

RED BANK PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Minutes from October 24, 7 PM – Borough Hall Courtroom

Meeting called to order at 7:05 with a motion by Nicole Taetsch, seconded by Sarah Corrado.

Attending: Maureen Dolan, Melissa Moore, Sarah Corrado, Julie Flores-Castillo, Pat Richter, Nicole Taetsch, Oscar Salinas, Ben Forest

The minutes from the September 26, 2023, meeting were approved unanimously following a motion by Nicole Taetsch seconded by Sarah Corrado.

Item 1: Update of current Recreation activities and events

Fall sports: Outdoor soccer season is coming to an end Nov. 4, challenged by lots of rain, although the youngest children seemed to enjoy playing in the rain. Most missed sessions were made up. The Pre-K group has another week. K through 2 is going really well. Our travel team players sometimes made up for a shortage of players on other town teams. The Red Bank travel team won Fright Festival Freehold. The volunteers, coaches, referees all did well and contributed to a great season – maybe an end of the season celebration is in order. Basketball continues with 20 adults.

Halloween Parade and Festivities: The kickoff movie, renaming the town, and the parade were all a great success with tremendous participation. Additional signage to guide the crowds might be a good idea in the future and having floats set up at 1:00 and costumed parade folks at 1:30. Improvements can be made to the costume/float competition. There was discussion on creating a temporary Broad walk, improving the acoustics, inviting the YMCA to have a float, organizing a House Tour, and exploring No Limits Café Food Truck. RiverCenter would like to be a partner next year. The various winners should be posted on social media.

Projects: At Riverside Gardens Park the benches are on back order and the boardwalk has been replaced. At Eastside Park the new fence is up, and the courts are in the process of being resurfaced. There will be a registration system to use the courts, with a QR Code and license plate to prove Red Bank residency. People from neighboring towns can use the courts, but Red Bank residents will have priority. At Count Basie Park the protective netting will be extended to be higher to prevent errant balls from inflicting damage to cars.

Item 2: Upcoming activities and events

Winter Sports: Registration opened two weeks ago for indoor soccer and basketball with high interest levels. The first Sunday in January begins the season. Out-of-town residents can register.

Kids Singing Lessons: A singing program for children 6 to 14 taught by Choirs of the Atlantic will begin at the Senior Center with a maximum enrollment of 15. It's almost full.

Holiday Season: For the Holiday Season, the tree at Johnny Jazz Park will be lit on December 8, and a Santa Claus is needed. There was considerable discussion about the health of the evergreen there, and the Shade Tree Commission will take a look at it. Free hot beverages will be provided.

December 12 and 13 from 6 pm to 8:30 pm is the 'phone calls from Santa and Elves' session, often using RBR students. This takes place at 90 Monmouth Street. Maybe the YMCA would like to provide some volunteers.

Letters to Santa are mailed in two special boxes in town and the Rotary organizes written responses. December 18 is the deadline for letters.

Item 3: New Business

Count Basie Park fence: There was considerable discussion about the needs of Count Basie Park for capital upgrades and improved safety. The area 3, 4, and 5 fences need to be replaced. The costs of new bleachers and fences are considerable.

Balancing events w/staffing resources – There is considerable stress on the available staff hours in the Recreation Department given the number of events the Town is involved in. Pat Richter and Nicole Taetsch volunteered to take a look at this challenge and come up with some recommendations.

Recreation and social mobility: Nicole Taetsch shared with the group research supporting the importance of recreation as a tool for overcoming socio-economic challenges and accessing new networks and social groups that can have a positive influence on young people. She will share the podcast summarizing this research. As the Borough values equity and inclusion, knowing the importance of recreation in impacting social determinants may stimulate increased investment in recreation.

Next Meeting will be held – Tuesday, November 28, 2023, 7 pm Court Room

Sarah Corrado _____ x _____ Maureen Dolan _____ x _____ Julie Flores-Castillo _____ x _____

Alberto Garcia _____ John LeFever _____ x _____

Melissa Moore _____ x _____ Pat Richter _____ x _____ Nicole Taetsch _____ x _____

Oscar Salinas (P & R Director) _____ x _____ Ben Forest (Council Liaison) _____ x _____