

# CITY OF GALT

## MINUTES

### GALT PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

Council Chambers, 380 Civic Drive, Galt, California  
Wednesday, April 10, 2013

The special meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Commissioner Steele. Roll call was taken. All Commissioners with the exception of Commissioner Smith were in attendance.

Staff members present: Special Projects Administrator Armando Solis, City Attorney Steven Rudolph, Street Superintendent Adin Selby and Administrative Assistant Deborah Porteous-Toste.

#### **CHANGES TO THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA** - None

#### **COMMISSION TRAINING**

Attorney Steven Rudolph reviewed what was already presented at the last meeting and told Commissioner Buchanan that if he had questions about the information he missed Rudolph would be glad to meet with him and go over the material.

Moore immediately had a question about the public speaker and if it was required to give name and city in order to make a public comment. Rudolph said it is not a prerequisite, but if you want it to be considered more highly over a non resident voter etc. then giving at least your name may make a difference, but again it is not required.

Moore asked how late the agenda could be changed after it is posted. Rudolph feels that it would be rare not to be able to wait until next month but the Commission can always call a Special meeting which would need to be posted at least 24 hours prior to special meeting.

Rudolph reiterated the difference between public comment at the front end and those on items on the agenda.

The Commission is under rules of guidance adopted by City Council and if you want to make changes as a body, the body can bring those changes to City Council for consideration.

When a decision is made there is a strong need for there to be a reason for the motion.

Brown act restricts Commissions getting together to discuss items without it being publicized. Public comment is there for Commission to take in information and they need to attempt not to get into a discussion with the speaker. Suggested give a brief a response and then possibly refer them to the Department Head for more information.

Be as respectful as you can as long as you get business done.

Ex parte information – gave an example of a situation where a vote was taken and one individual voted against the item. When asked why the objection the individual spoke of information he was told by someone else that made him vote against project/item. You job is not to gather facts. Ex parte information was not given to the other members so that it could be responded to or forwarded to staff to get more information on item and bring back for the Commission to consider.

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Ex Parte information may be coming from someone opposed to an item and others see this so they may have an altered view of the Commissioner's position. It avoids a perceived bias view. Rudolph was not encouraging Commission to ignore the public that wants to talk to you but to encourage the individuals to come to the meeting and get it on the record so it can be discussed and reviewed. If individual does not want to come to meeting but you feel their concerns have validity then the Commissioner should bring the concerns up for the entire Commission to evaluate.

Ethics – Rudolph summed it up as “A decision should be made and based on what is good for the overall public.” That is the goal. There is a high sense of distrust in the general public of government, every element of it and you guys are part of that government now and so this is your opportunity to set the bar at the high level and to send a message to people that you are making decisions in the overall public interest and you act in the manner that maintains their trust.

When to step aside? There is a minimum standard set forth but if you have a strong opinion or a conflict you should lean towards the higher standard keeping discretion to the public.

If you are not sure if there is a conflict then you default to the conservative position and either continue the item to another meeting or excuse yourself. However, if you get the agenda and are unsure it would be best to contact Mr. Rudolph to see if there is actually a conflict and if not then your input can be heard.

Bias – Personal or subject matter bias. Steve gave examples where you cannot make an objective decision. Also sometimes you may have to step aside even if you feel you have no bias but the public may think that you do.

Compensation – monthly stipend, some travel and training etc. are budgeted for Commissioner. A Commissioner cannot decide to attend a function with the anticipation of reimbursement. If you want to attend something that you feel is a part of your official duties ask Armando ahead of time so you are informed before you make a decision to go on your own dime.

Rudolph gave out information on how to contact Armando, Jason or Steve if any Commissioner has any questions

Meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m. for the Regular Parks and Recreation Meeting to commence.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Porteous-Toste, Administrative Assistant