



MINUTES

Meeting of the
Scotts Valley City Council
Date: April 2, 2025
Time: 6:00 PM

CONTACT INFORMATION	MEETING LOCATION	POSTING
City of Scotts Valley 1 Civic Center Drive Scotts Valley, CA 95066 (831) 440-5600	City Council Chambers 1 Civic Center Drive Scotts Valley, CA 95066 OR Zoom Video Conference https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83295730901	The agenda was posted on 3-28-2025 at City Hall, SV Senior Center, SV Public Works Building, and on the Internet at www.scottsvally.gov .
CALL TO ORDER 6:00 PM		

The City Council meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE and MOMENT OF SILENCE

ROLL CALL

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT: Derek Timm, Mayor Allan Timms, Vice Mayor Steve Clark, Council Member Krista Jett, Council Member (left at 7:50 PM during Closed Session) Donna Lind, Council Member	CITY STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Mali LaGoe, City Manager Kirsten Powell, City Attorney Steve Walpole, Police Chief Stephanie Hill, Administrative Services Director Rodolfo Onchi, Public Works Director Taylor Bateman, Community Development Director Cathie Simonovich, City Clerk
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SPECIAL SET MATTER

1. Mayor's Proclamation - April 2025 as Arts, Culture & Creativity Month

Mayor Timm presented the proclamation honoring April 2025 as Arts, Culture, and Creativity Month. Jim Brown, from the Arts Council Santa Cruz County, accepted the proclamation and said a few words.

2. April - Autism Awareness Month

City Manager LaGoe announced that the City of Scotts Valley is now an Autism Certified Center. The City staff and many audience members wore blue to show support for April as Autism Awareness Month.

Meredith Tekin from the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education (IBCCE) spoke about the importance of training and certification to gain a better understanding of autism and other neurodivergences.

The following people also spoke to show support for autism awareness and Scotts Valley businesses/organizations becoming certified: Victor Alejandro, John Flint, and Terence Concannon (CEO of Visit Santa Cruz County).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CM Lind attended a Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) board meeting where they continued to work on fiscal planning, taking into consideration the reduction in sales tax, coupled with the increases in expenses.

CM Lind attended the Scotts Valley Chamber of Commerce annual awards presentations and continued to work with the Chamber on the awards gala event which will be May 9 at Roaring Camp.

CM Lind attended the League of California Cities (CalCities) Monterey Bay Division virtual meeting. This was a panel discussion on how the first 100 days of the new administration are impacting local governments.

CM Lind and other elected officials, attended the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) Journey to Learning held at the Seymour Marine Discovery Center.

CM Lind represented the City at the Brook Knoll fundraising event and at the chamber mixer at West Coast Community Bank (formally Santa Cruz County Bank).

CM Lind, along with CM Jett, attended Assembly Member Gail Pellerin's District 28 Women of the Year awards, where elected officials gathered to honor 13 women.

CM Jett, along with City Manager LaGoe, attended the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) in Monterey and shared the "Look Book" to introduce Scotts Valley's proposed Town Center.

CM Jett attended the Youth Action Network's Leaders Unite event, which was attended by high school students from throughout the county. The event creates the opportunity for students to connect with elected officials.

CM Clark attended the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) Journey to Learning where they enjoyed a behind-the-scenes look at some of the extraordinary work happening at UC Santa Cruz. This was a great opportunity to engage UC leaders on access to education and potential partnerships on economic development possibilities in Scotts Valley.

CM Clark attended the Scotts Valley Chamber of Commerce annual awards presentations.

CM Clark attended the Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) meeting where they established work groups for the north and the south county to study ideal track alignments for the zero-emission passenger rail and trail project. He noted that the RTC is looking for input on unmet transportation needs in the county. Input can be given by taking a survey or by providing public comment at the May RTC meeting.

CM Clark attended the League of California Cities (CalCities) Monterey Bay Division virtual meeting where they discussed the first 100 days of the current administration. The concerns raised were regarding disaster recovery funds, grants, MediCal/Medicaid, and more.

Mayor Timm also attended the CalCities virtual meeting and noted that Scotts Valley is waiting for federal funding for road projects (\$2M) and the county also has significant funding they are waiting for. Our federal representatives would like to hear from anyone who has been impacted by federal cuts or the federal freezing of funds.

Mayor Timm announced that the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) is currently hosting 5 public meetings called *Connect Monterey Bay* to look at long-term transportation planning needs (roadways, public transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, airports, etc.) over the next 25 years. For more information go to ambag.org.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Budget Season: It is budget season and staff from every department have been working diligently on the budget for the next fiscal year. This includes working through the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), operational costs, revenue projection, and more. The budget subcommittee will meet next week, and the draft budget will be presented to the City Council in May.

Maintenance Projects: The new fence at the Skate Park has been installed, which marks the completion of this project. Additionally, the crew has cleaned up the Dog Park and also gave the Community Center a much-needed coat of fresh paint.

Vandalism at Hocus Pocus Park: Anyone who has knowledge of the vandalism at Hocus Pocus Park is asked to reach out to the Police Department. The sink and toilet in the men's restroom were destroyed and the bathroom had to be closed, which necessitated bringing in portable restrooms until the damage was repaired.

Recreation Summer Activity Guide: The summer recreation activity guide is live on the City's website and available in hard copy form in a few places around town.

Citizens Academy: The City is gaging interest in a new round of Citizens Academy (exact dates are to be determined). Citizens Academy is an excellent way to learn more about the operations of the City of Scotts Valley. If you are interested in attending, please email Jordan Taylor at jtaylor@scottsvalley.gov or City Hall at cityhall@scottsvalley.gov.

Reminders:

- Sign up for the citywide newsletter!
- Follow the city on Social Media for important information and updates!

PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

Alexandra Sklar, Co-Director of Trouble Fastpitch, spoke about the Parks & Recreation fees for utilization of the Siltanen Park fields and also submitted a letter (see attached).

John Flint spoke about the importance of caregiving.

ALTERATIONS TO CONSENT AGENDA

M/S: Lind/Clark

To approve the Consent Agenda with no alterations.

Carried 5/0 (AYES: Timm, Timms, Clark, Jett, Lind)

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve City Council minutes of 03-19-2025
2. Approve check register dated 03-15-2025 through 03-28-2025

ALTERATIONS TO REGULAR AGENDA

M/S: Lind/Jett

To approve the Regular Agenda with no alterations.

Carried 5/0 (AYES: Timm, Timms, Clark, Jett, Lind)

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Community Grant Program Recommendations

City Manager LaGoe presented the Community Grant Program recommendations. The Council Members thanked the City Manager, the staff, and the review committee for their work on this important program.

The following people provided public comment in support of the Community Grant Program: Dana Wagner, Community Bridges Meals on Wheels; Danny Reber, Scotts Valley Chamber of Commerce; Ameer Sawhney, Scotts Valley Multicultural Fair, ; Lis DuBois, Boys and Girls Club of Santa Cruz County; Patrice Maginnis, Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired; Darshana Croskrey; Leeann Luna, Monarch Services; and Julia Feldman, Conflict Resolution Center.

M/S: Timms/Lind

To approve the FY 2024-2025 Community Grant Program awardees as recommended and authorize the City Manager to execute contracts with the grant awardees in a form acceptable to the City Attorney.

Carried 5/0 (AYES: Timm, Timms, Clark, Jett, Lind)

2. Future Council Agenda Items

CM Clark proposed a future agenda item for a graffiti ordinance which would encourage individuals and businesses to quickly clean up graffiti on private property. A consensus was obtained from the Council Members.

CONVENE TO CLOSED SESSION

The City Council convened to closed session at 7:20 PM to discuss the following item.

The City Attorney noted that there would likely be nothing to report.

CLOSED SESSION SUBJECT(S)

1. Public Employee Annual Performance Evaluation
Legal Authority: Government Code Section 54957(b)(1)
Position: City Manager
Staff Present: City Manager, City Attorney

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

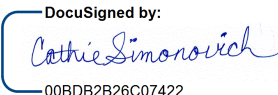
The City Council reconvened to open session at 8:22 PM.

REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN DURING CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Timm announced that there was no report from the Closed Session meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Attest: 
Cathie Simonovich, City Clerk

Approved: 
Derek Timm, Mayor



April 2, 2024

Scotts Valley City Council
1 Civic Center Drive
Scotts Valley, CA 95066

Council Members Timm, Timms, Clark, Jett, and Lind,

We are writing to alert you to the significant and detrimental impact that the Parks and Recreation Fees will have on local kids and the non-profit organizations which serve them.

It has become clear that our organizations, Scotts Valley Girls Softball and Scotts Valley Trouble Fastpitch, cannot financially bear the dramatically increased costs of Siltanen Park field rentals and also continue to operate our programs on Scotts Valley fields as we have for decades.

Scotts Valley Girls Softball has called Siltanen Park "home" for over forty years, providing a place to play for 150-200 local girls each spring. The SVGS competitive travel program, Trouble Fastpitch, has proudly worn the Scotts Valley name and shared our community spirit at tournaments throughout California for almost thirty years. The future is bright as well- player registration is up and we are seeing renewed interest in softball among the girls of Scotts Valley.

All of this history and opportunity is now in jeopardy due to the exorbitant Parks and Recreation field rental fee increases. **Our costs to use Siltanen Park fields will increase from 575-675% under the new Fee Schedule, putting both programs at risk.**

When renting fields in Scotts Valley, we are not guaranteed they will be well-maintained, safe, or even playable. **This is a baseline that other cities provide.** Because of this, SVGS volunteers have been regularly maintaining the Siltanen Park fields for decades.

Sadly, in the past two years, what has been a collaborative working relationship between SVGS and Parks and Recreation has turned negative. There is a lack of cooperation with and understanding of youth sports operations and the value they provide to our kids. We believe that Staff is actively monitoring how and when we use the fields via social media, contributing to the sense of distrust and non-partnership. Meanwhile, the field conditions have deteriorated over

this time frame, as SVGS has been told we can no longer provide the critical maintenance and upgrades our community has counted on.

We have lost faith in the ability to solve these problems directly with Parks and Recreation, and are thus asking to the City Council to review and intervene as follows:

1. We request that Council review our attached document, outlining our situation and concerns, and direct the Parks and Recreation Staff to enter a Memorandum of Understanding with each of our organizations which maintains our current per-player rate structure and fee for the next five years.
2. We respectfully ask that Council direct the City Manager to determine an alternative source of revenue for the General Fund and reduce field rental fees for all local non-profit organizations, rather than laying the City's larger financial burden so heavily upon local kids and families.
3. We ask that this topic be placed on a future City Council agenda to be reviewed and heard publicly..

We understand that there are underlying costs to running the parks, and that the City and Parks and Recreation need to cover those costs. We also are proud of the work our volunteers have done beautifying Siltanen Park for the enjoyment of our entire City over several decades, in exchange for affordable field usage fees. We simply ask to continue working together as a team with Parks and Recreation- they allow our organizational volunteers to invest time and money in the fields and park, and in return, we keep the existing field fees which will allow us to keep our programs operating and serving our local girls.

As parents, coaches, and supporters of the kids of Scotts Valley, we submit this letter and attached documentation in their interests and on their behalf. Thank you for your time and energy in reviewing.

Signed,

Kelly Weaver
President- Scotts Valley Girls Softball

Ed Poston
Director- Scotts Valley Girls Softball

Nick Torres
Co-Director- Trouble Fastpitch

Alexandra Sklar
Co-Director, Trouble Fastpitch



Statement of Impacts and Concerns Regarding Scotts Valley Parks and Recreation Hourly Fee Schedule for Field and Facility Rentals

Prepared for Scotts Valley City Council by Scotts Valley Girls Softball and Trouble Fastpitch
April 2 2024

1 HISTORY

Meet Siltanen Park's "Home Teams".

2 HISTORY

SVGS and Parks & Rec, collaborating together for decades.

3 IMPACT

Financial impacts of high hourly field fees put small non-profit programs in operational jeopardy.

4 IMPACT

When youth sports turn into City revenue sources, kids and community suffer.

5 IMPACT

Reducing access and limiting opportunities for local talent to thrive.

6 CONCERN

Asked to pay more, while already receiving less.

7 CONCERN

How were these "fair fees" set? And are they fair?

8 CONCERN

Field rental fee increase directly conflicts with Scotts Valley Parks & Rec Master Plan and Kids Bill Of Rights.

9 REFERENCES AND LINKS

10 SELECT PHOTOS OF FIELD CONDITIONS

1 HISTORY Meet Siltanen Park's "Home Teams"

Scotts Valley Girls Softball is the longest-running youth softball program in Santa Cruz County. Since 1984, SVGS has been a cornerstone of the local youth community, with 150-200 girls participating each season at Siltanen Park.

Coming out of the pandemic, SVGS is continuing to flourish. In 2023, the league was honored with the title of "Organization of the Year" by the Chamber of Commerce. This year, registration increased by 15%, driven by fresh interest among younger players.

In 1997, SVGS introduced a competitive travel team, Trouble Fastpitch, providing talented local players opportunities to play at a higher level. For nearly 30 years, Trouble Fastpitch players have practiced at Siltanen Park as their homebase and represented the City of Scotts Valley with pride as they travel to compete across California (and even out-of-state) with teammates.

Locally, it is well-known that the grounds for Siltanen Park were donated to the city specifically to be used for diamond sports (softball and baseball). Over the years, many local girls have learned to play here with SVGS and moved on to wear the Scotts Valley name on their jerseys with the well-regarded Scotts Valley High School Falcons program.

SVGS and Trouble Fastpitch are proud to introduce new young players to softball, teamwork, and community on these fields each season.



SVGS and Trouble Fastpitch players at "home" at Siltanen Park and forming friendships across ages in the Scotts Valley Fourth of July Parade.

2 HISTORY SVGS and Parks & Rec, collaborating together for decades.

For decades, Scotts Valley Girls Softball and the Scotts Valley Parks and Recreation Department have collaborated in efforts to maintain and improve Siltanen Park. The advantages of this collaboration are clear- thousands of local girls have experienced the benefits of team sports while playing softball on Scotts Valley fields, without the City needing to undertake operations of a program of this size or maintain the fields daily.

Each season, SVGS and Trouble volunteers contribute 500+ man-hours towards the maintenance and improvement of Siltanen Park, for the enjoyment of all Scotts Valley citizens. Volunteers take on the regular seasonal field and facility tasks of infield skinning, weeding, reseeding, weed-wacking, painting, removing poison-oak from the batting cage, and repairing damage in the outfield caused by gophers off-leash dogs, and bikes. Each week during the season, field dragging, raking, and lining for games takes 20-25 hours. Players are taught proper respect for the facilities, and help with trash clean-up and field repair/raking after each practice and game.

Over the years, SVGS and Trouble have contributed tens of thousands of dollars worth of improvements to Siltanen Park. This includes installation of wood platform seating areas; perimeter fencing; backstops at Ponytails, Juniors, and Seniors fields; bleachers at Ponytails/Seniors fields; scoreboards; concrete block retaining wall from Vine Hill School Rd to park; asphalt installation from Vine Hill School Rd to park; pitching bullpens; batting cages; bleacher, bench, and backstop restoration; replacement of home plates, pitching rubbers, and base plugs; and more.

Unfortunately, things have changed in the prior two years, with the current Parks and Recreation Staff appearing uncooperative, unwilling to collaborate, and without understanding of the operational restraints of a small-town youth sports program.

SVGS IN- SEASON MAINTENANCE			SVGS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	INVESTMENT
	HOURS	PEOPLE	senior backstop	\$21,963.00
infield skinning	8	15	ponytail backstop	
weeding	8	15	bench restoration	\$3,000.00
reseed / dirt	8	20	bleachers pontails / seniors	\$5,140.00
weed wacking	8	4	scoreboards	\$4,000.00
painting	8	6	perimeter fencing	\$4,200.00
field dragging	18/week	1	drinking fountain	
field lining	9/week	1	cinderblock retaining wall from vine hill school rd to park	\$5,000.00
			ashalt installation vine hill rd to park	\$4,900.00
			pitching cages	\$6,000.00
			batting cage	\$3,500.00
			junior backstop installation	
			gopher abatement machine	\$3,500

Scotts Valley Girls Softball Maintenance and Capital Investments
Note: this does not include regular maintenance or investment by Trouble Fastpitch

3 IMPACT Financial impacts of high hourly field fees put small non-profit programs in operational jeopardy.

Currently, both the SVGS and Trouble Fastpitch organizations pay \$14/child per season (spring rec, summer competitive, fall competitive) for field access. In exchange, organizational volunteers provide extensive volunteer manpower and financial investment in the Siltanen Park fields (see Section 2).

Assuming no growth in our programs and at the discounted non-profit hourly rate of \$22.50/hour, the cost impacts to both programs are debilitating:

Scotts Valley Girls Softball will incur an additional estimated cost of \$14,500, a 575% increase in field rental costs. Spread across players, this results in a field cost of \$95 per player per season, an \$81 increase per player. As context, SVGS just raised registration fees to \$125.00 per player this season, which is consistent with other local leagues.

Trouble Fastpitch will incur an additional estimated cost of \$6,600, or 675% increase in field rental costs. This equates to an increase of \$170 per family, adding an additional 25%-50% to current fees. This makes the per-player costs for the program uncompetitive compared to other nearby teams, and frankly is just too expensive for local families.

Raising registration fees to accommodate this increased cost for field usage is simply not financially feasible for either organization. **It is highly likely that Scotts Valley Girls Softball, cornerstone of the community, would be priced out of the fields it has called home for four decades.**

And what good are our parks, without girls playing on the softball fields?

SVGS Hourly Field Rate Scenario	2025 Numbers	Trouble Hourly Field Rate Scenario	2024 Actuals Summer + Fall Seasons
Total Players	179	Trouble Total Players	67
Total Teams	17	Trouble Total Field Hours	331.5
Total Games (2 hours each)	112	Hourly Trouble Field Expense	\$7,458.75
Total Practices (2 hours each)	263	Cost/player (each)	\$111.32
Total Field Hours	750	Cost/unique player (47)	\$158.70
Total Field Expense (\$22.50/hr)	\$16,875.00	Cost/family (44)	\$169.52
Cost/player	\$94.27		
Actual Cost @ \$14/Player	\$2,506.00	Actual 2024 Cost @ \$14/Player	\$938.00
Difference	\$14,369.00	Difference	\$6,520.75

Impacts of Hourly Fee Rates on Scotts Valley Girls Softball and Trouble Fastpitch Players and Families

4 IMPACT When youth sports turn into City revenue sources, kids and community suffer.

By instituting these new fees, Scotts Valley Parks and Recreation has shifted from their goal of providing “high-quality, unique recreational experiences for its community and beyond”¹ and instead is focusing on treating local parks and youth recreational athletes as revenue centers for the City’s General Fund.

Due to the severe Parks and Rec field fee increases, both SVGS and Trouble Fastpitch will actively need to consider moving practices and games to other locations, or ceasing to operate in a recognizable fashion.

Just like the Little League players with Vine Hill fields and the soccer players at Skypark, the athletes of Scotts Valley Girls Softball consider Siltanen Park to be their home. They bring energy and spirit to our community, day after day and season after season. Girls from TK to eighth grade form years-long friendships at Siltanen- running from field to field to cheer each other on, giving high-fives to prior years’ coaches, chasing after foul balls, and helping clean up trash and rake the fields as stewards of their beloved park.

With the fee increases being imposed by the City, these girls run the risk of losing their most treasured place and home-away-from-home. The social and effect of relocating play due to untenable Parks & Rec field fees on our community of local girls cannot be understated. Already keyed into the subpar field conditions here in Scotts Valley compared to sport facilities serving other programs and in other cities, these girls will be devastated to be split up and lose “their” fields, all while seeing larger organizations maintain their facilities due to lower costs or sport-specific enrollment advantages.

Is this the way to show the youth, and particularly the young girls, of Scotts Valley that they are a valued part of our community?

¹ Scotts Valley Parks and Recreation 2024 Master Plan, Page 13

5 IMPACT Reducing access and limiting opportunities for local talent to thrive.

Scotts Valley Trouble Fastpitch has spent the past two years re-positioning the program to showcase the name of our hometown, adding the city name to all our communications and team apparel. At the core of our program is our “home” at Siltanen Park. Our girls and fans wear the Scotts Valley name with pride, sharing our community spirit as they compete in tournaments across Northern California. This is an organization that actively increases the visibility and reputation of Scotts Valley when on the road, and strives to build community and foster friendships here in town. It is a shame that this group of young players is not supported by their local Parks & Recreation Department.

Trouble Fastpitch differs from other competitive softball teams in that we strive to open up access to as many families and talented players as possible, regardless of life situation or finances. The hourly field fees will affect program costs so severely that this program keystone is threatened.

We want to make it as easy as possible for busy families to play competitively and for kids to make friends. By utilizing the co-located fields at Siltanen, Trouble Fastpitch makes it simpler for families with kids across multiple ages to play, volunteer, or coach. This is extremely unique to our program, and local parents love it. Currently, there are four sets of sisters or cousins across our teams!

The shared location also means that our older players can mentor younger players, and that their “team” is really made up of 50 girls of all ages, not just the 9 on the field. These girls are their most confident, joyful, and strong selves when playing together at Siltanen Park.

To absorb hourly field rentals, Trouble will need to consider moving practices to dispersed locations or reducing the amount of on-field instruction time players receive.

Beyond the logistical challenges this creates for families and cost concerns for the program, most importantly, it will destroy the community of camaraderie, leadership, and teamwork that the “Trouble Girls” have built for themselves.

Trouble is also unique in having a tiered fee strategy, which means more local girls can access and play competitive softball year after year. In 2024, Trouble fees ranged from \$325-\$650/player. This is one of the lowest travel softball fees in the area, and substantially less than other competitive girls sports. In addition to carefully looking at our fees each season, we are working to widen access to travel softball by offering more scholarships.

With the fee increase, Trouble would have to charge our families 25-50% more each season. Player fees would be nearing the costs of larger, heavily-funded programs with high-quality softball facilities just over the hill in San Jose. **This may drive families to take their kids out of Scotts Valley for competitive softball instruction, is prohibitively costly for new players, and could absolutely break the program after nearly 30 years of play.**

6 CONCERN Asked to pay more, while already receiving less.

In the past several years, and most recently with post-pandemic staffing changes at Scotts Valley Parks and Recreation, SVGS has lost confidence in the department and its capabilities. Where previously we would have worked together to keep the fields in playable condition, our hands are now tied and the spirit of collaboration is gone.

With all of these ongoing issues, the fields and facilities have continued to deteriorate. Combined with staff reluctance to make improvements in a reasonable time frame or allow volunteer work on larger projects, it is particularly egregious for the City to increase the rates for playing on sub-par and worsening fields.

A select list of issues is listed here, with photos following at the end of the document.

- Public Works has acknowledged that they do not have the resources or knowledge to correctly care for the infields. (See above for man-hours provided by volunteers).
- Allowing Snack Shack to become a Health Hazard, requiring significant termite remediation and code upgrades in order to use. SVGS is left without a Snack Shack, our largest source of in-season fundraising. Players and families are walking up the hill to spend their money at the flourishing Little League Snack Shack.
 - When SVGS tried to negotiate with the city to use the Snack Shack again this season, the high rental fee and contract stipulations were so limiting that it did not make sense for the league to continue using it.
 - After 28 years of use, Parks and Recreation was requiring that SVGS move all their refrigeration, equipment inventory, and belongings in and out of the space daily for each use. This is logistically impossible for a volunteer-run organization.
 - Meanwhile, while telling the organization that they now needed to pay for use of the Snack Shack, SVGS was also being told they could not use it without performing construction upgrades to meet current environmental health code.
- Rampant gopher and ground squirrel populations pose a safety hazard. Children and coaches have been injured (including broken bones) due to unmitigated gopher issues.
 - At one point, the interim P&R manager told SVGS that the organization could remediate the gophers, since the City could not. After purchasing the suggested \$3500 equipment, the new Staff has now instructed SVGS not to intervene.
- Seniors Field Bullpen turf is overrun with crabgrass. A snake lives below the turf.
- Un-leveled fields. Hundreds of volunteer hours cannot fix this.
- Un-maintained infield fringe. In the offseason, lack of City maintenance means weeds and grass grow well into the infield dirt, further damaging it's integrity..

- Persistent erosion and drainage issues.
 - The City has attempted temporary fixes using straw wattle barriers, which are not working and do not solve the underlying problem.
 - The players have called the erosion channel across the Juniors field and dugout “The Canyon” for several years. “The Canyon” has been filled with large rock fill, which is also not an appropriate solution. Along with causing issues during gameplay, just last week, a coach sprained their ankle on the uneven dugout rock surface. The first-base dugout bench is nearly unusable because of this situation.
- Fences- currently installed incorrectly. An estimated \$500 of balls are lost each year.
- Lack of shaded dugouts or shaded seating, combined with high sun exposure. Other comparable facilities have this basic amenity, either provided by their City or funded by parents. When parents tried to solve this problem, they received pushback from Staff.
 - This does not appear to be listed as a future CIP, meaning these fields will not have City-provided shade cloth anytime soon, and yet donors/volunteers are not supposed to pay for and install it.
- Not addressing the long-standing issues with Siltanen Park being used as the de-facto off-leash dog park for North Scotts Valley every evening at 6pm. It is an affront to the girls of SVGS that the City allows dogs to ruin the fields without charging dog-owners an hourly use rate, all while requiring youth organizations to pay for the same fields and also expecting them to clean up dog waste and repair damage left behind.
- Not addressing the on-going damage created by e-bikes and mountain bikes riding on the infields. Recurrent use has affected the integrity of the infield dirt, outfield grass, and foul territory.
- Long-budgeted Capital Improvement Projects continue to be pushed out each year.
 - One such project, ADA Improvements, appeared in the City Budget as far back as 2021. Now, it is showing as budgeted for the FY25-26. Meanwhile, multiple grandparents have fallen on the Siltanen paths as they walk to their grandchildren’s games.
 - Field fencing and netting. Siltanen Park previously had netting and fencing which allowed for a thriving adult softball league to be played on the fields, creating revenue for the City. This improvement has not been completed to the pre-existing standard.
 - Siltanen Bleacher Upgrade was at one point budgeted for FY24-25. Now, it is budgeted for FY26-27, with a status of “Not Started”. The bleachers are significant safety hazards and wholly inadequate, yet they have not been replaced as we were told, and it appears no progress towards this has been made.

7 CONCERN How were these “fair fees” set? And are they fair?

As one of the primary non-profit youth organizations using Siltanen Park, SVGS was told the organization would have an opportunity to provide input during the creation of the Parks Master Plan. However, this did not materialize. There was no direct attempt at notification, outreach or collaboration from Parks and Rec to SVGS during the development of the Scotts Valley Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The only public feedback cited in the Master Plan was collected via an online survey, which was disproportionately filled out by residents residing near Skypark.

SVGS and Trouble Fastpitch are concerned that the Parks and Recreation Fee Schedule, which grew out of the Master Plan, does not reflect the needs of the Siltanen Park users or consider the specific needs of existing youth and girls sports leagues.

The Master Plan lists several “Benchmark Communities” to which Scotts Valley is compared². In reviewing the fee schedules for these communities, the hourly rates adopted by Scotts Valley are significantly higher than these cities. It is also worth noting that Scotts Valley has fewer designated softball fields than most of the benchmarks, though we have significantly more soccer fields. **The most local “Benchmark Community” referenced is Capitola, which charges \$15 an hour for use of their softball/baseball fields. None of the Benchmark Communities appear to be using their youth sports organizations to raise money for their cities, beyond charging negotiated or reduced fees covering basic administration and maintenance.**

After the new fees were adopted, it was reported that they were developed based on Bay Area cities³ (which have larger youth sports leagues that can better afford high field rental costs), with no mention of using the Benchmark Cities so heavily referenced in the Master Plan.

“Staff said the new numbers came out of a workshop with other Greater Bay Area municipalities, which allowed local officials to learn new strategies for raising revenue while keeping things fair for users...Staff said they were hopeful the new rates would add revenue to City coffers, but added it’s hard to tell as things are only just now returning to pre-pandemic levels of service.”

- Scotts Valley Press-Banner, 11/15/24

To address Staff’s own mentions of intended fairness: as an organization which has served Scotts Valley girls for over forty years at Siltanen Park, it is clear that **these fees are not fair to the users.**

Leveling fee increases of 575% on a field used primarily by a single girls sports program, only to put that revenue back into the general fund, is not fair to the users. Expecting small local non-profits to pay more money for less access to our parks is not fair to the users. Continuing to ignore deferred maintenance and postpone capital projects, and then charging more to use increasingly poor facilities is not fair to the users.

² Scotts Valley Parks and Recreation 2024 Master Plan, Page 33

³ <https://pressbanner.com/scotts-valley-city-council-approves-new-facility-rental-fees/>

Scotts Valley Girls Softball, Trouble Fastpitch, and the nearly 200 girls who play on the Siltanen Park Softball fields are disproportionately affected by the inequitable fee increases when compared to Little League (serving primarily boys) and SV/SLV Soccer (which serves two communities and over 1,000 members). Both of these organizations have lower per-player field costs and have the opportunity to offset or absorb increased field fees by 1. Continuing to utilize school ballfields immediately adjacent to City Parks at a lower cost, 2. Utilize fields in other cities/areas due to larger geographic reach, and/or 3. Having historically and significantly higher participation numbers and community donations to fund their programs.

The female youth athletes of our community will suffer the most directly from the high Parks and Recreation hourly-based fees.



2024 Trouble Fastpitch competitive softball teams, made up of local players from ages 8-13 and based at Siltanen Park.

8 CONCERN Field rental fee increase directly conflicts with Scotts Valley Parks & Rec Master Plan and Kids Bill Of Rights.

The Parks Master Plan prominently mentions the growing popularity of Softball several times, citing a 15.3% growth rate in the sport. Specifically, the plan states that female youth ages 13-17 have had a 70.8% participation rate increase in the past five years, the greatest of any team sport. Locally, our female tween and teen demographic is heavily under-served by the Parks and Recreation classes, events, and programming. Community input in the Master Plan shows that Scotts Valley residents want more things for tweens and teens to do. And, again according to the Master Plan, this group likes softball.

With four decades of experience, SVGS is primed to offer these girls a needed, desired activity that the City simply cannot. **With this growing interest in the sport and need for activities for tween/teen girls, why would the City introduce a fee schedule so extreme that it puts Scotts Valley's only youth softball league at operational risk?**

The City of Scotts Valley's Children's Bill of Rights⁴ was adopted by the City Council in 2024. Press reports specifically state⁵ that this document would be to underscore partnerships with local youth organizations, including softball.

The Childrens' Bill of Rights includes the following acknowledgements:

- *The right to be heard respectfully regarding all matters that affect them so they may feel valued*
- *The right to feel welcome and free to play in neighborhoods, schoolyards, parks, and participate in outdoor recreation programs*

Prohibitive fees, sub-par conditions, and long-deferred improvements at Siltanen Park do not show the youth of our city that they are valued, welcomed, or supported.

⁴ <https://www.scottsvally.gov/614/Childrens-Bill-of-Rights>

⁵ [Scotts Valley Press Banner \(3/29/24\)](#)

9 REFERENCES AND LINKS

Scotts Valley Parks and Recreation Master Plan

<https://www.scottsvalley.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5271/Parks-Master-Plan-Final>

Adopted Fee Schedule w/Comparison to Prior Fees

[Link to Approved Fee Schedule](#)

Scotts Valley Publicly Posted Fee Schedule

<https://www.scottsvalley.gov/687/Fee-Schedule>

Links to Fee Schedules for Master Plan “Benchmark Communities” (note, these cities provide regular parks/field maintenance and adequate facilities, whereas Scotts Valley does not).

[Capitola](#)- contract rate or administrative-only fee of \$15/hour

[Half Moon Bay](#)- contract rate or \$20/hour for one-off events

[Pacific Grove](#) - contract rate or does not charge for youth activities in partnership w/P&R.

Parks Capital Improvement Projects on City Website

<https://stories.opengov.com/scottsvalleyca/published/rJBx6jkwK>

Five-Year CIP Summaries showing Siltanen Park CIPs moving out year to year with no progress

[FY 22-23](#) (draft, cannot recall adopted from City Website)

[FY23-24](#)

[FY24-25](#)

Scotts Valley Girls Softball

<https://www.svgsoftball.com/>

Scotts Valley Trouble Fastpitch

<https://www.svgsoftball.com/trouble>

10 SELECT PHOTOS OF FIELD CONDITIONS

Conditions surrounding Ponytails field at beginning of 2025 Season, following limited maintenance or pest abatement from Parks and Recreation over the off-season.



“The Canyon” erosion channel at the Juniors First Baseline and Dugout. This condition has been known to Parks and Recreation for sometime, and affects gameplay and safety. It is representative of other conditions throughout the seating areas and fields. Picture taken before attempted/ineffective repair in March 2025.



E-Bike and Dog Damage photographed on April 30, 2025.

This occurred following a weekend where SVGS and Trouble volunteers performed ~20 hours of regular in-season field conditioning and maintenance ahead of Saturday games.



Damaged Home Plate and Pitching Rubber at Senior Fields, Summer 2024

Replacements paid for by Trouble Fastpitch and installed with Public Works help.

Not pictured: uneven field conditions, poor infield dirt integrity, weeds, and gopher damage.

