

**BOROUGH OF MOUNTAIN LAKES RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**Monthly Meeting Minutes – Quick Notes**  
Minutes for April 16, 2024 at 7:30 PM - Zoom

**1. Call to Order**

A monthly meeting of Borough of Mountain Lakes Recreation Commission was held on April 16, 2024 on Zoom teleconference. It began at 7:30 PM and was presided over by chairperson David Keyt, with Derek Jackson as secretary.

**2. Attendees**

Voting Members in attendance: James Aitken, Phyllis Deering, Derek Jackson, David Keyt, Shaun Lehrer, Rob Wianecki

Non-voting Members in attendance: Laurie Stepper (Recreation Director), Melissa Muilenburg (Council Liaison)

Guests in attendance: None

Members not in attendance: Heather Hornyak, Mark Odenwelder, Tish Scarola and the Board of Education Liaison

**3. Approval of Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on February 20, 2024 was made by David Keyt and seconded by Derek Jackson.

**4. Report of the Recreation Director**

Report was prepared by Laurie Stepper.

- Summer programs opened for registration. Registration went very well overall.
  - Parent feedback of having the program open earlier or in the evening to accommodate more working parents/guardians.
  - Teen Adventure Week 2 and 3 have lengthy waitlists. Considering adding another bus. There are logistical challenges that need to be overcome including hiring more staff and/or not being able to increase the reservations we already have.
  - Waitlists will be looked at later in April
- Planning for Summer Recreation Camp and Teen Adventure.
  - Booking presenters
  - Ordering supplies
  - Creating staff manual and emergency procedures
  - Interviews for Summer Camp Staff began April 1, as of April 10 over 30 interviews have been conducted.
    - There are over 50 Camp Counselor applicants for about 15 positions.
    - There are 16 CIT applicants, after interviews, I'll see where all the scheduled line-up and see what weekly offers will be made.
- Rack and Ring renewals were strong – most were confirmed by Monday, Mar 18 and all requested renewals were processed before the new applicants started.

- Rack and Ring new applicants opened Wed, April 3 with 88 responses in 1 day, 95 total as of April 10
  - Available spots per location
    - Big Dam Rack 4; SUP 17, Ring N/A
    - Birchwood Rack 17
    - Island Beach Rack 5; SUP 6; Kid Kayak 14; SUP 9
    - Midvale Boat Dock Rack 8; SUP 8; Ring 8
    - Wildwood Rack 12
  - As of April 10 – 50 calls have been made, most getting their first choice. Only a few spots remain.
    - Remainder of the requests will be notified in the coming days/weeks, as I wait on responses.
  - Online payment did not work well. Hopefully there will be another option for 2025.
- Reviewing and scheduling interviews for Summer Staff starting within the next week or so.
- Trout Derby Committee Meeting with majority of members to review logistics and task responsibility.
  - Discussion of stocking bass and other ecologically appropriate species in 2025 was very well received by the Committee.
  - Everyone agreed that the goal is for kids to catch more fish.
- Mountain Lakes Sailing Association meeting (Mar 14) – reviewed summer program registration, number of staff/CIT applicants, briefly discussed Blue Moon Social. Conversation to continue in April.
- Meet with Matt S and David S to start planning for summer wrestling program for High School aged kids in July.
- Booking bands for summer concert series. So far, The Tourne (formerly The Tourne Boys), Denville String Band, Alex Laurenzi and Brother Wisdom are booked
- Continue planning “100-year celebration as a municipality” events.
- Recreation Volunteer Management
  - Attended the NJ Recreation and Park Association Conference Feb 26-27 in Atlantic City. Biggest takeaways were the networking, fingerprint vs background check clarification, National Playground Study and public usage trends, importance of safety and training compliance in youth sports.
  - Developing a borough volunteer management plan to keep track of fingerprint reports, procedure if fingerprints come back with an offense, volunteer database by sport and/or last name, and possible application process.
- Egg Hunt on Mar 24 went well. Thank you to Phyllis and Heather for talking/meeting with me individually to review how the event has run in the past. Thank you to David and Heather for helping on the day of. We had over 20 High School volunteers and about 200 participants (kids and adult) enjoy various activities before the egg hunts.
- In coordination with the BOE Facilities Director, we were able to produce an excellent solution to the accessibility of the MLHS turf bathrooms and gate. Door codes have been installed on the bathrooms and there is a realtor type lockbox with keys to the turf gate.

Youth Program Directors were asked to agree to a code of conduct to ensure their use of the turf remains in good standing. This new system eliminates the need for volunteers to pick-up keys from Borough Hall.

- Exploring keyless locks for beach bathrooms – Hoping to install programmable keyless locks to the beach bathrooms to eliminate the need to pick-up keys at Borough Hall. Each rental will receive a code to open the bathrooms and will be changed for each rental.
- New Tennis Court Windscreens and 4 benches have been installed.
- Commemorative Bench Program is in final stages for proposal to Council. Program was developed by DPW Subcommittee, and will be managed by Recreation Director.
- As of March 2024, USA Sports Group program registration is 32% higher than the same time last year. They offer multi-sport, flag football, soccer, and tennis programs for kids aged 2.5 and up.
- Continue planning “100-year celebration as a municipality” events.

#### Upcoming Events

- Trout Derby – Fri, Apr 19 at 4pm for stocking; Sat, Apr 20 at 8am is the derby

#### Monthly Meetings

- HUB Lakes
- DPW Subcommittee

#### Ongoing tasks

- Manage facility request from residents.
- Oversee and support sports programs with school facility requests and supply purchase, if needed.
- Weekly eblast
- Social Media posts
- Update the Borough website (still learning)
- Manage Borough Hall room reservation calendar for conference rooms and Chambers.

#### Recent Administrative Tasks

- Bulk Mail process and procedure
- Risk Management Quarterly Report due April 15

## 5. Old Business

Review action items from prior meetings (kept separately from meeting minutes)

- Rack & Rings
  - Plan of action for not using by July 4 – Potentially refund a portion of the fee so that someone else can use the “loaner” rack.
  - Allowing more than 1 watercraft per rack – We will likely allow more than 1 vessel per rack up to a weight limit
  - Feasibility of adding more racks. The only option that meets demand would be moving the swings at Island Beach. However, this would likely not be received well because of the use of swings.
- Swim & Boat Races

- Historically there were races over 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. However, these were not well attended. We will look at the morning of Saturday July 13.
- Races between Island Beach and Midvale Boat Dock
  - Swimming by age with different distances
  - Kayak, canoe, paddle board by age
- Will coordinate with life guards to determine logistics and schedule

## 6. New Business

- Storybook Trail Program (see flyer below)
  - Sue Lyon takes books and puts them on poster boards along trails, sidewalks, playgrounds etc
  - The thought was to try it at Island Beach in June, July or August
- Borough Activities Fair Idea
  - There is a need for volunteers in different groups and raise awareness of those groups / activities
  - Create something similar to a job fair to support these groups recruiting members, volunteers and to highlight opportunities to residents
  - Various locations and format were discussed including ML Club, the Esplanade (like ML Day), coordinated with the 100-year celebration.
- Brainstorm of new ideas for seniors
  - “Tech Help Day”
  - “Card Game” lessons
  - Makerspace
  - Trips
  - Could eventually be incorporated into a rebooted 55+ group
- Discussion of meeting in-person

## 7. Announcements

Next meeting May 21, 2024 will be in-person or hybrid

## 8. Adjournment

David Keyt moved that the meeting be adjourned. Derek Jackson seconded the motion. The motion passed at 8:48 PM.