

## **RED BANK PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE**

Minutes from July 30, 2024 - Borough Hall Courtroom

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm

Attending: John LeFever, Oscar Salinas, Ben Forest, Katie O'Brien, Pat Richter, Maureen Dolan, Julie Flores-Castillo, Richard Blache and guests Charles Jackson and Pat Pinto, both pickleball advocates.

The minutes from the June meeting were approved unanimously and posted on the Township website.

Because of the presence of guests, the order of the agenda was modified to discuss pickleball first.

### **New Business:**

Eastside Park courts (Tennis/Pickleball), rules revision, usage, etc.

Mr. Jackson and Ms. Pinto are both frequent users of the Eastside Park courts. They attended the meeting to share some challenges in smooth utilization of both the pickleball courts and tennis courts.

The Eastside Courts have two tennis courts which can be refigured into four pickleball courts. Courts are reserved through an app on a first come, first serve basis. While the app has had some glitches, they are resolved. It is the only local court with pickleball nets, which Red Bank Parks and Recreation supplies. In other locations, people play pickleball using nets intended for tennis. The usage is so high that the lines marking the courts are getting worn already, after only the first season of use. The contractor will redo the lines and resurface a few areas due to this significant wear and tear.

Oscar is getting calls frequently from residents with complaints about how the courts are being used and by whom.

Some of the suggestions discussed included:

- Restricting the courts to Red Bank residents only
- Ways to restrict people from booking four weeks in advance.
- Limiting players to 4 hours per week
- Enforcing time limits to avoid 'awkward social interactions' between the players finishing their play period and the next group of players.
- Eliminating the option of instruction sessions and mechanized ball machines
- Preventing nonresidents from booking through residents
- Developing a 'check in' on site.
- Enforcing the 'no dogs' rule
- Rules for open play times twice weekly

The Committee made the following recommendations for consideration by the Recreation Department:

1. Limit court usage to 6 hours per week for Red Bank residents.
2. Limit court usage to 2 hours per week for non-residents.
3. Post a clock in a highly visible area and require players to leave their courts five minutes before the end of their booked play period.
4. Requiring that the person booking the court be a Red Bank resident and must be present during the booked time.
5. Include the courts in the upcoming camera installation project, monitored by the police.
6. Install a storage closet for squeegees, push brooms, shovels, etc.)

7. Limit Tuesday morning open play to twenty-five people with a sign-up requirement. Move it to 8 am. No music, no chairs on courts, no instructors.
8. Consider usage fees as a last resort, issuing badges like beach tags.

## **Item 1: Update of current P & R activities & events**

### **Summer Camp Update**

The Recreation Department is in week four of camp. The team has been excellent with several Supervisors who are teachers and seventeen counselors. August 16 is the last week, followed by one week of sports camp, August 19 to 23. Next year's camp will use Dorbrook for swimming – they have a beautiful new pool.

### **Fall soccer update.**

The final numbers will be in by Thursday, but soccer remains extremely popular. At the pre-K level there are thirty children registered and forty-three from kindergarten to second grade. There is a need for coach volunteers.

### **Baseball Backstops (field 4 and 5)**

New backstops have been installed but need to be improved by the contractor. They are like the ones at Eastside Park.

## **Item 2: Upcoming activities and events**

### **Update on projects.**

The project for town wide security cameras is in progress, and a survey has been completed. The contractor uses AI technology for their system.

The Marine Park new parking lot where the tennis courts were is under construction and the existing parking lot will be removed. October is the target for this phase to be finished.

There will be some improvements to the Marina, but there are barriers to some of the improvements desired. There will be a new boat lift so that the Fire Department boat can be accessible year-round. There will be a new fence and new ladders. There are eighteen slips.

The date for Hispanic Heritage Day may be changed because of surrounding towns already booking September 15<sup>th</sup>. Oscar is attending a meeting this week with the Committee planning the event.

National Night Out, held at Count Basie fields, is next week, August 6 from 5:30 to 9:30, and volunteers are needed. There will be several inflatables for kids to play on.

### **New Business:**

### **Non-sports recreational activities**

Ideas were shared about easy recreational activities that were not sports oriented and lent themselves to partnerships or teachers already identified, such as tai chi, garden walks, historic building tours, hula hooping, and more.

### **Shelter at Riverside Gardens**

Seems that the town would only consider a temporary shelter for Riverside and Oscar will get specifics about what would be acceptable. The white tents used for events could also be used. Once there is a plan, the Committee can identify sponsors.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm with a move by Kate seconded by Maureen.

Note: the secretary will not be attending the August meeting so an alternate for minute taking is needed.

Next Meeting will be held – **Tuesday, August 27, 2024**, at 7pm in the Court Room.