

# CUMBERLAND COUNTY RECREATION COMMISSION

May 11, 2023  
Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Cumberland County Recreation Commission (C.C.R.C.) was held on Thursday, May 11, 2023, at the 4-H/Rutgers Extension Center in Rosenhayn, 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 \*

Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator \*  
Matt Pisarski, Planning Director/Department Head \*  
Elena Gable, Assistant Planning Director \*  
Wanda Riviera, Confidential Assistant \*  
Matt Horowitz, Recording Secretary \*

## Guests:

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

## **Approval of Minutes – April 13, 2023**

Mr. Williams thanked everyone for being in attendance. Mr. Sheppard asked for a motion to approve the April 13, 2023 meeting minutes. A motion to approve the April 13, 2023 Cumberland County Recreation Commission meeting minutes was made by Mr. Wilson. It was seconded by Mr. Sheppard and passed unanimously by the Commission.

## **Sponsorship Requests**

Mr. Sheppard indicated there were no Sponsorship Requests on the agenda to be discussed at this month's meeting.

## **Discussion of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (C.P.R.)/Automated External Defibrillator (A.E.D.) Training**

Mr. Williams said following the Damar Hamlin on-field cardiac arrest incident, the Commission had been tasked with helping to coordinate C.P.R./A.E.D. training(s). Mr.

Williams had provided information from the American Heart Association within the meeting packet through Inspira Hospital. Mr. Williams explained Inspira had said the class would be \$45.00/person, which would include certification. Mr. Williams had asked the Inspira Health Foundation to help further supplement the cost and explained \$45.00 was already the supplemented cost.

Mr. Williams stated the Commission could sponsor about 10 people for the C.P.R./A.E.D. training(s) a year at the \$45.00/person cost at under \$500.00 total. Following a brief period of discussion amongst the Commission members and County staff, Mr. Pisarski suggested dedicating \$750.00 from sponsorship towards 16 training spots fully paid. A motion to approve the allocation of a \$750.00 sponsorship to help fund 16 C.P.R./A.E.D. trainings at \$45.00 each at Inspira Hospital was made by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Sheppard, and passed unanimously by the Commission.

### **Recap of the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Bob Busnardo Kids' Fishing Derby (Sunday, May 7 – Mary Elmer Lake)**

Mr. Williams said the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Bob Busnardo Kids' Fishing Derby was a great, well-attended success and showed pictures from the day's event on-screen for those attending in-person, as well as persons attending virtually. He added the link to the event photo folder was available online within the emailed meeting packet. Mr. Williams added there were 85 kids/teens in attendance at the event. He thanked all the volunteers, including Departmental staff, as well as weighmasters J.T. Burks & Dave D'orio.

Mr. Williams stated feedback and/or questions about the event included using mealworms over nightcrawlers as fishing bait, which he was open to doing next year. Mr. Williams said he would talk with Mr. Burks about this suggestion in the coming months.

Another question posed to Mr. Williams was the potential competitive advantage of people fishing from boats within the lake, rather than the vast majority fishing on-land from the shore. Mr. Williams added, according to the numbers, the participants fishing from the shore caught more fish than those in boats.

Commissioner Pearson commended County staff and all of those who volunteered at the event. The Commission members were happy the attendance numbers had risen, and Mr. Williams said he hoped for 100 attendees in 2024.

### **Upcoming Outreach Events**

Mr. Williams made mention of the 2023 Events schedule included within the meeting packet. Mr. Williams said this was a list of Outreach events the Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs hoped to have staff attend in the coming months. These events would promote events related to the Cultural & Heritage Commission, the Tourism Advisory Council, and the Recreation Commission, as well as 4-H, Master Gardener, etc. events.

Mr. Williams wanted the Commission to be aware staff would need funding to purchase more give-away items for these and more events soon enough. He also mentioned staff could use help, if any of the Commission members had any free time to volunteer and help man the table at some of the events listed for the summer and fall events.

Multiple Commission members expressed they might be able to help at specific events. Mr. Pisarski thanked Mr. Burks, who volunteered to assist at the Fishing Derby's weighing station at the last minute. The Commission members thanked Mr. Williams and County staff for their efforts working the Tourism/Recreation booth at Outreach events.

### **Planning Department Updates**

Mr. Pisarski handed out two mapping leaflet hand-outs and said he would need help from the Commission as to how to delineate the neighborhoods that needed recreational facilities. Mr. Pisarski shared what the consultants at Clarke Caton Hintz (C.C.H.) had been doing. He shared the Areas of Bridgeton Underserved by Recreation Facilities and Cumberland County Population Access to Open Space maps.

. Mr. Sheppard suggested shrinking the impact areas shown on the maps and thought the types of recreational opportunities available should be better defined. Commissioner Pearson asked if the County was looking to potentially assist the cities and municipalities with aspects like remediation, re-building grounds, etc.

Commissioner Pearson felt as though the Bridgeton City Park and other local recreational facilities were being extremely underutilized. Mr. Pisarski said, one, there had been outreach to staff and personnel and the municipal level by the C.C.H. consultants and, two, the Cumberland County Recreation Master Plan would help inform how the County Commissioners would allocate the funding dedicated to recreational improvements.

Suggestions were made to more so look at using population density for specific areas of concern across the mapping. Mr. Pisarski said he and staff would continue to work with the C.C.H. consultants to further refine the mapping. He said revisions would be sent out to the Commission as staff received updated versions. Commissioner Pearson asked about using some of the local school spaces after regular school hours of operation. Mr. Pisarski said the current mapping likely included school facilities, but not interior gyms.

It was suggested public transit lines should be added to the maps, as well. Mr. Pisarski said the buffers would need to be re-calculated, factoring in both population density and acreage to determine the sizes of the corresponding circles. Ms. Gable suggested tweaking the standard calculations for the buffer fields. Mr. Pisarski said the C.C.H. consultants would need to further identify what types of outdoor recreation opportunities were located within/surrounding each school facility. Mr. Pisarski asked the Commission members to send any additional suggestions or feedback to him or Mr. Williams via email. He explained the Mid-County Park (formerly known as "The County Fairgrounds") Plan done at the latest by mid-summer and County-wide Recreation Master Plan finalized by late summer.

### **County Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Pearson said Messrs. Williams & Pisarski had already expressed everything she would have covered on behalf of the County Commissioners. She thanked Messrs. Williams & Pisarski, their staff, and the Recreation Commission for their continued efforts towards the betterment of Cumberland County as a whole.

### **Recreation Commissioners Comments**

Mr. Wilson shared Mr. Burks and the Vineland Midget Football League (V.M.F.L.) had hosted their annual Youth vs. Guns, Drugs & Gangs flag football game the previous weekend. Mr. Wilson said it had been a great success with involvement from the Chief of Police and an assortment of officers with the youth. It was part of the V.M.F.L.'s Bridging The Gap initiative with local law enforcement engaging with locals children and teens. Mr. Wilson added Quinn Broadcasting was in-attendance at the event, as well.

Mr. Wilson inquired if the Recreation Commissioners might be able to have some kind of T-shirts, polo shirts, jackets, etc. embroidered with the names and the Cumberland County Recreation Commission to wear when volunteering at the events Mr. Williams mentioned. Mr. Sheppard agreed with Mr. Wilson's statement about the T-shirts. Mr. Wilson suggested reaching out to the community leaders about the status of the local recreation facilities.

Mr. Burks agreed with all the sentiments expressed throughout the meeting. Mr. Burks said he wanted to keep the momentum going for positivity and progression forward.

### **Old Business/New Business**

Mr. Wilson shared the Vineland Midget Football League would be starting their inaugural flag football season. He said 130 children and teens had been registered (with 40 more on the waiting list) and recently attended their first practice, including all ethnicities and diverse backgrounds, as well as about 30 young women players. Mr. Wilson said this would be the first time since being established in 1959 the V.M.F.L. would be doing a flag football league in addition to their usual tackle football league.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Sheppard asked for a motion to adjourn the day's meeting. A motion to adjourn the May 11, 2023 Recreation Commission meeting was made by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Sheppard, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Mr. Williams thanked everyone for their continued attendance and involvement with the Commission.