



**OFFICIAL**

**MINUTES**

**OFFICIAL**

W.C. Walker Senior Center  
505 Sunset Avenue, Shafter, CA 93263

January 9, 2024

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The Regular Board Meeting of the Shafter Recreation & Park District (SRPD) was called to order at 6:03 pm by Chair Salinas.

2. FLAG SALUTE AND INVOCATION:

Chair Salinas led the flag salute and Mr. Jimenez gave the invocation.

3. ROLL CALL:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Amando Chávez  
Gary Rodríguez  
Nelson Salinas

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Fortino Valdivia

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA:

The posting of the agenda was declared on Friday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No public comments.

6. CONSENT AGENDA:

Director Rodríguez **MOVED** to approve the Consent Agenda except for items C and D, minutes from the December 5, 2023, Special Board Meeting and the December 12, 2023, Regular Board Meeting. Chair Salinas **SECONDED**.

AYES 3 (Chávez, Rodríguez, Salinas)

NAYS 0

ABSENT 1

ABSTAIN 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

Mr. Jimenez drew the Board's attention to the correspondence regarding a Conditional Use Permit for a park to be constructed in the Mexican Colony. Director Rodriguez asked if SRPD had been asked to program for the park. Mr. Jimenez noted that no official request has been received but that Superintendent Couch had previously mentioned in passing that SRPD might offer services at the park.

7. **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

None of the committees have met. No reports.

8. **STAFF AND CONSULTANT PRESENTATIONS:**

Mr. Jimenez reported on WCW activities including the visit from Congressman David Valadao, the addition of the Step-by-Step exercise program from Kern County Aging and Adult Services for the months of January and February and the return of Dignity Health's Enhanced Fitness program on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. These along with our regular Zumba Gold program offer a variety of exercise options for seniors. He noted that both the Walker Center and the SRPD offices will be closed for the January 15<sup>th</sup> holiday, that JR NBA Basketball has begun practices and will hold a skills clinic on Saturday, January 13<sup>th</sup> and that he will be attending a CSDA class on personnel issues and prevailing wages on Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Jimenez noted that Mr. Skylar Garcia was supervising basketball practices at three gyms and unable to attend but encouraged Board members to review his report.

Mr. Jimenez reported that the 746 Foundation is still meeting but needs the SRPD Board to appoint two of its board members to serve on the Foundation Board, which is made up of two staff members, two SRPD Board members and three community members.

Mr. Gilbert Garcia was not in attendance to give his report.

9. **OLD BUSINESS**

**A. DISTRICT VOTING – INFORMATION/ACTION ITEM**

Steven Ochoa of Q2 Data, Inc. reviewed the districting process and invited public feedback on communities of interest and proposed district boundaries.

Gustavo Aguirre, from the Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment (CPRE) in Bakersfield asked if the formation of districts would mean that SRPD funds would be invested equally between the districts or if consideration would be given for districts with greater needs.

Chair Salinas noted that we are not the City of Shafter, which oversees infrastructure issues, but a Recreation & Park District looking to attend the recreational needs of all citizens and asked Mr. Aguirre to clarify if he had any specific recommendations for the mapping process.

Mr. Ochoa clarified that while identifying Communities of Interest (CoI's) is important, it is equally important to note what other neighborhoods these CoI's might be paired with to form a district as well as neighborhoods that would not be appropriate to include.

Refugio (no last name given) identified himself as a colleague of Mr. Aguirre and mentioned several areas in Shafter that had greater needs for services and support including the Mexican Colony and the Cherokee Strip. He commented that in rural areas, it is often difficult for children to participate in sports. He encouraged SRPD to consider the creation of mini parks in these areas to give kids a place to play.

The Board asked for more definition on these at-risk neighborhoods and the following areas were mentioned: The Mexican Colony, the Cherokee Strip, Smith's Corner, North Shafter and Myrick's Corner.

Shafter resident Maria Martinez noted the importance of involving more community members from all areas of Shafter because she could only speak for her own neighborhood. Asked to define her own neighborhood, she set a border of W. Los Angeles and the area behind up to the Mexican Colony on the west side.

Mr. Aguirre returned asking about the best way to form districts. Steven Ochoa commented that factors that might define a CoI were limited services, infrastructure issues— lack of drainage, etc., as well as education levels, income levels and other factors.

Shafter resident Imelda Hernandez was asked to help define by specific streets the North Shafter area. She previously mentioned high-need areas. She mentioned the following streets: Tulare to Venable, Gibson, Prince, Sunny, Klassen, Mayer, Park, Fresno, Epi's Labor Camp, Poplar, Scaroni.

Chair Salinas reminded everyone that input could still be submitted through the next day, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Mr. Ochoa requested SRPD Board direction to begin the mapping process. Director Rodriguez recommended that one potential map be drawn using the input from the community and a second map be based around community parks as follows:

Rodriguez Park: From Rodriguez Park to Lerdo Highway and S. Shafter continuing south toward Thomas Lane and Riverside/Burbank or as far as needed for population requirements.

Lerdo Highway to Dresser on the west side of highway 43. McDonald's all the way to Dresser on the west side of highway 43.

Kirschenmann Park (formerly Hudson Park): This can cover the east side of Shafter Ave. and the south side of Lerdo highway and could also include the downtown triangle from Sno-Fun to the Arco station.

He added that his ideal division would include four districts on the left (west) side of the tracks and one on the right (east) including Gossamer Grove, but that the population levels might not allow for these divisions, so possibly three districts on the west side and two on the east side would be acceptable. He noted that the east side districts could be divided as Central Ave. toward the north and Central Ave. and Tulare toward the south with the downtown triangle on the east side included with the north district.

Refugio commented that another point to consider is that in the high-need areas there is a greater need for parks because many homes have multiple families with a number of children living in them.

Mr. Aguirre noted that he considered it better to avoid connecting North Shafter with the southern neighborhoods or similar makeup since having a similar population in two districts would offer the potential of more representation on the board.

Director Rodriguez **MOVED** to approve the creation of two maps, one based on public input, and one based on board recommendations. Director Chavez **SECONDED**.

AYES 3 (Rodríguez, Chávez, Salinas)

NAYS 0

ABSENT 1

ABSTAIN 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

**B. BOARD VACANCY – INFORMATION/ACTION ITEM**

Mr. Jimenez presented board member applicants Isaiah Zacarias and Cristina Camacho to the Board. He noted that a third application was received from Fernando Marquez the day after the deadline, but that Mr. Marquez was not in attendance at the meeting. The Board conducted separate interviews with the remaining two candidates. **NO ACTION TAKEN**.

(California Government Code Section 1780).

**C. BOARD VACANCY APPOINTMENT – INFORMATION/ACTION ITEM**

Based on the applications and interviews, Director Rodriguez **MOVED** to appoint Ms. Camacho to the vacant board position and Chair Salinas **SECONDED**.

AYES 3 (Rodríguez, Chávez, Salinas)

NAYS 0

ABSENT 1

ABSTAIN 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

As of 8:12 pm, Director Cristina Camacho took her place on the SRPD Board.

**D. BOARD COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS – INFORMATION/ACTION ITEM**

Chair Salinas reassigned Board Committee responsibilities as follows:

**PROGRAMS:**

Director Amando Chávez

Director Nelson Salinas

**PERSONNEL:**

Director Cristina Camacho

Director Amando Chávez

**FACILITY ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT:**

Director Gary Rodríguez

Director Fortino Valdivia

**BUDGET AND FINANCE:**

Director Cristina Camacho

Director Fortino Valdivia

**SAFETY:**

Director Amando Chávez

Director Nelson Salinas

**AD-HOC: Groundbreaking Ceremony**

Director Gary Rodríguez

Director Nelson Salinas

**AD-HOC: Wonderful Community Fund**

Director Cristina Camacho

Director Fortino Valdivia

**AD-HOC: Naming Rights**

Director Nelson Salinas

Director Fortino Valdivia

**746 FOUNDATION:**

Director Cristina Camacho

Director Fortino Valdivia.

**E. DISTRICT SPECIAL TAX – INFORMATION/ACTION ITEM**

Mr. Jimenez updated the Board on special tax efforts and noted that the L.A. Times had called to request his comments. **NO ACTION TAKEN.**

**F. TRACK & FIELD – INFORMATION/ACTION ITEM**

Director Rodriguez noted the importance of preparing Shafter youth for college scholarship opportunities of all kinds and noted that Track & Field (T&F) should be one of those. He noted that T&F has not been available to elementary school children for several years. He noted that in Taft the recreation district organizes T&F although participants compete for their individual schools. He added that this is a void in our community that he would like to see SRPD fill. Mr. Jimenez noted that this is a complicated sport, requiring a team of coaches specializing in the various events, but that there were possibilities both to organize it directly from SRPD and/or to use the ELOP program already in place at Richland School District and the one we are helping Grow Academy to establish. He noted that SRPD could rent Shafter High School's newly renovated track for competitions. Director Rodriguez asked about deadlines for participation. Mr. Jimenez commented that meets take place in March and April so SRPD would need to begin advertising a T&F program almost immediately. Director Rodriguez recommended that the Program Committee meet as soon as possible so the program might be established this year, if only in a small way. He noted that the Board did not want to overburden staff, but that it would be good to get this started. Director Rodriguez **MOVED** to establish a budget and get the program started and Director Camacho **SECONDED.**

AYES 4 (Rodríguez, Chávez, Camacho, Salinas)

NAYS 0

ABSENT 1

ABSTAIN 0  
**MOTION CARRIED**

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. STORAGE TRAILER – **INFORMATION/ACTION ITEM**

Mr. Jimenez noted that with the pool shed fire SRPD lost not only equipment but necessary storage space and that it would be helpful to have storage that could allow us to move equipment between locations. He recommended the purchase of a trailer and presented pricing options for assorted sizes from several sellers. Chair Salinas **MOVED** to approve \$15,000 for the purchase/preparation of a storage trailer for SRPD use. Director Camacho **SECONDED** the motion.

AYES 4 (Rodríguez, Chávez, Camacho, Salinas)

NAYS 0

ABSENT 1

ABSTAIN 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

11. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:

Chair Salinas expressed appreciation for the staff’s efforts on Congressman Valadao’s visit and noted that he enjoyed learning about the senior adult program. He said, “Sometimes we lose sight of older family members and I feel humbled to be a small part of this.”

Director Rodriguez offered thanks for keeping T&F on the agenda and noted that as he returned from stress leave, he was pleased to see that the Board and staff were taking care of business. He also thanked Director Camacho for joining the Board and said he was looking forward to Basketball and T&F.

Director Camacho expressed her thanks to everyone and noted that she was very excited to serve on the SRPD Board.

Mr. Jimenez reminded Board Members that a Special District Leadership Academy (SDLA) training was scheduled soon in San Luis Obispo and asked who wanted to attend. Director Chavez has already signed up and Chair Salinas, Director Camacho and Director Rodriguez also expressed willingness to attend

12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

SRPD Mascot, Fundraisers Rental Policy, Driver Safety Policy, Naming Rights Brochure, Salary Scales for 2024-2026, Track & Field Program

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

No executive session held.

14. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Salinas adjourned the meeting at 8:40 pm