela Castillo commented on the racial targeting made by ICE and not just those with criminal backgrounds or arrest warrants. She stated that people are being targeted at health care facilities and are avoiding treatment.

Adele said to stop separating families and everyone should be equally treated.

Nicolai stated that what President Trump is doing is scary with deporting people.

Benjamin Majorga stated that President Trump is creating division in our country, and we should be united.

Raquel Arias criticized Mayor Taylor and Council Member Poochigian for attending the inauguration. Visalia is a community of immigrants and the residents rely on them and deserve respect.

Brittany wants the agricultural workers to be protected and for communities to stop being torn apart.

Natalie Ortiz is a third generation immigrant from Mexico and commented on the violence in their home land. She stated that getting documented is extremely difficult and hopes the city will have compassion for them.

Steven Skinner agreed with the previous comments but also added that the Constitution protects everyone equally. He hopes that local tax money will not be used to go against anything that will infringe those rights.

Monica Velasquez encouraged everyone to learn from their history and the hurt done against minorities.

Mary Jane stated the United States has had a long history of being divided and that this legislative body should take action to pull everyone together.

Ms. Scroggins commented on discrimination against immigrants and hopes for change.

Mayor Taylor commented about California's SB54 that was enacted in 2017 which limits the involvement of local law enforcement agencies with regards to federal immigration enforcement efforts and that the City of Visalia is in compliance and abides by these laws.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

CONSENT CALENDAR

Consent Calendar items are considered routine and will be enacted in one motion .

This is the time for members of the public to provide public comment on an item on the Consent Calendar. Comments will not be taken individually by the public if an item is pulled by a Council Member. Each speaker is allowed up to 3 minutes, and a timer will notify you when your time is expired. Please begin your comments by stating and spelling your name and providing your city of residence.

A motion was made by Council Member Brian Poochigian, seconded by Council Member Steve Nelsen, to approve. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye:** Brian Poochigian, Brett Taylor, Steve Nelsen, Emmanuel Hernandez Soto, Liz Wynn
1. Authorization to read ordinances by title only. [24-0495](#)
 2. Authorization to accept recommended COPS Grant expenditures - Authorize and accept recommended expenditures for training, equipment, salary, and benefits for 1.5 police officer positions through the State of California fiscal year 2024-2025 Citizens Option for Public Safety (COPS) Program funds of \$223,196 and \$210,518 for fiscal year 2023-24 COPS Growth funds for a total grant of \$433,714 and appropriate \$33,714 the grant fund. [24-0450](#)
 3. Fire Station 56 Notice of Completion - Request authorization to file a Notice of Completion for the Fire Station 56 Project. [24-0511](#)
 4. Actions Pertaining to Valley Strong Stadium Expansion & Remodel of Clubhouse & Batting Cage: 1. Authorize the City Manager to execute an emergency Progressive Design-Build agreement with 4CGlobal, Inc. dba 4Creeks Build, for an amount to be determined; 2. Authorize the City Manager to award the construction management services to Vanir Construction Management, Inc. in the amount of \$221,150. [24-0515](#)
 5. Adopt Resolution for Updated VMT Thresholds - Request to adopt by Resolution No. 2025-04 an update to Vehicles Miles Traveled Thresholds and Implementation Guidelines pursuant to Senate Bill 743 and the California Environmental Quality Act. [24-0563](#)
 6. Ordinance Adoption - Second reading and adoption of Ordinance No. 2025-01 for Zoning Text Amendment No. 2024-02, a request by the City of Visalia to amend Visalia Municipal Code Title 17 (Zoning) based on multiple factors including but not limited to: streamlining of land use review and changes in business and/or development trends and activity, citywide. [24-0571](#)

-
7. Authorize Homekey+ Grant Application - Authorize staff to apply for Homekey+ funding not to exceed \$12 million to assist with the development of Crescent Meadows, a senior affordable housing complex with 25 Homekey+ eligible units, upon the completion of the application by the partner agency Crescent Meadows, L.P. to fully comply with the grant and City requirements. [24-0578](#)
 8. Execution of Southern California Edison Easement: Authorize the City Manager to execute Southern California Edison anchor easements and adopt Resolution 2025-03 for the Riffin Widening Project from Kelsey St. to Shirk St. (Resolution required) [24-0580](#)
 9. Confirmation of reappointed and newly appointed Measure N Oversight Board members for review of all proposed Council spending plans for Measure N funds. [24-0597](#)
 10. Contract for the Purchase of Street Name Signs - Authorize the City Manager to award an annual contract for the supply and delivery of street name signs to Safeway Sign Company at an amount not to exceed \$65,000 annually, totaling \$325,000 over the life of the contract, from the Gas Tax Fund (111), with an option to renew annually for up to four (4) additional one-year terms. [24-0600](#)
 11. Landscape and Lighting District Enhancement Project - Request authorization to file a Notice of Completion for the Lisendra Heights Landscape Enhancement Project, 5300 W. Whitendale Ave, Visalia, CA. (Project No. 2730-72000/CP0750-999). [24-0602](#)

REGULAR ITEMS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

Comments related to regular Items and Public Hearing Items are limited to three minutes per speaker, for a maximum of 30 minutes per item. The Mayor may reasonably limit or extend the public comment period to preserve the Council's interest in conducting efficient, orderly meetings.

1. Ordinance Adoption - A Public Hearing and Introduction of the first reading of Ordinance No. 2024-12 for Zoning Text Amendment No. 2024-04: A request by the City of Visalia to amend Visalia Municipal Code Title 17 (Zoning Ordinance), Chapter 17.32.166 Short-Term Rentals, Citywide. [24-0604](#)

Senior Planner Josh Dan provided a presentation on proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to Short-Term Rentals.

Mayor Taylor opened the Public Hearing at 8:09 p.m., and with no comments given, closed the Public Hearing at 8:09 p.m.

Council Member Poochigian spoke in opposition to these changes and does not believe it is being applied fairly.

Mayor Taylor expressed concerns about the overall ordinance on short-term rentals but is in support of these changes.

A motion was made by Council Member Emmanuel Hernandez Soto, seconded by Vice Mayor Liz Wynn, to approve. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Brett Taylor, Steve Nelsen, Emmanuel Hernandez Soto, Liz Wynn

No: Brian Poochigian

2. Appeal of Planning Commission Action - A continued Public Hearing to consider an appeal of the Planning Commission's denial of Conditional Use Permit No. 2024-29, which was a request to amend the hours of operation for the Jack in the Box drive-thru facility to 24-hours located at 1145 South Lovers Lane, in the Neighborhood Commercial zone. [24-0607](#)

Senior Planner Josh Dan provided a presentation on the request by Jack in the Box to appeal the decision by the Planning Commission to deny the CUP.

Patrice Roux, owner of Jack in the Box, stated that an agreement was not reached with the neighbors, so he has proposed his own conditions with additional vegetation. He does not want to pay to install a wall.

Planning & Community Preservation Director Paul Bernal stated that in the City ordinance the screening for drive-thrus can be landscaping or a wall. Since the landscaping has not fully developed staff proposed a three foot wall.

Mayor Taylor opened the public hearing at 8:20 p.m.

Deborah Cardoza stated that the neighbors oppose the restaurant being open 24-hours. She feels like it was a compromise to not oppose the restaurant from being built since it was not going to be open 24 hours.

Rochelle Kenner hopes the Council will take what the residents want into consideration and is concerned about light pollution and drunk drivers in the area.

Ernest DeSoto opposed the restaurant being open 24 hours and the disturbances that it will bring with late night customers.

Bill Huott spoke on how busy Lovers Lane is, and he supports the business being open 24 hours. He believes that their presence will bring extra security there.

Mr. Roux commented on the current operations and that he does not have control over the actions of others driving through the area.

Mayor Taylor closed the public hearing at 8:35 p.m.

Vice Mayor Wynn noted that she went on site at night and could not see the issue of light or noise pollution.

Council Member Poochigian commented on the couple of residents that may have lights shine onto their properties but believes additional landscaping will help. He stated that more restaurants are needed on this side of town.

Council Member Nelsen stated that a lot of broad statements and assumptions are being made and that Lovers Lane is a busy street and commercial activity is only going to be increasing in that neighborhood.

The Council discussed approving the CUP with the condition of adding solid hedges that will be at least 3 feet high.

A motion was made by Council Member Steve Nelsen, seconded by Council Member Brian Poochigian, to approve as amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Brian Poochigian, Brett Taylor, Steve Nelsen, Liz Wynn

No: Emmanuel Hernandez Soto

CLOSED SESSION REPORT

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Taylor adjourned the meeting at 8:46 p.m.

UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

1. Upcoming City Council Meetings

[24-0592](#)

Tuesday, February 18, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m. at 707 W. Acequia

Monday, March 3, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m. at 707 W. Acequia

Note: Meeting dates and times are subject to change, check posted agenda for correct details. In compliance with the American Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in meetings contact 713-4512.

Written materials relating to an item on this agenda submitted to the Council after distribution of the agenda are available for public inspection in the Office of the City Clerk, 220 N. Santa Fe Street, Visalia CA 93292, during normal business hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Gomez, Chief Deputy City Clerk