

BOROUGH OF MOUNTAIN LAKES RECREATION COMMISSION
Monthly Meeting Minutes – Quick Notes
Minutes for July 20, 2021 at 7:30 PM - Zoom

1. Call to Order

A monthly meeting of Borough of Mountain Lakes Recreation Commission was held on July 20, 2021 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: David Keyt, Derek Jackson, Gary Reznik, Ina Rose, Mark Odenwelder, Shaun Lehrer, Tish Scarola

Non-voting Members in attendance: Karen Brennfleck (Recreation Director), Joe Chang (Board of Education Liaison), Khizar Sheikh (Council Liaison)

Guests in attendance: None

Members not in attendance: Heather Prince-Hornby

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting June 15, 2021 was made by Mark Odenwelder and seconded by Shaun Lehrer.

4. Report of the Recreation Director

Report was presented by Karen Brennfleck.

- The recreation facilities in and around the lakes continue to be very popular this summer. There are often many people trying to book the pavilion.
- Karen Brennfleck and Vicky Allison met with the facilities committee to discuss concerns about the lifeguards ability to safely enforce rules at and/or around our waterfronts. They need support from the commission and town to better enable them to ensure the safety of swimmers. (See new business)
- New Swim Clinic for Spring
 - YMCA does swim lessons at the Craig School until April. Our guards could potentially run swim lessons there in the months of May and June.

5. New Business

- Fishing on Docks
 - Vicky Allison has requested the recreation commission consider policies for fishing on the docks. Some residents are insistent on doing it at Island Beach boat dock and Midvale boat dock. The current Island Beach policy is that guards only monitor the area across the bridge. There are weekly incidents of people stepping on hooks on the docks at Birchwood. Hooks also snag on the swim area lines and occasionally this results in cut hands.
 - Recommendation Summary – No fishing permitted at Birchwood Beach area, including the docks, during the summer beach season. Fishing will be allowed in other areas of the Birchwood Park. Place signs at Island Beach and Midvale boat

docks encouraging the use of footwear and “swim at your own risk”. Facilities committee will prepare a formal draft for review by the recreation committee before it is submitted to council.

- Definition of Parks, Beach Badge Required Areas
 - There have been disagreements about the definition of the beach vs the park. For example, residents bring their pets to the non-beach part of Island Beach Park and say the “no dog” policy does not apply there. Similarly, non-residents launch boats and/or swim off the Midvale and Island Beach boat docks. There have been a few incidents of people being rescued by lifeguards while swimming off the unguarded docks. This is a distraction from the focus on the supervised and guarded waterfronts.
 - We need to consult borough legal counsel to understand liability implications of the current state and/or any changes.
 - Brainstorming ideas for consideration
 - Suggestion 1
 - Ordinance defining clear boundaries of beach and/or park
 - Fence in and monitor an area defined by the property line to the water, encircled around the parking lot. Leave a single gated entrance to the beach and park, which can be monitored by guards.
 - Suggestion 2
 - State that if you use the lake or park without the beach tag, you do so at your own risk.
 - Suggestion 3
 - Define ordinances that allow for governance and enforcement.
 - Police write citations with monetary fines for not adhering to the ordinances.
- Beach Swim Test
 - The swim test has been around for as long as anyone can remember. It is difficult and often requires many people to try multiple times. There are complaints that it is not generically appropriate for all activities.
 - Our community welcomes participants from other lakes to our swim meets. Those communities are responsible for judging the ability of their swimmers. As a result, those lake communities regularly have a large number of younger swimmers participating in meets while Mountain Lakes has little to none. Mountain Lakes’ poor participation relative to other communities is because our youngest swimmers rarely pass the test. Many Mountain Lakes resident parents believe that the participants from these other lakes would not pass our swim test.
 - The swim Team leadership will have an independent conversation and make a recommendation of if/how their participants should be evaluated independently from the swim test.

- The sailing camp leadership will have an independent conversation about the requirements for both their counselors and campers.

6. Announcements

Next meeting August 17, 2021

7. Adjournment

Ina moved that the meeting be adjourned. Shaun seconded the motion. The motion passed at 9:03 PM.