

RED BANK PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Minutes from May 27, 2025 - Borough Hall Courtroom

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm

Attending: John LeFever, Nicole Taetsch, Pat Richter, Katie O'Brien, Melissa Moore, Richard Blache, Dana Ian Farley, Joe Simon, Oscar Salinas, and Ben Forest.

The minutes of the April meeting were approved unanimously by the Committee.

Item 1

Update of current Parks and Recreation activities and events

Count Basie Fitness equipment update.

As a follow-up to Joe Simon's presentation to the Committee at our last meeting about installing fitness equipment at a Red Bank Park, there was a meeting with the Major and Boro Manager. Everyone agreed that this would be a good idea pending funds to pay for it. Right now, capital funds for the current fiscal year are all committed to various projects but next year is a possibility, or securing sponsors from area fitness related businesses. The cost would be approximately \$120,000. The Committee discussed possible locations, and the walking trail at Count Basie Fields would probably be best.

Spring Sports Update

T-Ball has ended and had lots of make up sessions due to rain. There was good participation.

Track and Field has ended and had the same challenges with rainy days and scheduling make up sessions.

Baseball playoffs will occur over the next two weeks.

Spring Classes

There will be a three-week Hip-Hop class at the Senior Center. The last session had low enrollment.

Jason Goldman from Flower to the People provided a short gardening class with four attendees.

Chair Yoga is going great and will continue for a total of six sessions at the Senior Center. There are about twenty participants.

Zumba and Tai Chi will be scheduled again and maybe singing bowls.

The Senior Center has added a staff person, so they might be offering more programs.

Item 2:

Upcoming activities and events

Summer Camps

Enrollment for the Little Rascals is at 25, and for the Rascals is 30 (a bit low). Counselors and Supervisors have been hired. The issue of indoor space in case of excessive heat or rain has not been resolved in a way satisfactory to everyone. For now, Lunch Break is the last resort. Oscar tried many of the ideas shared at the last meeting and they were not successful.

There will be a Brazilian Soccer Camp offered for the second year at the end of August and a multi-sport camp to be available during the last weeks of the summer.

Sports registration

Recreation Soccer registration was last week for all ages, preschool to eighth grade. Volunteers are needed to coach.

Summer Series

Movies have been scheduled for Riverside Gardens Park on July 8, 18, 22, and 29th and August 12. Movies include Elemental, Soul Surfer, Spiderman, Monster Trucks, and Inside Out 2. There was some discussion about offering an adult film, especially as the movies end quite late for younger kids. Maybe a rom com of interest to teenagers and couples.

Fitness in the Park will be provided by the Red Bank YMCA on Wednesdays at 6 pm.

Live Jazz will be at 7 pm on Thursdays at Riverside Gardens and 4 pm on Sundays in August at Jonnie Jazz Park. The special jazz concert in honor of Count Basie's birthday will be August 24 from 1 to 5 starting at 3:00.

Sponsorship for the Summer Series went well, bringing in \$14,525 compared with \$11,000 last year. While there is no hospital sponsorship, a new sponsor, Brightview Senior Living, came forward. The Legacy website is working well. The banner showing all the sponsors will go up in about a week.

The Juneteenth Committee is working on their event for June 22. There will be several Juneteenth celebrations in Red Bank. PRIDE in the Park is June 7. The Community Engagement Manager is guiding these types of events with support from Parks and Recreation.

Memorial Day commemoration has already occurred and was very well organized. The monument on Monmouth Street needs refurbishment with a cost estimated at \$35,000. There is a time capsule in the monument which might be ready to open soon.

Garden Tour Ideas

The idea of a small garden tour was discussed with the first step recruiting interested gardeners to show off their flower or vegetable gardens and commit to a day/time for the event. There would be a small fee for community residents to tour the gardens, and participants would get a little something at each garden. There would also be prizes for the best gardens. There is a draft of a recruitment flyer which Oscar will rework to conform with graphic standards of the Boro and post. All Committee members can share the flyer with neighbors that have great gardens. There has already been outreach to the Navesink Garden Club, but there are no interested people available in the summer. A Committee member suggested that the flyer be formatted as an invitation to entice interest.

Eastside Court System Issues

There are pickleball court users that are manipulating the sign-up system to dominate courts. Maureen is willing to enforce the rules and clarify the limitations to those abusing the system. The Committee agreed that Maureen can take on this role and keep Oscar informed.

The Boro is still working with the contractor to correct water pooling areas.

Other events

The slide at Eastside Park was replaced and an inspection done of the area, revealing several sinkholes.

Item 3:

New Business

Bench Donation

There is a national suicide prevention organization (joshsbenches.com) that provides public benches with a hotline number (988) for people at risk. It seems that there is no cost to the Boro. Several locations were discussed. Of course, the train tracks have been the location of several tragic suicides. Oscar and Ben will pursue the project, and the Committee was in support of it.

Usage contracts for Count Basie

The Committee has discussed many times the need for an update and standard practices for groups using Count Basie Fields. All groups should have a formal contract/agreement that is renewed periodically. For profit and nonprofit groups should be treated differently. Local groups and out-of-town groups should be treated differently. Councilperson Forest and President LeFever will meet to draft a memo to the Boro Manager summarizing the Committee's concerns and urging action.

Resignation of Committee Member

The Secretary, Pat Richer will be moving out of the area by September the latest and resigning from the Committee. The Committee will need to appoint a new Secretary.

Joe Simon moved to end the meeting and Katie Obrien seconded the motion.

Next Meeting will be **June 24, 2025**, at 7 pm in the Court Room.