

Florence Township Recreation Committee Minutes 9/11/23

The Florence Township Recreation Committee held a regular meeting on the above date at the Municipal Complex (711 Broad 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 President Tony Pastore at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Present: Kim Dembowski, TJ Lovenduski, Tom Supey, Tony Pastore, Mary Pieretti, Donna Sadler, Don Nemeth, Cindy Golway, Fred Dunphy, Paul Ostrander, Martin Eckert Jr.

Absent: Caitlin Motta, Tom Boracci

Also Attending: Michael Muchowski

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Meeting of June 5, 2023

Motion of Pastore, seconded by Sadler to approve the minutes as submitted.

COORDINATORS REPORT

- **Spring Recreation Tournaments:** Marty shared that both recreation baseball and softball programs hosted tournaments during the spring and early summer. The efforts of public works and volunteers from our programs provided an excellent experience for visiting teams and families. Tournaments were well attended and our local squads did well.
- **Patriotic Celebration Recap:** Marty provided that the annual patriotic celebration held on Saturday, July 8th was very successful. Each facet of the day from Flag Raising Ceremony to parade, evening activities and fireworks display all were managed well and without incident or injury. Marty thanked all municipal departments for their support throughout the day as well as the participants that make the parade exciting and enjoyable for all attendees. Marty cited that several recreation programs took part in the event this year and everyone had a great time.
- **Team Snap Recreation Registrations:** Marty shared that each of the fall programs are utilizing the Team Snap software to manage registrations currently. To date there have not been challenges to the programs and each group continues to communicate with the rec department that the program is running smoothly.
- **Tennis Court Resurfacing:** Marty did not have specific updates to the tennis court project. He shared that bid specs were being prepared and believes that a bid opening will take place soon. At this time, it is premature to identify a potential start date but will provide more information as it is received.

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CORRESPONDENCE

- **Recreation Football:** The recreation department and football & cheer liaison were copied on an email referencing challenges working with a parent and child that are registered to return to our program. The information cited difficulties from the previous season and were planning to address with the parent prior to the start of this season. Their tentative meeting was going to take place at the same time as the recreation committee meeting, therefore both Marty Eckert and Don Nemeth were unable to attend. Both shared that should there be questions post-meeting that Marty and Don would support however the direction was to first meet with the parent as a board and make attempts to find a workable ground to move forward with upcoming practices. Marty and Don will report next meeting should there be further information or meeting(s).

FACILITIES

- **Municipal Facilities:** Yesco Lighting has completed various lighting maintenance needs on recreation fields between soccer, baseball and softball. Remaining work includes 4 ballasts to be replaced on Muchowski Field. The committee discussed the length of time between visits and although parts appeared to be delayed the time lapse was excessive.
- **Rec Football Practice Field Goal Posts/Maintenance Needs:** Marty reported that public works has painted the goal posts at the rec football practice field. They will be scheduling to complete posts on the game field prior to the start of the season along with some painting needs in the area of the concession stand. Public Works will be moving the football shed and establishing a hardened surface filling in holes from groundhogs. The area will be repaired to include either concrete or crushed concrete tampered and then shed will be replaced. All other groundhog holes have been filled.
- **Coates Field Water Spigot Replacement:** The water spigot coming off of the concession stand has been damaged and needed replacement. Swanson Mechanical handled the replacement and modified to prevent future damage. Spigot also was fitted with a locking mechanism and key stored inside of the concession stand to avoid being turned on at random.
- **Board of Education Facilities:** No current active use of BOE facilities at this time. Marty will be requesting facility use for recreation basketball in the Fall.
- **Veterans Field Restroom Door Repair:** Due to the cost of a door replacement, public works maintenance, Carlos Rao had the ability to weld the door and reinforce the previously rusted and deteriorated area. Door has been re-hung and is now operating properly.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Florence Twp Fieldhouse:** Marty shared that Ted Lovenduski is handling bid related information. Once bid has been awarded and further information becomes available as to the tentative start of work, Marty will share with the committee.

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- **Fall Festival:** Committee members and community members participating to develop the fall festival met prior to the recreation committee meeting. Various activities are being outlined and next meeting the group will begin laying out where booths and activity will take place. Several vendors have signed up to participate which will fill out nicely to establish several options for attendees to enjoy. Checks are being made payable to Florence Township and vendor fees are \$25. These fees will be utilized to cover costs associated with the event. Checks are being presented by a report and totals are calculated as they are received.
- **2023 Health & Wellness:** Marty shared that all active wellness programs continue to operate with solid attendance. Marty has been overseeing the community center and periodically mops and stocks restrooms as needed in between preparing for rentals. Recently, Marty spoke with a certified nutritionist and discussing contained the potential of offering a few segments educating residents on healthy eating options. The committee agreed that this would be a worthwhile addition to offer and suggested a few talking points should we move forward and secure the person to come out 3-4 times. One thought was to talk about meal prep for families with the school year resuming. Healthy choices and easy/quick meal solutions. A second session could be geared towards our senior community. Another could potentially include healthy options for active adults and/or student athletes. And then if there was a way to offer a session that utilized either the kitchen or a demo of meal prep where food samples are provided or a cooking demo then that would be something of interest. Marty is going to follow up with the person to further gauge interest and see if there may be dates in the fall to host a few sessions.
- **Music in the Park:** Marty shared that music in the park evenings were adversely affected due to periods of time when the air quality was poor and combined with rain, heat and humidity it made it difficult to schedule. The goal is to host events when a number of residents are able to attend and they typically must be scheduled in advance due to band availability. Since we only held the initial event, we are going to support the fall festival with music and look to opportunities in the community center this fall or winter. The committee understood and agreed with the challenges of outdoor events considering the weather over the summer.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Overview of Upcoming End of Season Reports:** Marty shared that as the final rec programs of the 2023 year have started, leagues will be submitting end of year reports and expenditures. Once completed Marty will review and prior to post season meetings the committee will discuss any items on the reports that may be subject to the post season meetings. In 2023 each recreation program met with the committee and provided feedback from the past season and had great dialogue with the committee. We will look to the same process in 2024.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Tony Pastore: Provided that he will follow up with the comedy group about interest in dates this fall and will coordinate with Marty on availability.

Don Nemeth: Don recognized the goal posts have been painted and that the next step should be to update the posts on the football game field (Marty responded that it is already noted at public works). Don attends the recreation football and cheer meetings regularly and expressed that the overall numbers for the program are excellent and larger than that of the 2022 season. The youth football camp was well attended

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and the weather cooperated which supported the success of the camp. Football/cheer practices are set to begin and weigh ins are scheduled to be held in Florence again this year and will take place on September 9th. Last year they were well organized between our league and West Jersey Youth Football in terms of teams arriving during scheduled times to complete the weigh in process and exiting the grounds to alleviate any parking issues. They will follow the same approach for this year.

Don Nemeth: Inquired about any updates from the park planner. Will the committee be reviewing any other suggestions before park decisions are made. Don referenced playgrounds that are in poor condition and asked if the planner is working on those or if repairs are being managed by the township. Marty responded that public works has cautioned areas of concern and removed items such as sliding boards that were found to be damaged. Replacement parts have been ordered and some have been installed and are awaiting the surface area to be completed prior to reopening.

Mary Pieretti/Kim Dembowski: Spoke to playground conditions in general and noted that some areas are missing the soft surface material and asked if something can be put in those holes until the material is placed. Marty shared that at the recent supervisors meeting public works did relay that they have been in contact with the company that handles those repairs and for a period of time the material wasn't available but they are scheduling to come out and visit all playgrounds to complete repairs. Marty will follow up and request that exposed areas be filled and to request a timeline for repairs.

Marty Eckert: AED Training: Marty spoke with Phil Drangula and he is looking at his schedule and will coordinate dates with fall programs for AED training opportunities. Marty will follow up with Phil.

Marty Eckert: Marty shared that the municipal alliance year end reporting has been completed. All information has been sent to the county for review. Mental health awareness training was supported by a grant and benefitted school district staff. Additional training was earmarked by prevention plus to provide training for the 10th graders. Committee members asked if moving forward to the new grant year if trainings of some type could be offered to younger graders as well. Marty stated that when they begin to outline options with the school district that conversations will include utilizing some of the funds to expand the offerings to other grade levels in an age-appropriate style.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion of Pastore, seconded by Supey – 7:54pm