



Greater Vallejo Recreation District

GVRD promotes wellness and healthy lifestyles
by providing safe parks and innovative and fun
recreation programs for all residents.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rizal Aliga
Robert Briseño
Thomas Judt
Tom Starnes
Ward Stewart

GENERAL MANAGER

Gabe Lanusse

Publicity, Program and Community Relations Committee Agenda

Directors: Starnes and Judt

Tuesday, July 8, 2025

Administrative Office-Board Room, 401 Amador Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

2:00 p.m.

This committee shall study and recommend all District recreational programs and policies regarding public affairs and community outreach to include co-sponsorship with other entities. This committee shall assure information regarding the affairs of the District is adequately communicated to its constituents and the public at large. This committee shall make presentations before groups and organizations upon request.

1. Public Comment
Members of the public may speak on any item within the jurisdiction of the committee. Each speaker is limited to 3 minutes and a spokesperson for an organization is limited to 5 minutes.
2. Community Events Review: What works, what doesn't, what was cancelled
 - 2.1 Bite Night Thursday
 - 2.2 Bands and Brews
3. Upcoming Community Events
 - 3.1 Bands and Brews (Board Involvement Opportunities)
4. Programs:
 - 4.1 Summer Camps
5. Marketing Update
 - 5.1 Marketing CAP- August
 - 5.2 July is National Parks Make Life Better Month
 - 5.3 Community Outreach Efforts



6. Discussion Items
 - 6.1 Measure P Programs
 - 6.2 Public Comments Regarding Programming
7. Meeting Adjourn

CORRECT ME IF I AM WRONG: PLEASE

A few decades ago, I read a report that most of the crime committed was done so by 14- to 24-year-old men. More current readings and conversations have suggested that the range has dropped to as low as 12- and 10- years old, both men and women. I have also heard that the number one priority for Vallejoans, during this past election, was public safety. Knowing this, it follows that if, as a society, we provided alternative activities for this age group, that there should be a reduction in crime?

Vallejo Late Night Basketball has recently restarted on Friday nights and will be available throughout the summer. During the pandemic it ceased operation for obvious reasons. According to the police officers associated with the program, then and now, there was noticeable drop in crime when the program was running. As well as improved relations between youth and the police officers who attended those events. A win-win in my book.

Just to round out my argument, National Public Radio (NPR) aired a story about young people, in juvenile detention, in Baltimore Maryland. The report aired November 6, 2023 and is entitled "Youths say boredom and basic needs landed them at Maryland detention centers." Feel free to look it up, and listen, for yourselves. In short, all the young people incarcerated cited boredom, a lack of things to do, as a main reason for their criminal and antisocial behaviors.

I do not see how I can draw a clearer picture of what is happening now in our society. Unengaged youth lead to higher crimes stats and a lowered sense of public safety. Am I wrong, or should this not be the topmost priority of our public conversation. Yes, we have our unhoused residents and there is crime associated with that way of life. That being said, should not our children and afterschool activities be a regular item on everyone's agenda?

But Tom, you sit on the board at the Greater Vallejo Recreation District (GVRD). Why is that not on every one of your agendas there? Got me. Your right. I believe that it should be. Right now, the only offering that I know about that is specifically for teens, is a Robotics Programming class for \$200. I have asked for a complete list of programs that GVRD provides and am still waiting for the answer. Our next meeting, when we review the additional cuts required to our budget, I will ask, 'What youth activities have been cut?' and what has not been touched to create this

budget. I fear that this though, will have little impact as there is not a clear focus for teen activities in GVRD's Master Plan, the main document that governs GVRD. Unfortunately, try as I might, I do not seem to possess the necessary skills needed to persuade a majority of the board to direct staff to make teen-after-school-activities a main priority.

Now here is the challenge I am seeing, and please, correct me if I am wrong. As a community, it feels like, we do not care enough to get involved for our young people. I am saddened when looking out at an empty board room during meetings. Why is there not a representative from the police department there advocating for more programming? Why does the school district not have a liaison sitting in on our meetings, offering to expedite coordination between our organizations? Why is there not a committee liaison from the City council stopping by regularly asking the same questions? Why is the community not up in arms at every meeting demanding GVRD provide afterschool programming?

The answer: siloing. Each of us working separately in seeming oblivion to the fact that we all have the same priorities, and that each of our organizations hold a piece to this puzzle. Why is there such resistance to having all our agencies, county included, sit at the same table on a regular basis to discuss this very issue: Our youth, crime and the overall betterment of Vallejo because of it? To me, it feels like, as citizens, we just do not care enough to make it so.

Here is my ask, start showing up – regularly. Start going to school board meetings, city council meetings, county supervisor meetings if possible, and yes GVRD meetings. Start going and do not stop. Presence is leverage. If you firmly believe as I do that an important key to a better Vallejo is by being there for our kids, then please, show up. At each meeting you can make a Public Comment. Please do it! If I am wrong, then please tell me. I do not want to waste my energy on something you do not think is important to Vallejo.

With humility,

Thomas Judt

Thomas Judt
Board Member
Greater Vallejo Recreation District

June 17, 2025

Community Democratic Club
Vallejo CA

Dear Community Democratic Club Members,

I wanted to take a minute to thank you for inviting me to sit on your Solano Black Agenda aligned Panel Discussion last evening, regarding the Greater Vallejo Recreation District (GVRD). It is a privilege to serve our community as a Board Member for GVRD and I am sincerely grateful for last night's reminder of just how important the work is that we do, or do not do, at GVRD.

It was reminded to me last night that there is no greater office to be held than that of Citizen. To be a Citizen is to not only enjoy the privileges and protections of the Citizen State but to responsible for, and held accountable to, our fellow Citizens.

Our discussion, last night, was centered around the need and desire for more recreational activities for our youth, and GVRD's responsibility to provide them for our community. As a Citizen and Board Member, I could not agree more with this statement. It is our responsibility as Community Members to ensure that our joint assets are directed to the areas of the most importance to our community. I can think of no greater need than the well-being, and positive mentorship, of our youth during the transitional ages of 12 to 25.

Presence is Leverage. The Greater Vallejo Recreation District has a constituency of over 120,000 residents. I am saddened on meeting nights, when such important decisions as the future of our young people are being considered, that there are no other Citizens in public attendance, in the GVRD Board Room. Sitting with you last night gave me reassurance that this will not always be the case.

With Gratitude and Respect,

Thomas Judt
Citizen/Board Member GVRD