

City of Tulare
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
830 S. Blackstone St.
Tuesday, September 9, 2025 6:30 a.m.
MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Tulare Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 6:32 a.m. by Chairperson Craig Hancock at the Claude Meitzenheimer Community Center.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Craig Hancock, Eric Farrenkopf, Mike Jamaica, Lupe Mendoza and Nick Sherwood

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Manuel Caceres and Armando da Silva

PRESENT: Chris Orr, Brian Beck, Ivan Nicar, Stephanie Velasquez and Amanda Brock

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Craig Hancock.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

Brian Beck introduced the new Recreation Supervisor, Stephanie Velasquez to the Commissioners. She is overseeing the Senior Center.

Chris Orr also covered the design for the memorial plaque for Jennifer McCoun at the K9 Bane Dog Park. He will discuss with Ivan Nicar about where to place it and is requesting the Commissioners to come up with what they would like to put on the plaque.

V. CONSENT CALENDAR

(1) **Commission minutes of the August 12, 2025, regular meeting.**

It was moved by Commissioner Mike Jamaica, seconded by Commissioner Eric Farrenkopf and unanimously carried to approve the August 12, 2025 minutes as presented.

VI. GENERAL BUSINESS

(1) **Parks & Recreation Master Plan Presentation – Chris Orr**

Director Chris Orr discussed briefly on starting of new programs for the spring and new places to hold them. We hope to start utilizing Prosperity Sports Park more in the springtime. We would like to hold an event at the new Dog

Park October 24, 2025 and are planning to hold an event in the springtime that will be associated with Relay for Life, called Bark for Life. Currently working on a Park Event Application for our General Park Use parks. The Centennial Court Striping project to add in lines for Pickleball will be taking place soon and we hope to start having Pickleball classes and activities once that project is completed.

At a City Council meeting, Councilmember Terry Sayer brought up concerns about gophers at Centennial Park. We then performed a survey of all our parks and noted which ones were most affected and asked the Council to approve more funding to get the most affected parks taken care of. Council approved twenty thousand dollars in additional funding for the project where we will contract with a company to provide monthly rodent abatement services at Prosperity Sports Park, Elk Bayou Soccer Complex, Live Oak Park, Del Lago Park, Cypress Park, Bender Park, Centennial Park, Blain Park, Sunrise Park and Parkwood Meadows.

Tulare Youth Soccer League that utilizes Elk Bayou Soccer Complex for games and practices is interested in helping us with some field improvement projects. Our main concern is top dressing the field especially after we work towards controlling the squirrel and gopher population.

Chris Orr then went over handout 6.1 on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. We were awarded fifty thousand dollars extra by Council to start implementing items from the Master Plan. Our plan is to focus on Elk Bayou as it has the most available area for implementing requested items from our survey that was put out to the City Residents, such as: walking and biking trail, outdoor recreation areas, passive recreation space, archery range, disc golf, hiking and biking trails. While not all those items are feasible since they haven't succeeded in the past, we can focus on rehabbing the current facilities that are out there and make the passive recreational space more accessible and useable.

Recreation programming high priorities were fitness, cooking, dance and performing arts classes. The biggest hurdle is available space. We did implement a couple of high priority classes - yoga and Zumba, and we are continuing to add more classes in the medium priority. Our existing programming continues to be successful.

(2) **Recreation & Senior Services Programs/Activity Report (August)
Attendance Report (August)– Brian Beck**

Softball is going up and it has forty-four teams currently enrolled. B.E.S.T Club remains the same. Movies in the Park are up in numbers as well due to the increase in times we are hosting the event. We have decided to host a specific Zumwalt Movies in the Park as well. The last movie in the series will

be on Thursday, October 30, 2025 and it will be the closing activity to our first Fall Festival. This is an event that we have wanted to host, so we are teaming up with the Tulare Police Department, Tulare Police Activity League, and other city entities to pull the event off. It will start at 5:00PM and is a free event to the community. Tennis is also up. It was received well in the summer, so we are adding it in as a fall activity as well.

New programs will be arising in the coming months. August is slower due to the preparation of fall activities, so we will be seeing an increase in monthly numbers moving forward. Co-ed Volleyball has eighteen teams signed up this fall which is a large increase. Brian also touched on the Letters to Jack program and stated that with one posting on social media about the free program, we have already received two hundred sixty letters from forty-five different states. The program runs until October 20, 2025. He also touched on the Haunted House Decorating Contest, HIIT the Park, Tai Chi in the Park, Indoor Hockey as well as events at the Senior Center. Stephanie Velasquez stated that the Senior Center will be hosting a Golden Ghouls Halloween Festival after lunch time on October 30, 2025.

- (3) **Parks Division Monthly Report – Ivan Nicar**
Parks Manager, Ivan Nicar covered the items found on Staff Report #6.3 under General Business.

VII. ITEMS OF COMMON INTEREST

Commissioner Eric Farrenkopf brought up concerns about the Alpine Vista area being undeveloped. He states that it is a huge safety concern for the students and people that walk that area. Chris Orr stated he would look further into it and report back to the Commissioners with the findings.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Craig Hancock at 7:00 a.m.