

# CUMBERLAND COUNTY RECREATION COMMISSION

## March 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes Notes

A meeting of the Cumberland County Recreation Commission (C.C.R.C.) was held on Thursday, March 9, 2023, at The Cumberland County Administration Building in Bridgeton, New Jersey and via Microsoft Teams and/or Teleconference.

Ken Sheppard, Chair (February 2027) \*  
Chris Wilson, Vice-Chair (September 2025) \*  
John Fuqua (July 2025) \*  
Carman Daddario, Jr. (February 2027) \*  
J.T. Burks (July 2025) \*

Commissioner Victoria Lods  
Commissioner Donna Pearson \*

Matthew Pisarski, Department Head \*  
Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator \*  
Wanda Riviera, Confidential Assistant \*  
Matt Horowitz, Recording Secretary \*

**Guests:** Jerry Velazquez, The Authority  
Mort Isaacson, The Authority  
Elaine Clisham, Clarke Caton Hintz  
Geoff Vaughn, Clarke Caton Hintz  
Samantha Cruz, The City of Millville

*Note: Asterisk (\*) indicates members present at the aforementioned meeting.*

### **Approval of Minutes Notes – February 9, 2023**

A motion to approve the February 9, 2023 meeting minutes notes was made by Mr. Wilson. It was seconded by Mr. Daddario and passed unanimously by the Commission.

### **Grant Update: Recreational Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities**

Mr. Williams explained staff had applied for a grant through the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJ D.C.A.) Mr. Williams said staff had received a letter stating they did receive the full amount of the grant award they had applied for, which was \$5,000.00. It was the Recreational Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities (R.O.I.D.) grant running through the calendar year of 2023. Mr. Williams stated the three planned programs were reviving Disability Awareness Day, expanding the Christmas Dance Party for Individuals with Disabilities, and a new program for swimming with individuals with disabilities. Mr.

Williams added all of this programming would be funded with the R.O.I.D. grant award and he simply wanted to include the letter in the packet for informational purposes.

### **Discussion of C.P.R./A.E.D. Training for Personnel at Local Leagues**

Mr. Pisarski explained he had included within the meeting packet correspondence with Inspira, who had a program called Heartsavers with a C.P.R. & E.C.C. course. It was offered for \$45.00/person and the Commission could gather designated personnel from the leagues. Mr. Williams said there were multiple options the Commission could ultimately do and he had an email out to the foundation for Inspira to see if they could help further subsidize the per person cost. Mr. Williams hoped to have additional answers by the next Recreation Commission meeting. Mr. Sheppard felt it was a great idea and thanked Mr. Williams for his efforts thus far. Mr. Fuqua agreed and said he would recommend all of Life Worth Living's staff and volunteers take such a class and Stronger Families would do the same, totaling about 50 people. Mr. Wilson added the City of Vineland was in the process of trying to mandate such C.P.R./A.E.D. trainings for personnel within the local leagues.

### **Discussion of Recreation Master Plan Update**

Mr. Pisarski said at the previous month's meeting, the Commission had been discussing the plans for the Fairgrounds and County-wide Recreation Master Plan, So, in response, he had invited Jerry Velazquez & Mort Isaacson from The Authority and Geoff Vaughn & Elaine Clisham from Clarke Caton Hintz, all of whom were in attendance. Mr. Velazquez said The Authority had done an initial electrical survey that had three phases of upgrades to be made to the existing Fairgrounds facility. Mr. Velazquez said all of this would work in concert with the Fairgrounds Plan/Recreation Master Plan for Phases 2-3. Clarke Caton Hintz had initially gone out during the Fair the previous year to collect data from fairgoers, as well as recreation officials from the various municipalities, surveys, and online information. Mort Isaacson added some additional commentary from his perspective, as well.

Elaine Clisham & Geoff Vaughn from Clarke Caton Hintz briefly introduced themselves. Ms. Clisham added that her staff had also interviewed people who sponsor various events at different kinds of venues. Mr. Vaughn said they distilled all of the various elements of feedback into three different concept plans; one, being an enhancement of the existing Fairgrounds property, walking trails, facilities, utilities, midway, parking areas, animal display areas, demolition derby, etc. across Properties A, B, and C. Two, with comparative event spaces sized for roughly 4,000-7,200 people. Three, a Fairgrounds/4-H facility also incorporating some sort of music events space with capacity from 2,500-4,000 people. Ms. Clisham said there were various requests for pickleball courts from the municipal representatives, but mostly for programming and funding for their assorted facilities. However, Ms. Clisham added there were little to no requests for additional structures.

Concerns were raised by the Commission about the limitations of the space for parking expansion/overflow lots. Mr. Wilson suggested potentially including a state-of-the-art splash park to help draw in community members. Mr. Sheppard raised concerns about pedestrian traffic from the recreational vehicle (R.V.) park and parking lots at large events, such as

music festivals. Mr. Fuqua mentioned a riding trail for all-terrain vehicles (A.T.V.'s.) He also raised concerns about how many locations throughout the County that 4-H utilize that have been renovated. Mr. Fuqua also suggested looking into turf fields for men's, women's, children, and adult flag football leagues. Mr. Pisarski asked staff at Clarke Caton Hintz to look at facilities like Total Turf in Pitman for either the Fairgrounds Master Plan or Recreation Plan.

Ms. Clisham spoke a bit about the County-wide Recreation Master Plan, which was currently in-process, as well. She said the various sports and recreation-related facilities across the County had been cataloged and logged by staff at Clarke Caton Hintz. Next, they would identify "under-served communities" and make sure there were outdoor recreational facilities/green space(s) within walking distance from all of these County residents. Ms. Clisham said her staff would create a priority plan for those with the least access. Mr. Pisarski noted the County could only build on County-owned land.

Mr. Daddario said it would be best to put everything (all types of attractions) at the County Fairgrounds to help draw in the most amount of people. It was clarified the road would/could go through the Carmel Hebrew Cemetery through an easement to help create a circular path amongst all three properties. Mr. Wilson asked who Clarke Caton Hintz's municipal representative was at Vineland. Ms. Clisham said the representative for Vineland was Dale Elbeuf. Mr. Daddario questioned the amount of financing for said project. Mr. Velazquez said the County had set aside \$2.5 million with an additional \$700-800,000.00 for the trail development, totaling at about \$3.1-3.2 million. Messrs. Fuqua & Wilson thanked County staff, Mr. Pisarski, The Authority, Mr. Velazquez, and Clark Caton Hintz for a job well-done. Mr. Pisarski added the documents shown would also be sent to the County Commissioners, refine everything a bit more, and host a public presentation. Mr. Wilson suggested Clarke Caton Hintz staff look into the RiverWinds Community Center in Deptford, NJ.

### **Planning Department Updates**

Mr. Pisarski stated he would like Mr. Fuqua to stick around after the meeting, so that they could talk about the 4-H facilities. Mr. Pisarski added the Jake's Place playground grant application had been submitted and the budget within the grant request was \$1.3 million. He said this would cover 75% of the project and some of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (A.R.P.A.) funds would be used to help cover the remaining 25%. Mr. Pisarski explained staff would find out in July if the requested grant funds were ultimately received.

### **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the March 9, 2023 Recreation Commission meeting was made by Mr. Fuqua, seconded by Mr. Wilson, and passed unanimously by the Commission.