

Florence Township Recreation Committee Minutes 5/5/25

The Florence Township Recreation Committee held a regular meeting on 4/7/25 at the Florence Township Community Center 69 Main Street, Florence, New Jersey. Members of the public were invited to attend the meeting in person.

The meeting was called to order by Recreation Committee Chairman, Tony Pastore at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Present: Tony Pastore, Mary Pieretti, Don Nemeth, Tom Boracci, Martin Eckert, Tom Supey, Kim Dembowski, Cindy Golway, Donna Sadler, Caitlin Motta, Toniann Carroll, Councilman Joseph Frappolli

Absent: TJ Lovenduski

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Meeting of March 3, 2025

Motion of Carroll, seconded by Motta to approve the minutes as submitted.

COORDINATORS REPORT

- **Recreation Baseball/Softball** – Marty provided that registration numbers for both baseball and softball we up this season and despite inclement weather that public works continues preparation. Donna has been working well with Dave Wright, Superintendent of Public Works and complimented his responsiveness. Infield mix continues to be applied and 25 tons has been on order for delivery to replenish the township stock. The infield apron at Olaff Field and overgrowth along the 3rd baseline has been remedied by public works. AJ Arcchi, Mark Babula, Chris Swiderski and Daymion Nix did a great job correcting the problems and along with staying on various spring prep around the complex. There are some weather alerts for Opening Day weekend and will be monitored to determine if any rescheduling will be necessary.

CORRESPONDENCE

- **Recreation Cheerleading Parent/Coach Meeting:** Marty and Don Nemeth shared that there was a meeting with a cheer coach that was placed as inactive from the recreation football & cheer board in 2024 due to an incident that took place during recreation night at the high school football field. The individual expressed that they were informed that they would not be permitted to volunteer during the upcoming 2025 fall season and asked to mee to further discuss/recap the matter and express thoughts on their coaching status moving forward. Don and Marty listened to the information provided and provided feedback which was consistent with what had been reported during the season when the incident had occurred. Marty and Don shared that the decision at this time does rest with the league's board, however the matter would be discussed at the recreation committee meeting to determine if additional correspondence may be deemed appropriate.

Cindy Golway shared accounts of the matter and how the board arrived at the decision to continue the separation of the individual from coaching for the upcoming season. Cindy

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expressed that there were incidents prior to the matter at the high school and the board decided that it was in the best interest of the program to maintain the separation for an additional season. Cindy also provided that the board had presented a date to meet with the individual however they were unable to meet. The committee did ask if the person was offered another date/time to meet. Cindy shared that the individual did not offer to meet at another time and at that point there wasn't further communication. Cindy expressed that the individual would be welcome to either attend a future committee meeting in the future or to speak with the football league president and inquire about a time to meet. It was noted that when the president advised the individual that they would not be considered for coaching in the upcoming season that the individual did not request an opportunity to meet.

The committee concluded that this decision was managed by the recreation football & cheerleading board and did not require additional support by the recreation committee at this time. If the individual requests a meeting with the football board, then recreation football & cheerleading liaison, Don Nemeth would attend.

- **Gentle Fitness – Summer Offerings:** Marty shared that in combination with the large weekly turn out associated with the gentle fitness program to the recent availability by the instructor to offer an additional session there is an opportunity to provide residents a second class per week during the summer months. Tony Pastore continued to provide information about the existing program and the consistency and progress that serves as beneficial to our community. The committee agreed that this additional offering is appropriate and will work well as an additional summer scheduling. (In addition, the committee talked about the possibility of expanding to offer programs for breathing exercises and Zumba returning in the future). The committee discussed budgetary constraints but also the possibility of sponsored activity or charging a monetary fee to participate. As we further explore opportunities, these matters will be part of our discussions.
- **Golden Eagle Community Band:** Marty shared that on Friday, July 11th the evening prior to the township's patriotic celebration that the Golden Eagle Community Band will be performing at the Florence Township Community Center. This group provides a variety of instruments and will gauge this program to offer patriotic themed musical numbers.

FACILITIES

- **Municipal Facilities**
- **Field Lights:** Marty shared that Joe Brunner will be starting with Muchowski Softball Field, repairing the outfield lights. The importance to have the lights operating properly was stressed by Donna Sadler and Marty will be communicating the repair process with Donna. Baseball lights/bulbs will be addressed as well. (Recreation Soccer and Recreation Football lights will be addressed in advance of those seasons).
- **Board of Education Facilities**
- Recreation basketball is set to conclude this week and the playoffs have been coordinated and will take place at the various gyms taking part in the league this season.

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OLD BUSINESS

- **Roebbling Carnival:** Marty shared that all carnival preparation continues. Insurance and logistics for the event are in progress. Marty will host an annual spring/summer events meeting with departments to review details for each event/activity over the next month. More information to follow.
- **Patriotic Celebration:** The committee discussed the annual celebration and ways to further expand the experience for residents and participants. We will be looking to offer potential recognition/prize or trophy for categories, etc.... In the future the committee will consider a fun run or 5k and opportunities after the parade for kids and families.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Recreation Website:** Marty updated the committee that several updates have been added to the rec website and there will be updated registrations for upcoming fall programs.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee Discussion: The committee discussed the following items for maintenance needs and future consideration to implement.

- The new playground on W 6th Street does not have enough trash cans.
- Bleachers. The committee discussed bleacher standards and should rails and backing be added to future bleacher orders. Olaff Field in particular has bleachers that set higher and should be a safety consideration as per the committee.
- Rec Baseball Fees (Tball) – The committee discussed the fees associated for t ball players. They are high fees and do not align what is offered at the t-ball level. It was recommended to discuss with rec baseball and in fact all programs to consider reducing any fees associated with the youngest levels.
- Vaping. Marty discussed with the committee the problem with smoking on the municipal grounds and recreation fields. Marty will be following up immediately to further address.
- Cricket. The cricket season will be opening on 4/24. Tony has been mediating the addition of teams to the league and making sure all communication remains fluid to ensure a positive start to the season.
- New Playground/All Playgrounds. Signage noting age-appropriate use was suggested. Teens are very rough with the equipment and if signage is placed then if police need to be called, they may reference the guidelines. Playground rules could be posted as well.

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- Recreation Football and Cheerleading. Don Nemeth provided that the program held their reorganization meeting. They held appropriate and advertised elections. Irrigation on practice fields has been repaired and Marty was asked to make sure the township water department was made aware for the season. Don noted that there are bulbs out and should be addressed before the season (It was mentioned that LED lighting was a consideration and there should be an update provided on the townships position on this taking place in the future as it will be beneficial and cost saving for the township). The annual bocce ball tournament will take place on August 2nd and league weigh-in's will be scheduled for September 6th at the former PW garage pending any work being done.
- Tennis. Marty and Mary discussed tennis offerings and Marty will follow up with Ike Johnson asap.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion of Boracci, second by Motta – 8:30pm