

RED BANK PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Minutes July 28, 2026 - Borough Hall Courtroom

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Attending: John LeFever, Oscar Salinas, Joe Simon, Maureen Dolan, Dana Ian Farley, Pat Richter, Melissa Moore, and Councilman Forest.

The minutes from the June meeting were approved unanimously with a motion from Maureen seconded by Dana.

Item 1:

Update of current Parks and Recs activities and events

Summer camp is in its third week and very successful – kids are having a great time, and the staff is working very well. There are 25 Little Rascals and 45 Rascals. There is a new golf cart ferrying supplies from location to location. The need for indoor space is still a challenge. Camp has been using the Arts Center on Monmouth Street and the Charter School, but additional locations are needed for inclement weather or extreme heat.

Count Basie turf replacement is almost done, and with the Green Acres grant the bleachers will be sand blasted and painted starting in November, hopefully ready for the spring. The basketball court will be repaired after Lunch Break has their big Community Picnic on August 15. The fencing in fields 3, 4 and 5 needs to be replaced, and there are 3 quotes to replace the lights. There was considerable discussion as a follow up to last month about the opportunity to switch to LED lights, with tremendous cost savings over time. The initial investment is the challenge. There are also some bathroom issues at Count Basie Fields, with unacceptable levels of filth. This issue also pertains to the new Marine Park area, where the bathrooms are the original ones with minor ADA modifications.

Eastside Park now has the playground and basketball court open. There were concerns about the grassy area still being fenced off and confusion about irrigation, turf, grass seed, or what the plan is for completion. (note: after the meeting, Oscar investigated and learned that the contractor is letting the rehabilitated area dry out, making sure the sprinkler system is working, and then they will put down sod).

Riverside Gardens needs some beautification of the entryway, but unfortunately this project was not chosen by Eagle Scouts. They preferred to work on raised beds for the community garden (part of Eastside Park). There is no water source nearby. Parks and Recs and DPW will continue to consider options.

Item 2: Upcoming activities and events

Fall sports.

Soccer is very popular and there is robust registration in the 3rd and 4th grade girls' group and 5th and 6th grade girls' group. Coaches are needed!

Fall events

Small events:

At the senior center two sessions of a sound healing meditation are scheduled for August 17 and 31st, and a 3-class session of chair yoga August 25th and Sept 1 and 3rd.

There will be a free rowing class offered by Navesink Rowing on August 15, 8 am near Maple Cove. Swim tested participants will be able to go out on the water.

Halloween themed movie will be on October 16th – send recommendations to Oscar for PG-13 options.

The Westside Jazz concerts will be on August 9, 16, and 23 at 4 pm.

Big events:

National Night Out – August 4 from 5:30 pm to 9:00 pm at Count Basie Fields. This is an opportunity for the community to meet and bond with our local police. Parks and Recs has a supporting role.

Hispanic Heritage Day - is September 20th, led by the Community Engagement Manager, with input and support from Parks and Recs and DPW. It will be at Riverside Gardens Park at 2:00 pm and include a Cuban Jazz Band (they will have an August 13 performance at Riverside Gardens Park as well), two food trucks (Lupita's and Chilangas), food carts, and more food vendors are needed.

Halloween Parade – Scheduled for October 18th (rain date October 25th) and will be even bigger than last year. More floats are needed. There was a suggestion to have it after dark. There might be a petting zoo, a Zombie Run, a Haunted House, spooky snacks and drinks and even the possibility of closing Broad Street for the day like in the summer. There was a suggestion for fewer awards, and this would depend on the judges doing a better job. Parking might be available at St. James Church.

Item 3: New Business

Westside Garden – Volunteers with Patchwork for Wildlife (a group under the Animal Welfare Committee) cleaned up a neglected Boro park on a dead end and created a native garden. There is interest in providing educational/fun programs for local children. Reach out if you have any connections to Girl Scouts, the Charter School, etc. They might also want to be a Porchfest location, although there isn't any shelter there.

Trip to Candide's Garden – The groups that Parks and Recs take on trips are not a good match for this field trip to Lake Como.

Video of Cards from July 2 event – Many adults and children completed cards which were displayed at the Parks and Recs table stating, 'what freedom means to me'. They were shared with Councilman Forest, who might have some contacts to help post the results on social media.

Pretty Good Poetry Competition – this would be in April, and the Committee discussed various ways it could be organized, grade levels to be targeted, the challenges of AI, participation of local businesses (maybe RiverCenter would like to be involved). More discussion is needed.

Thank you notes – Oscar has prepared thank you notes for our summer program sponsors and next meeting will sign them and add a personal note.

First Use of Amphitheatre at Marine Park – There was a Youth Rock Show on July 2 which was the first use of the new theatre.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm with a motion by Joe seconded by Melissa.

Next meeting will be held August 25, 2026, at 7:00 pm.