



# 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

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**Monday, March 3, 2025**

**7:00 PM**

**City Council Chambers**

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#### **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.

Jim Reeves stepped forward to comment on the new logo.

#### **WORK SESSION AND ACTION ITEMS (as described)**

**1. Transit Division Presentation**

**[24-0562](#)**

Transit Manager Angelina DeRossett gave a presentation on transit services, highlighting public route options and the upcoming microtransit pilot program. Assistant City Manager John Lollis provided an update on the Cross Valley Corridor project.

Council Member Hernandez Soto recommended future microtransit discounts for veterans, individuals with disabilities, and other qualifying groups. Council Member Poochigian inquired about park plans, noting the Sequoia Shuttle's tourism potential, and emphasized its impact on downtown activity.

2. Award a Contract for Farm Management Services - Award a contract to A&K Precision Management for Farm Management Services in the amount not to exceed \$1.5 million per year to manage a total of 445 acres of pecan orchards surrounding the Water Reclamation Facility (WRF). The initial contract shall be for a twelve (12) month period and shall, at the City's option and upon mutually agreeable terms, be renewable annually thereafter for four (4) consecutive one-year periods. [24-0533](#)

Public Works Director Nick Bartsch discussed the proposed contract with A&K Precision Management to oversee 445 acres of pecan orchards near the Water Reclamation Facility, with the option of up to four annual renewals. Staff also suggested issuing an RFP to explore future lease options.

City Manager Leslie Caviglia provided historical data and noted A&K's proposal was the most competitive.

Staff also discussed that although yields have improved, the orchard continues to operate at a loss. Staff noted profitability depends on future yields, market prices, and tree maturity.

Council Member Hernandez Soto suggested reevaluating the orchard's future if profitability isn't seen by year 15.

Vice Mayor Wynn supported continuing due to maintenance needs, while Council Member Poochigian favored ending the project.

Council Member Nelsen proposed exploring alternative uses like a solar farm.

Mayor Taylor raised the idea of leasing and urged timely action, citing financial risks.

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. Cannabis Business Update - Provide staff direction on potential next steps pertaining to the authorization of Cannabis Businesses in the City of Visalia and depending upon the option selected, amend the contract, and appropriate \$5,000 from the General Fund. [25-0018](#)

Economic Development Manager Devon Jones presented a PowerPoint on the cannabis business ordinance and sought Council direction following the passage of Measure O (70.7% approval). City Attorney Koontz addressed tax collection from cannabis deliveries, apportionment, and regulatory compliance.

Council expressed support for drafting a cannabis business ordinance, with interest in preparing for future retail sales. There was consensus on the potential for significant tax revenue, the need for clear criteria, oversight, and a thoughtful regulatory process. Concerns were raised about retail over-saturation, with suggestions to limit the number of stores and explore specific zoning to prevent clustering.

Staff confirmed the City can customize zoning and recommended starting small with room for growth.

A motion was made by Council Member Brian Poochigian, seconded by Council Member Emmanuel Hernandez Soto, to approve the recommended option #2, and direct staff to draft a cannabis business ordinance and potentially allowing such businesses to operate within the City upon adoption of the ordinance, and amend the existing contract with HdL to include the additional scope of work totaling \$24,600 and appropriate an additional \$5,000 from the General Fund. The motion failed by the following vote:

**Aye:** Brian Poochigian, Emmanuel Hernandez Soto

**No:** Brett Taylor, Steve Nelsen, Liz Wynn

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Liz Wynn, seconded by Council Member Steve Nelsen, to approve the recommended option #1 and direct staff to proceed with drafting a cannabis business ordinance for adoption and during the adoption process set the number of businesses permitted to operate in the City of Visalia to zero effectively establishing the regulatory framework for such businesses but not yet permitting such businesses to operate within the City, and amend the existing contract with HdL to include the additional scope of work totaling \$24,600 and appropriate an additional \$5,000 from the General Fund. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

**No:** Emmanuel Hernandez Soto

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

Mayor Taylor adjourned to closed session at 5:11 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER REGULAR SESSION - 7:00 PM**

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE****INVOCATION LED BY SR. PASTOR UNRAU, PARKSIDE CHAPEL****SPECIAL PRESENTATION / RECOGNITION****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 commented on the Presidential inauguration and discussed a public comment made at a previous Council meeting.

Ashely Olivas, Field Representative for Assemblymember Macedo's office stepped forward to introduce herself and welcomed the opportunity to provide assistance to the City of Visalia.

Kyle Savage, Field Representative for Senator Grove's office stepped forward to introduce himself and provided a brief legislative update on Assembly Bill 379.

Patrick Burke thanked the Council for their service and raised a concern regarding a school bus stop impacted by the recent heavy rain.

**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 Steve Nelsen, seconded by Council Member Brian Poochigian, to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. 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. [24-0596](#)
  2. Amendment to Construction Management Contract - Authorize the City Manager to approve the Contract Amendment with NV5, Inc. in the amount of \$226,491.50 for additional construction management services related to the Downtown Street Lighting Project. [24-0601](#)
  3. Water Conservation - Stage 2 - Consider reauthorization of Stage 2 of the Visalia Water Conservation Ordinance and adopt Resolution 2025-06. [24-0611](#)
  4. Valley Strong Stadium Batting Cage Contract - Accept the construction proposal for phase 2, task 1 - batting cage & related site work by the design-builder, 4CGlobal, Inc. dba 4Creeks Build for a lump sum amount of \$1,867,198.84. [25-0002](#)
  5. Award of Contract for Security Services - Authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract for security services for Transit, Parks and Facilities, and the Convention Center to Val Security Incorporated, for an initial term of one (1) year with four (4) one-year extensions at the option of the City not to exceed \$470,000 in year one with allowances for annual CPI increases in years 2 through 5. [25-0010](#)
  6. Notice of Completion - Authorize the filing of a Notice of Completion for the Orchard Removal Project at the East Side Regional Park. [25-0011](#)
  7. Park Project Notice of Completion - Request authorization to file a Notice of Completion for the Blain Park Retaining Wall Replacement Project, 3101 S. Court St, Visalia, CA. (Project No. 1010-72000/CP0530-999). [25-0020](#)

8. Park Project Notice of Completion - Request authorization to file a Notice of Completion for the resurface basketball courts at Village Park, 315 Pearl St, Visalia, CA. [25-0028](#)
9. Southern California Edison Easement on City Owned Property - Adopt Resolution No. 2025-12 authorizing the grant of easement to Southern California Edison Company to construct and maintain electrical facilities on a portion of city-owned property and authorizing the City Manager to execute the grant of easement, subject to City Attorney's approval as to form. [25-0035](#)
10. Approve Services Contract - Authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with Precision Concrete Cutting for an amount not to exceed \$500,000 for surveying and concrete shaving purposes, attaching to the Purchasing Cooperative of America Contract #PCA OD-311-20 and appropriate \$500,000 from Risk Fund. [25-0042](#)
11. Citizens Advisory Committee Appointment - Approve the Citizens Advisory Committee's recommendation to appoint Jennifer Fawkes and Lacey Todd to fill vacant voting positions on the Citizens Advisory Committee. [25-0043](#)

## 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. Microtransit Fare - Public Hearing and Adoption of Resolution [24-0432](#)  
No. 2025-05 to authorize a proposed new microtransit service fare be included in the City's Rates and Fees Schedule for Fiscal Year 2024-25 and 2025-26.

Transit Manager DeRossett discussed the new microtransit service and proposed fare of \$5.00.

Council discussion focused on the proposed microtransit service and its impact on fixed routes. Transit Manager DeRossett advised that data analysis would be conducted to assess adjustments aimed at improving route efficiency and optimizing services throughout the city.

Mayor Taylor opened the public hearing at 7:16 p.m.

Michelle Kenner stepped forward to inquire about the vehicles that would be used for the microtransit service.

There being no further comments, Mayor Taylor closed the hearing at 7:17 p.m., with Transit Manager DeRossett confirming the vehicles would be minivans for 6 passengers, including wheelchair access.

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

2. Recommendation to withdraw and re-notice to March 17 Shirk-Riggin Industrial Project consideration - the development of an industrial park with a total building footprint of approximately 3,720,149 square feet on 284 acres, and consisting of the following actions: [25-0055](#)
- Certification of a Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (State Clearinghouse #2022080658): A request to certify the Environmental Impact Report for the Shirk Riggin Industrial Project ("Project"). The City of Visalia is the lead agency in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
  - Initiation of Proceedings for Annexation No. 2024-03: A request to annex three parcels totaling approximately 284 acres into the City limits of Visalia. Upon annexation the area will be zoned Industrial (I) and I-L (Light Industrial) consistent with the land use designations of the Visalia General Plan Land Use Map.
  - General Plan Amendment No. 2025-01: A request to decrease the Light Industrial land use designation and to increase the Industrial land use designation on the project site consisting of approximately 284 acres.
  - Introduction and First Reading of an Ordinance for adoption of a Development Agreement for the Shirk & Riggin Industrial Park: A request to authorize the City to sign and enter into a development agreement pursuant to Government Code Section 65864 et. seq., and Section 17.60 of the City of Visalia Zoning Ordinance.
- Project Applicant: Seefried Industrial Properties, Inc.  
Project Location: The proposed Project is located on approximately 284 acres, on the north side of Riggin Avenue between Shirk Street and Kelsey Street. (APN:077-840-004, 005, 006)

Principal Planner Brandon Smith stepped forward to discuss the matter and the request to withdraw and renote to a future Council meeting scheduled for March 17, 2025.

Mayor Taylor opened the public hearing at 7:17 p.m. There being no public comments, the hearing was closed at 7:18 p.m.

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



## CLOSED SESSION REPORT

City Attorney Richardson advised that there was no reportable action from Closed Session.

## ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Taylor adjourned the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

## UPCOMING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

### 1. Upcoming City Council Meetings

[24-0595](#)

Monday, March 17, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m. at 707 W. Acequia

Thursday, April 3, 2025, @ 5:30 p.m. Joint Meeting with VUSD & COS at Visalia Charter Independent Study (VCIS) at 424 N. Lovers Ln.

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,

Reyna Rivera, Chief Deputy City Clerk