



## Recreation Meeting Minutes March 12, 2024

Don Bogardus	Chairperson	Present
Nicole Halajian	Vice Chairperson	Present
Danielle Conroy	Member	Present
	Member	
Kelly Eller	Member	Absent
	Member	
Marla Rodriguez	Member	Absent
Lynn Apolaro	Alternate #1	Present
Neldon (Joe) Condon	Alternate #2	Present
Cris Franco	Council Liaison	Present

Also in attendance was Recreation Director Debbie Armeno

Recreation Committee Chair Don Bogardus called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. and had all stand for the salute to the flag and a moment of silence.

It was brought up to the Committee that since there are 2 vacancies, Shawn Conner and Jim Mc Bain, we can move the 2 Alternate Members up to Full Members, if they would like to do so. Both Lynn Apolaro and Joe Condon were in favor of. Recreation Director Debbie Armeno will send an email to Township Manager and Township Clerk on this request.

Recreation Chair Don Bogardus as for action on the minutes from the February 13, 2024, meeting, Recreation Director Debbie Armeno stated moving forward she would include a copy of the minutes with the agenda sent out on the Friday prior to the meeting. We tabled the approval of the minutes until later in the meeting, so everyone had an opportunity to read through.

Councilwomen Cris Franco gave a report from the last Council meeting touching on COJ Field 8 project with full lights, press box, and full field. Danielle Conroy asked if this field was only going to be for games only and she was told it has not been decided yet, and no work has been started as of yet. Councilwomen Franco also spoke on the hire of a new Police Officer and a new Model Noise Ordinance being created.

## Recreation Meeting Minutes March 12, 2024, Cont'd

Recreation Chair Don Bogardus asked Recreation Director Debbie Armeno for her report.

She spoke on her time at the NJRPA Conference and the seminars she attended and what she was bringing back to the Township.

She discussed the new Spring/Summer Brochure and asked the Committee to share what we have put up and she spoke on the other avenues where she advertised.

She discussed the submission of the NJDCA Grant for the Tennis Courts at the Municipal Complex. She explained that the Grant was extended but ours was reviewed and good to go.

She gave some general updates on the department and discussed some deadlines that need to be in place for marketing and advertising to gain participants.

Recreation Director Debbie Armeno mentioned to the Committee that in their packets was the new Ordinance and went over, Recreation Committee Chair spoke on working collaterally and as a team, everything goes through the Recreation Department and Debbie prior to things being planned. Debbie as the Director is in charge and the Committee is here to help run anything the Recreation Department is going to do. We will all work together, and we all want to put on the best programs and events for the residents of Byram. Council Women stated that she is here to help with whatever she can she just will need notice. Danielle Conroy stated that our main concern with this is reporting to Township Manager Joe Sabatini and not direct to the Council. Recreation Director Debbie Armeno explained this is how the structure works, the Committee reports to me and I report to the Township Manager.

The Recreation Chair and Director spoke on a cancellation policy moving forward for all programs and events. We will be placing a minimum number of attendees and if we do not meet that minimum 2 weeks prior then the program/event will be cancelled. Recreation Chair brought up the Polar Plunge and stated it should have been cancelled 2 weeks prior and from a Risk Management side there was a lot of variables and Nicole Halajian stated she was having the lot plowed and a lane down to the lake and Recreation Chair stated that all that information should have been brought forth and it was not. Danielle Conroy feels by cancelling this may have “killed” a new event.

## Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes March 12, 2024, Cont'd

Recreation Committee Chair Don Bogardus asked for any Committee Member updates/Discussion/Reminders/News, and Nicole Halajian brought up that she is unhappy with the dates in the release, she would prefer more collaboration and Recreation Director explained that deadlines were given and she was instructed to put this together and advertise.

Recreation Chairperson Don Bogardus discussed that the Byram Day Committee met and discussed the date for the event, and picked August 24, 2024, behind the schools to make it a more cohesive event. Recreation Director Debbie Armeno introduced Howard Rosenblatt, owner of Mega Bite Events to discuss what he can offer for Byram Day and how he can make the event bigger and better for the residents of the town. He discussed bringing in Craft Vendors and offsetting his fee by charging them a fee for tables, and he further discussed food trucks and the balance, and getting 2 bands and a DJ for the price of 1 band that others would charge. He also stated he would add some events for adults and the Committee thought that was a great idea. He understands the area and what makes a great event and wants to help us. The Committee asked some questions and Recreation Director Debbie Armeno stated that the Byram Day Committee should meet soon, come up with a plan and then submit it to the Township Council for approval.

Recreation Debbie Armeno gave a brief report on Upcoming/Ongoing Events:

- Senior Exercise is going well participation is increasing each week.

- Councilwomen Franco reported on Colors of Yarn and Mahjong.

- Touched on Miss Byram, Nicole Halajian stated a few people would not be available on the June 1 date.

- Spoke on Townwide garage sale and we have 15 families registered.

- Spoke on Miners tickets and we should sell more now that it is in the new brochure.

## Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes March 12, 2024 Cont'd

Recreation Chair asked the Event Committee to give a report:

Danielle Conroy began the report by speaking about Partnering with the Environmental Commission on a few events:

1. Scavenger Hunt where kids can also make insect houses to put out on the trails- this would be a family event possible in May- Recreation Director brought up not enough time to advertise this for May. Danielle was looking for the Recreation Committee to provide 2 gift cards for the winners, possibly \$50/\$25- Anneleise owner of Kreative Kid Care stated that she would like to donate the gift cards, Recreation Director Debbie Armeno stated that if she wished to do so it would have to be emailed to me then I would send it to the Clerk for Mayor and Council approval.
2. Danielle Conroy then spoke on a collaborative event with a presentation from the Avian Wildlife Center on raptures in the Fall.
3. It is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Environmental Commission and they would like to collaborate on a series of guided hikes and walks.
4. Danielle also mentioned there is no formal liaison from Rec to EC and Recreation Director mentioned that there is a Liaison from EC to Rec it is Peter Dlugos, we will not be sending a member of this committee to the Environmental Commission. Recreation Director Debbie Armeno further mentioned that she met with Peter on doing some hikes in the absence of Shawn Connor who was gracious enough to conduct them in the past.
5. Danielle spoke on Grandparents Day and if it would be catered or at the Stonewood and would we charge a fee or how we would do this event. Recreation Director said she would speak with the Township Manager Joe Sabatini and CFO Ashleigh Frueholz about how we need to handle this.
6. Nicole Halajian spoke on the Pet Parade and she spoke with OSCAR who is very excited as long as they can make the date, October 5. Recreation Director Debbie Armeno asked if there was a venue yet and she was told it is pending.

Recreation Committee Chair asked if there was any topics for next meeting or items for future meetings and there was nothing brought forth.

## Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes March 12, 2024 Cont'd

Recreation Committee Chair opened the meeting to the public and there was nothing brought up.

The Committee came back to the approval of the minutes from the February 13, 2024 meeting, Nicole Halajian made a motion to approve the minutes, Danielle Conroy seconded the motion all were in favor.

Nicole Halajian made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Danielle Conroy seconded the motion all were in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.