

Warren Township Recreation Advisory Committee
Minutes of March 28, 2023 Meeting
Approved

The meeting of the Warren Township Recreation Advisory Committee convened at 7:07 pm on Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at the Springdale Conference Room, Warren Town Hall, 46 Mountain Boulevard, Warren, New Jersey.

Open Public Meeting Statement - Adequate notice of this meeting was given by posting a copy on the Township Bulletin Board and sending a copy to the Township Clerk, Courier News, and Echoes Sentinel as required by the Open Public Meeting Act.

In attendance were: Zachary Drozd, Vance Gillenwater, Kevin Brotspies, Cherie Woods-Krebs, Recreation Director Joe Passaro. Absent: Heather Silver, Franco Caruso and Aparna Virmani

Kevin Brotspies motioned to approve the meeting minutes from January 10, 2023 and Vance Gillenwater 2nd.

Zach welcomed Margareta Warlick to the meeting and asked her to speak on the Somerset County Cultural Advisory Committee. Margareta explained that she is from the Micheller family and has lived in town for many years. She stated that she wants to find out what Warren residents are interested in to help support her role. Margareta explained that she would like to see more opportunities for artists in Warren and that she also has an interest in farming and history. Kevin asked what kind of events does the county hold and she stated that the cultural board will give money to organizations that help promote cultural experiences. She also stated that the county is starting to plan a large celebration for their 250th anniversary. Zach suggested that Margareta connects with Rory Britt from historic sites.

Zach welcomed, Cherie Woods-Krebs a new member to the Recreation Advisory Committee. Cherie stated that she grew up in Warren and moved back to town where she is currently raising her family. She stated that she served under the Recreation Commission in years past and she helped in the efforts of creating the Recreation Facebook and Twitter page. She stated that she has a job in marketing so she is happy to help in any capacity to help promote recreation program and events. Zach explained to Cherie the liaison positions and that a community outreach position might be a good fit for her.

OLD BUSINESS

- 501(c)(3) update
 - Zach stated that there is not much to update since the last meeting besides that the 501c3 will need to start from scratch and that we are in need for someone to run it.
- Trail Cleanup
 - Zach explained that he has been working with Heather on putting together a trail cleanup day. The cleanup day is planned for Earth Day, April 22 at 3:00pm at the Warren Nature Preserve. Zach explained that at the beginning of the event Rory Britt will give a short history about the Warren Nature Preserve along with trivia. In addition to the cleanup, the event will have a scavenger hunt for children with different facts about Warren. Heather and her son will be creating the scavenger hunt. At the end of the cleanup and scavenger hunt, there will be light refreshments near the pond. Zach stated that he would like certificates from the Recreation Department that can be handed out to those who complete the scavenger hunt. Joe stated that volunteers will need to sign in on the day of the event and that no one can use power tools for trail cleanup. The Recreation Department will coordinate with the Department of Public of Works for cleanup

supplies such as garbage bags, gloves, etc. Margareta suggested that for a future event that groups can create fairy houses to go along the trail and at the end, there could be a take home craft station for participants. Zach invited Margareta back for the October meeting to talk about incorporating for the next cleanup day.

- Food and Craft Festival
 - No update tonight as Heather was absent. Margareta has connections with local farmers so Zach will connect Heather with Margareta.
- Cultural Event
 - Zach stated that the committee will pivot away from a cultural event as the Warren Lions Club is planning to pitch one at their meeting on April 12. One of the holidays the Lions will cover in the cultural event is Diwali. More will be reported back after the Lions meeting to see if the Township can help with similar logistics as the EXPO.
- Non-Verbal Communication Boards at Playgrounds
 - Joe stated that we did move forward with the purchase of one non-verbal communication board since after reaching out to the Superintendent of Warren Schools that there is a need to have these boards at our playgrounds. The board that was purchased will be installed at the playground at Town Hall. The board was also modeled after the boards that were installed at the Warren Schools.

NEW BUSINESS- None at this time.

DISCUSSION

Joe passed out the finalized version of the 2022 Annual Report to members and reminded members to share with residents all of the great items that were accomplished. Cherie stated that she could create an infographic of the Annual Report to help promote all of the great items Recreation accomplished. All members agree that the Recreation Department does a great job sharing events and programs between social media and the newsletter. Zach suggested sharing the weekly newsletter on social media to get more subscribers. Kevin suggested a next month at a glance post as a summary of the upcoming events and programs. Cherie stated that short videos are becoming the popular medium and that we can create 30-60 second videos to help promote upcoming events. For example with holding up a signs regarding upcoming program and events.

DIRECTORS REPORTS- See attached for report.

Joe stated that the Teen Camp filled up within a few hours the first day registration opened and currently we cannot expand the size of the program due to staff shortages. The Teen Camp has become more popular over the years especially with the trips the campers are attending. Currently the cap is 48 campers per week and will have to look at adjusting the number for the future as long as there is staff. The Playground Program still has openings at this time.

LIAISON REPORTS

Kevin stated that he went to Elm Avenue Park and stated that the equipment looks to be in good shape and was curious how much use the park gets. He also stated that he plans to go to Greenwood Meadows next. Joe stated that he submitted a grant for the Greenwood Meadows Park for upgrades to the playground and the tennis courts.

ADJOURNMENT 8:10 PM. Zachary Drozd motioned to adjourn with all others in favor.

Next meeting, on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, 7:00 pm - Warren Town Hall Springdale Conference Room

Submitted by: Amanda Frech, Recreation Advisory Committee Secretary

Directors Report- March 28, 2023

1. New Municipal Pavilion is making progress, our construction company has given us a tentative date of completion of May 31.
2. Chair Yoga for Seniors will be starting up April 3rd.
3. Non Verbal Communication sign will be installed on our Municipal Playground next month.
4. Improvements to our Municipal Playground, which will include a full size basketball court and new playground which should be completed by the end of April.
5. Re surfacing of Tennis courts will start next month.
6. Sumer Camp registration will start on March 20th, we are still seeking Counselors for our camps, must be 18 yrs. old.
7. Annual Sports Recognition Dinner will be held on March 23rd at the Watchung Valley Golf Club.
8. Annual Fishing Derby will be held on May 20th at the Warren Nature Preserve
9. Summer concerts are planned for the month of July, stay tuned for the dates.