

Borough of Norwood Recreation Committee March 19, 2025

The Public Meeting of the Recreation Committee of the Borough of Norwood was held in council chambers at the Norwood Borough Hall on the above date.

The committee members present during the meeting were:

Gene Huelster
Nicole Rivera
Steven Whaley
Rakesh Ramessar
Ariel Perez
Fernando Petrone
Frank Fanelli

Also present:

Council President Foschino
Lindsay Volpitta, Recreation Secretary

Mr. Huelster called the meeting to order and asked the Committee members to stand for the flag salute. The statement of compliance was read, the Mayoral appointments Matt Alberti and Fernando Petrone were sworn in, and a roll call of the Committee was taken.

Ms. Rivera made a motion to approve the February 11, 2025, meeting minutes. Mr. Whaley seconded the motion and the Committee unanimously agreed.

Directors Report

Mr. Plescia advised te Committee that the new DPW building in Old Tappan cost just under \$500,000.00 to build. The primary costs were the concrete and assembly.

Ms. Rivera asked if there was a status update on the rec center. Councilman Foschino said the future of the rec center is the swim club land. It is a dry flat piece of land that goes unused the majority of the year. There are a very limited number of Norwood residents that are members. Currently, the Borough has a year to year lease with the swim club. Ms. Rivera said there is no benefit to maintain the pool if it is not being used by residents.

Soccer Report

Mr. O'Mullane was not present at the meeting. Earlier he had sent an email to Ms. Volpitta with the soccer update. Soccer is wrapping up the season this weekend. There are four (4) teams that have qualified for the semi-finals; girls 3rd/4th, two (2) boys 3rd/4th, and boys 5th/6th. The matches will be this weekend.

Football Report

Mr. Petrone informed the Committee that registration for this upcoming seasons opens on April 7th. There will be a discounted registration fee for those that register in the first thirty (30) days. All teams must be submitted to the league by June 15th. If there are not enough children to field a team they will be absorbed on the team of another town. The Football Board is looking for a new Board member to replace one who moved out of town.

Councilman Foschino told the Committee that earlier in the day, along with Mayor Barsa, he met with Harrington Park to discuss the budget issue. They are also rumors circulating that the Raiders will not be able to field a team. Mr. Petrone said he is aware of at least nine (9) juniors returning and ten (10) seniors.

Mr. Whaley asked if we send children to the neighboring towns to play, are they going to expect contributions from Norwood. Mr. Petrone said they only ask for the registration fees. They also have parents volunteer to work the snack shed and field cleanups. Games could also be held at Kennedy if needed.

Cheer Report

Ms. Rivera did not have a report due to football not knowing if they will have teams.

Baseball/Softball Report

Mr. Perez said the baseball and softball registrations closed in mid February. The 1st/2nd softball team will be taking on four (4) girls from Northvale for a total of seventeen (17) girls on that team. There are three (3) 5th/6th grade girls going to Old Tappan and two (2) 7th/8th grade boys going to Closter. Opening day is scheduled for April 26th.

Mr. Whaley said that the directors of the travel and club teams should be contacted and asked to reach out to the Norwood parents to ask them to have their children play rec baseball and softball as well as travel.

Basketball Report

Mr. Ramessar said travel basketball is over and rec basketball will be finished at the end of the month. Registration for summer basketball will open the first week in May. The Basketball Board has requested that in the future, half way through the season, NPS polish the gym floors.

DPW Director Report

There was no DPW report.

Budgets and Purchasing Requests

Councilman Foschino informed the Committee that all recreation budgets will stay the same as last year, there will be no increases.

Little League Participation Update

Mr. Huelster advised that Old Tappan, who was leading the charge to join Little League, has dropped out. Ms. Volpitta said the Borough Administrator received an email from the Old Tappan Borough Administrator asking if Norwood and the surrounding towns would be interested in a northern valley travel league. Ms. Volpitta will forward the information to Mr. Perez.

Field Use Subcommittee Applications

Mr. Huelster reviewed the applications that were received with the Committee. NVOT, NPS, Santos Baseball, Whalers, NJ Thunder, and NJ Vipers were all approved from field use. The NJ Bombers were denied field use.

Mr. Plescia asked if we were charging the schools to use the fields because NVOT normally allows indoor soccer to use the gym at no charge in exchange for the field use. Mr. Huelster said we do not charge NVOT or NPS. Councilman Foschino said he will contact NPS to discuss an arrangement for using the fields and the gym.

Mr. Whaley made a motion to recommend the Mayor and Council approve field use for the above noted teams. Ms. River seconded the motion and the Committee unanimously agreed.

Mr. Huelster suggested expanding the recreation programs to include volleyball and girls flag football.

Mr. Whaley made a motion to open the meeting to the public. Mr. Fanelli seconded the motion and the Committee unanimously agreed.

There was no one in attendance who wished to speak.

Mr. Fanelli made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Mr. Whaley seconded the motion and the Committee unanimously agreed.

Mr. Whaley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Fanelli seconded the motion and the Committee unanimously agreed.

Mr. Huelster thanked the Committee and adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsay Volpitta
Committee Secretary