

WESTWOOD RECREATION DEPARTMENT
RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes of March 14, 2022

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 8:00 P.M. by Vice Chair Bermari Roig

Present: Councilman Robert Bicocchi, Vice Chair Bermari Roig, Members Eric Dougherty, Yash Risbud, Jennifer Scardino, Karl Seitz, Recreation Director Gary Buchheister.

Absent: Chair Angelo Pira, Members Amy McDevitt, Kenroy Morrison, Holta Xhillari

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Member Dougherty made a Motion to Accept the February Minutes as presented, Member Risbud seconded the Motion. All in favor, the Motion was Approved.

3. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM:

4. COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT: Councilman Bicocchi reported that the Budget will be Adopted on the Council meeting of February 22. The funding for the Brookside Park Pavilion is Approved from the Trust Account and the Council is moving forward with the proposed Pump Track for Westvale Park.

5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Director Buchheister reported:

a. Winter Programs are ending for the season and it has been a perfect season.

The SNAP Soccer has had a very good registration and the program is running smoothly.

Forever Young Programs are thriving with 1 or 2 additional registrations per week with new residents or residents who were not previously aware of our programs. Most participants are enrolled in more than one program.

The Pre-School registration will begin on April 5 for the 2022-2023 school year.

Spring Programs registration began last week for residents and today for non-residents. Director Buchheister distributed a spreadsheet reflecting the current registrations totals. Programs will begin in early April and many programs are already at capacity. There are several new programs included in the season.

The adult, evening 'Paint Party' was a great success with 29 participants. Many more people were interested in attending. Future 'Paint Parties' will be scheduled and a weekly program will be included in the Fall Programs.

Mr. Buchheister is very pleased with the new format of the Spring Program Flyer as a booklet, rather than single a page flyer. The new format includes information on registration, Borough Permits, parks, sports organizations, etc.

Discussion followed on the new Coordinator and details of the Westwood Track program.

b. Capital Project Updates: The renovation of the Community Center kitchen is scheduled to begin on March 1. Mr. Buchheister is in weekly communication with the Contractor regarding supply chain delays and other items. Discussion followed on project items.

The 2021 Bergen County Open Space 50/50 Matching Grant has been Approved for the Brookside Park Playground. The Brookside Park Pavilion funding has also been Approved. The project has been delayed for supply chain problems and will be installed in the Fall.

'Welcome to Westwood' signage on Old Hook Road was damaged and has been repaired. The DPW will re-install the sign.

The Grant Approved for the replacement Voorhis Park walking path will not fully fund the project. The project's cost balance will be added to the Borough's Capital Budget.

Mr. Buchheister met with Boswell and the Borough's Grant Writer for the 2023 replacement of the Voorhis Park Basketball Courts.

Member Dougherty reported that he met with representatives of Pump Track USA to review the Westvale Park area for the proposed track. Mayor Arroyo and Councilmembers have been working on this to further this proposed project. The proposed track would be located near the football field and would be a 'Flow Track' due to the sloping terrain. Extensive and specific discussion followed regarding various alternatives of this new area which will be useful to residents of all ages.

- c. Basketball and Wrestling Updates: Director Buchheister reported that both sports have had very successful seasons which are concluding with three basketball teams making the playoffs. Extensive discussion followed on the seasons and the various leagues.
- d. Teen Center and the After-School Kids Club are concluding for the season. Teen Center began in September, 2021. Participation was restricted and as COVID numbers decreased, participation numbers were increased beginning with the older grades. Toward the end of the season, 45 wait-listed children were included to encourage them to rejoin in September for hopefully, a normal year. The Kids Club ran successfully with only a slightly diminished registration.
- e. New Partnership with North Jersey Blast to offer Special Olympics Basketball: Tabled
- f. Celebrate Westwood and Westwood Recreation are collaborating on "Wellness Walks" for residents at Westvale Park to 'walk the loop' and then participate in circuit training workout in the Fitness Area or participate in seminars for the six-week program which is provided at no cost to participants.

6. OLD BUSINESS: Tabled

- a. Committee Assignments:
 - Over 55 Programs;
 - Teen Center;
 - Youth / Pre-School Programs;
 - Facility Improvement (Parks / C.C.);
 - Sponsorship.

7. NEW BUSINESS: Director Buchheister reported that a 'Walk to Remember' event will be held at Westvale Park on April 24 including a remembrance walk for those lost to suicide. The event will host guest speakers and lecturers.

The Summer Playground Program is expected to run in a traditional manner (post-COVID) with Before Care / After Care, trips for Brookside Park and a full complement of Staff and C.I.T.s.

Director Buchheister attended a Chamber of Commerce meeting to introduce himself and the Recreation Dept. programs/events. The meeting resulted in several new sponsors for the Department.

The Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, April 9 in Veterans Park with face painters, etc. A very large crowd is expected, so all Board Members are encouraged to attend and assist.

8. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 8:29 P.M. The next meeting will be the second Monday, May 9, 2022 at 8:00 in the Community Center.