

CITY OF GALT

MINUTES

GALT PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Council Chambers, 380 Civic Drive, Galt, California
Wednesday, September 11, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Commissioner Moore. Roll call was taken. Commissioner Buchanan was absent.

Staff members present: Chief of Police, Bill Bowen, Vice-Mayor Mike Singleton, Special Events Coordinator Armando Solis and Administrative Assistant Deborah Porteous-Toste.

CHANGES TO THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA - None

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

ACTION: With no objections to the minutes they were approved as presented.

PRESENTATIONS – P.A.L. Police Activities League, Chief Bill Bowen

Chief Bill Bowen began by his presentation noting that he and Vice Mayor Singleton along with several others are starting a Police Activities League within the City.

In the absence of the Boys and Girls Club, they felt there was a need for something for the youth in our community, primarily for those that are troubled, under privileged or at risk. Chief Bowen stated that the City of Galt Parks and Recreation Program is one of the better programs than the majority of cities he has ever associated with, but is not sure if the Department reaches those kids. The biggest issue that he has seen in these kids is that these kids for whatever reason have very good parents but the parents are forced to work and they are not home to take care of these kids. These kids then end up in other groups of people and that's where many gangs are formed and then they end up getting their support from the gangs and such.

We as a City, members of the Police Department and members of the community need some kind of intervention. We have a bunch of kids for whatever reason that are not studying in school are not learning what they should be. Many don't know even have basic skills. In Bowen's business he runs across them and when he has them write a statement they can't spell easy words. Some of them cannot even spell their names if it is not a four letter name like John.

So what P.A.L. is looking to do is to start something with the support of the Commission, Parks and Recreation and through the City's parks reach those individuals who might not have the money to participate in positive programs. And although the Parks and Recreation Department has scholarships to help individuals with financial needs, P.A. L. would like to expand that. To get it off of the ground P.A.L. has a board of directors that is seated. They have had meetings and they have submitted the paperwork for their 501(c) 3 non profit status in which they hope to receive within the next 30 days. So the ground work has been laid.

Presently there is no budget at this time and the organization is planning their first fundraiser. The Director from National P.A.L. informed them about the Jr. Giants program. The Jr. Giants budgets millions of dollars to the program. This program will not compete with local baseball teams. Galt P.A.L. has contacted the Giants organization about this program. This program looks like a pretty good program. The kids earn magnets and stickers, etc for rewards. Reading is one area they can earn rewards. The hope is to reach as many kids as possible inside the Parks and Recreation program that might leave at some point at a later date or outside the department to get them involved in this type of program in hopes to direct them in a more positive direction.

Bowen spoke of his personal past history and about being a trouble maker himself. When going back and seeing a past instructor who expelled him on more than one occasion, now in his police uniform, his instructor told him that he thought he would see him behind bars. Bowen thought it was funny and said had it not been for the Marine Corp that would have happened to me. Bowen is enthused about the program they are trying to start and gave credit to the Vice Mayor for pushing it. Bowen has been involved in P.A.L. in another state and a larger City and it really works however presently he has no one to give to the program as it needs a full time officer. Singleton felt that the program could at least get off of the ground by using some drop in officers off of their beat. The organization has submitted an application for a grant. They should find out in October or November if selected. That grant would allow for a 2nd SRO for the schools and someone to run the P.A.L. program within the City of Galt. P.A.L. is looking for support from the Commission and citizens of the City of Galt. Bowen then turned the microphone over to Vice Mayor Singleton.

Singleton stated that he and the Chief have been working on this for over a year when it first came up in the strategic plan for the City. There is a need for more things for these at risk kids. Singleton feels some programs are just too expensive for these kids to participate in and to him it is a shame. As a child Singleton was a latch key kid and when he got home he did nothing and got into trouble. Singleton says that this is common and has heard it over the past 10 years or more that we need something for the kids.

Singleton handed out a history on P.A.L. He briefly went over some of the history and pointed out how well it has worked and kept kids out of gangs and gave kids structure, guidance and mentorship.

Moore did some research on P.A.L. and he said one of the founding principals was to get the police officers demystify the kids in the neighborhood. Asked when would the program be conducted (i.e. after school or during school hours), Singleton responded that is still up in the air as factors such as the second SRO, the grant and such need to be put in place. These kids need supervision so we don't have a set schedule as of yet. We are just into the foundation of this program. The board is working together on a business plan and that can be brought to the Commission at a later date.

The big picture as Singleton sees it is so many kids hanging with the wrong crowd and some of these kids think our officers are nothing but jerks and he wants them to see that is not the case. Singleton feels that we have a lot of great officers that do a good job. His hopes with this program is to have the kids see the upside of the officer, that he is human, has feelings, and will talk to you without implying the kid is bad. He believes the program will help to change that mentality by having the officers involved.

Singleton wanted to let the Commission know that aside from a background check anyone can coach in the Jr. Giants program. The Jr. Giants program provides the materials, a handbook for all coaches and has a lot of information to run a successful program. This program currently services California, Nevada and Oregon with over 200,000 kids. They provide everything including bats, balls, uniforms etc. All we need to provide is the kids. This program allows those kids that can't afford to play traditional baseball the opportunity.

Moore asked what kind of support is being requested from the Commission. Solis said that the Commission's role is for input, support and a recommendation down the road when it goes to City

Steele asked how you would identify the kids that are predisposed for problems. He said that during his years in soccer there have been kids unable to afford to play and coaches or the leagues have stepped up to assist those. So again how do you know who this program will help and the kids that are the target for the help?

Bowen said that he usually runs across these kids in the street. An officer asks about him/her and they talk about interests etc. Then this person tells his/her friend that this police officer, Council person, or whomever is not so bad and about the programs. Then the word gets around and perceptions change. The hope is then others will become interested in participating and begin hanging around the right people. The challenge is just trying to find what peaks their interest. Hopefully through the program and with the assistance of the Parks and Recreation Department we can accomplish this.

Singleton feels that there are other groups in town that have programs that target at risk kids and with all of them working together, it is the hope to get this program up and running. Singleton believes it is not difficult to determine the kids out there need help and are at risk.

Solis is involved with this program and has offered to bring back information as it becomes available in lieu of having the Chief and the Vice Mayor come back to the meetings and keep the Commission up to date on the program and its progress.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Parks and Recreation Facility / Program Sponsorships Policy – Solis
The City Council approved the Policy with your recommendations added to the Policy.
- b. Country In the Park – Solis – Huge success. Also had football from the Sacramento 49ers that the Department was in receipt of revenues of \$100 per hour. CLYSL and Galt FC had games out there. There were also bands and food vendors. It was a nice event.

NEW BUSINESS – Nothing at this time

UPCOMING COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS - Nothing at this time

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Lighting of the Night Event – December 7th**

At this point we are looking at the same route, if not it will be brought back to the Commission.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS/COMMENTS

- a. Chairperson Moore – reiterate that he really enjoyed the Volunteer Luncheon. It was outstanding.
- b. Vice- Chairperson Buchanan - absent
- c. Commissioner Reuthinger - none
- d. Commissioner Smith - none
- e. Commissioner Steele – In his opinion it is so difficult for youth to get a job. Also he feels that schools are getting away from vocational teaching and working with your hands.

Singleton does not want to limit P.A.L. to only sports. If a child wants to learn a vocation then the hope is to steer him/her in the right direction or have a program to help. Or if a kid wants to go to college help them with the process on how to get there. Sports is just the starting point, there is a much bigger picture for P.A.L.

STAFF COMMENTS

Solis just got the Galt Market Logo at the last minute. The Galt Market is looking into branding the Market and changing the logo is a reflection of that change and branding. He passed out the current suggested logo and wanted the Commissions opinion on it. There was discussion on "Flea Market". Solis said it will only be used for descriptive purposes. Reuthinger felt that the birds and the water tower in the logo should be more prominent as they blend in. Solis noted that he would also like to have "Galt" on the water tower.

Steele spoke on the round abouts on Twin Cities and the difficulty that has been brought to his attention from truck drivers. He stated that there is a real concerned about this issue. He wanted to know if this could be put on the agenda or was the Commission the correct forum to discuss this subject.

Solis answered that the proper forum would be the Planning Commission or City Council. He told the Commission the City newsletter that was just went out had more information on the round abouts.

Solis reported that the Department is hoping to have Recreation Coordinator position filled by mid October.

Solis attended GALT FC Board Meeting because individuals of the organization brought issues to the Commission meeting that he wanted to address. At that meeting there were no concerns brought forth. Solis will be attending another meeting this Sunday the 15th as the same issues brought before the Commission are apparently still an issue, so hopefully this time it will be discussed and resolved.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – nothing at this time

ADJOURNMENT –

Being no further business before the Parks and Recreation Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Porteous-Toste, Administrative Assistant