

## **Florence Township Recreation Committee Minutes 3/2/26**

The Florence Township Recreation Committee held a regular meeting on 2/2/26 at the Florence Township Municipal Building 711 Broad Street, Florence, New Jersey. Members of the public were invited to attend the meeting in person.

The meeting was called to order by Recreation Committee Chairman, Tony Pastore at 7:00 p.m.

### **ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

Upon roll call the following were found to be present:

Present: Tony Pastore, Mary Pieretti, Don Nemeth, Tom Boracci, Martin Eckert, Cindy Golway, Donna Sadler, TJ Lovenduski, Councilman Joseph Frappolli, Caitlin Motta, Tom Supey

Absent: Toniann Carroll, Vince Mancuso

Public: Elizabeth Labat, Matthew Golway, Casey Larcome, Ami Miller

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Reorganization Meeting of January 12, 2026 (Supey; Sadler)

### **OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT #1**

None at this time

### **RECREATION SOFTBALL PROGRAM REPORTING**

Representatives from the recreation softball program provided feedback from the 2025 season and expressed the success of the league through its participation with Little League, Opening Day, Tournament play and coordination with the recreation baseball program for indoor batting cage activity.

Total league registrations were at 119 and teams were situated between t-ball, 6-year-old team, 7/8-year-old teams (2), 9/10-year-old teams (3), 11/12-year-old teams (2) and 15U team, which participated in the Riverfront League.

The program is considering improvements and some include coordination with the recreation baseball program. New bases have been purchased for Legion Field and there will be some investigation on improved dugout roof options for that field beyond the vinyl coverings that had been installed in the past. Additionally, the program discussed the potential of creating perimeter fencing to include along each base path and enclosing the outfield area. This addition will enable leagues to add another complete field space for league play and to host tournaments. Recreation baseball program members attended a recent council session to discuss the same. Currently, the public works department will identify fencing that may be available to support the project, but Marty shared that there would not be enough material to span that entire area. Marty also noted that installing this type of fencing would require work to be completed by a fencing contractor. Don Nemeth inquired as to the costs associated with this project and if the programs would be working together to come up with the funds to place the fence. The program will await feedback from the township on materials and then connect with the baseball program to discuss further. The timing of this project came into question as the location of the property line because it was noted that areas of the outfield fall into the property of the American Legion. Councilman Frappolli shared that Administrator Sahol was going to be checking the property line.

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Recreation Softball shared that they had considered repairs to the existing softball shed located beside Muchowski Field but it is in poor condition and needs to be removed. Softball is considering storage options along with shed replacement costs. Don Nemeth inquired if there would be a plan to touch up the Muchowski Field sign located in the outfield. Donna Sadler will discuss with the program to address during spring field work sessions or contact a painter to check and provide a quote.

Florence Fun Day will be incorporated to Opening Day festivities again this season. The programs will be looking for vendors and activities to offer for families to enjoy. There is discussion for the Trenton Thunder mascot to be on hand again this year. They will look for confirm a singer for the American Anthem and will be honoring a longtime contributor to the township's recreation programs.

Additional discussions relating to the possibility of enclosing the outdoor batting cage area, lighting improvements and maintenance needs and the standing of LED lighting improvements to recreation fields, which had been discussed in the past. Councilman Frappolli provided feedback to these items citing continued discussions will take place and that matters involving the LED transition are budgetary discussions and the impact of outlaying costs for such projects. There was a reference to the outdoor batting cage enclosure and footings that indicate that as-is it would not be set up to be enclosed as there is not proper foundation to support what it would require to enclose. Additionally, Don Nemeth noted that past administrations did not approve enclosing the batting cage.

The program will continue to observe options for the league due to adjustments being made by Little League and will continue to participate in the Riverfront League. Overall, recreation softball continues to communicate regularly with families and coaches regarding registration, coaching opportunities and sponsorships. Their accounting remains balanced and healthy to support the needs of the program. Matthew Golway will coordinate expense reimbursements with Marty.

### COORDINATORS REPORT

- **2026 Recreation Basketball** – Marty and Mary discussed the recreation basketball board meeting. Both were pleased with the agenda of the meeting and the organization and communication of the league this season. Tom Carroll and crew are doing a nice job and the coordination of the practice and game schedule and the interaction with the neighboring townships and officials has gone well. Mary observed the large number of participants at the instructional level and the need for additional coaches to volunteer to support the group. One suggestion was when the committee has the opportunity to interact with the school district and athletic director, there be considerations for high school athletes or students looking to complete community service hours to take part in supporting the recreation program needs.

### CORRESPONDENCE

- No correspondence received at time of meeting agenda.

### FACILITIES

#### **Municipal Facilities**

Recreation Baseball and softball are currently using indoor batting cages. The program is working on improvements to the cages and the concession stand at Coates Field.

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- **Board of Education Facilities**

Recreation softball is coordinating indoor clinics and will oversee the general use on Sunday, communicating with recreation baseball. Use is approved through the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in March.

### OLD BUSINESS

- **Pickleball Project:** Will be completed in early Spring.
- **Fieldhouse Updates:** Marty and Councilman Frappolli confirmed that the bid is now being awarded and follow up will take place for the scheduling of work. Additionally, Marty will be working in-house and with the township engineer on additional phases of the improvement project.

### NEW BUSINESS

**2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Events** – The subcommittee is working on a schedule for the year and will coordinate dates with Marty prior to the March meeting.

### PUBLIC COMMENT #2

Elizabeth Labat – Representing Soccer inquired if there is a way to see the background check reports to review for coaching badge renewals. Marty shared that he typically sends to league presidents, but will make sure that they are forwarded to boards for review in advance of each season. Ms. Labat participated in general discussion providing feedback during the meeting.

Ami Miller – Representing Field Hockey shared that the program will have an open meeting in February and they will discuss open board positions and coordinate their second annual summer camp, which was very successful in 2025 and will coordinate with league to prepare for spring registration for the 2026 season.

### REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Tom Boracci Provided feedback on the soccer association. January elections were successful and the program developed an executive board as well as a committee to support efforts for the season opening. They will not be engaging actively in Spring soccer, but will be coordinating a summer camp this year. They will work with coaches and high school players to run the camp and will coordinate dates with the township and committee.

Tom addressed the existing lighting concern on Veteran's Field where one pole continues to be problematic. It is the observation of an electrician that there must be a break underground causing the breaker to continue to pop. Tom shared that he will coordinate with the electrician to address the matter and to provide a quote. He shared that if there is a cost savings benefit to trench the area back to the box that the program will look to doing that. Marty shared that if the township has a trencher, then we may be able to aid in that effort to reduce cost and will have mark outs completed in advance.

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Tom addressed setting up a website for rec soccer and will provide league information on that platform. Marty referenced Tom Carroll from recreation basketball and how their page was set up similarly and would be a good resource.

- Don Nemeth – shared that the recreation football & cheer program will reorganize on February 10<sup>th</sup> to elect new officers. The meeting will be held at the community center. Additionally, a reminder about checking the signage around the municipal complex for directional signs for the facilities. Also, when reviewing plans for the fieldhouse to discuss the possibility of future solar to be placed on the roof and the impact it would have on the lighting there and in the immediate area for the baseball batting cage, concession stand and lights,
- Donna Sadler, Caitlin Motta & Cindy Golway – Reviewed the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday event scheduled for the community center where a puzzle competition will take place. This is a great event and is family friendly and age groupings have been adjusted and the committee is looking forward to a nice turn out.
- Marty Eckert – provided information for a DCA Local Recreation Improvement Grant to establish a pathway bridging the upper and lower Roebbling Park nearest the parking lot at the corner of Riverside Avenue and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. This pathway will be wide enough for emergency response and maintenance vehicles and will have removeable bollards to ensure that access. The goal is to establish grade to support ADA-compliance and create an easy option for individuals to park and reach the lower park amenities including the dog park and heritage trail. The committee is supportive of this application and Marty will work with the committee for a few letters of support and will submit prior to the February 13<sup>th</sup> deadline.
- Marty Eckert – Shared that he reached out to Prevention Plus to learn of programs and educational opportunities for the school district and community to enhance prevention efforts against substance misuse. The goal is to provide opportunities prior to the close of the school year and include prevention materials at various community events during the summer.
- Toniann Carroll (Via Email) Mary and I both met the board (basketball) at their meeting last month and I am happy to report that the season is in full swing and running smoothly. Of course, with most things, there are hiccups here and there but it seems as though the board is doing a great job in coordinating schedules for both practices and games. I also had the pleasure of watching the future ballers of Florence this weekend at both the instructional sessions. Wow, there were 38 kids in the first session and over 30 in the second! My husband, Tom, and two other volunteers ran that practice like a well-oiled machine, keeping 38 kids moving and learning the entire hour! I was only able to see part of the second session but again, it was moving and groovin smoothly and the kids were having a blast!

Please keep me updated on when to post to social media for the February second Saturday event. I am happy to help out with setting up or organizing anything prior to the event.

### ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Motta, second by Sadler – 8:20 pm