

Borough of Wildwood Crest Tourism Commission Meeting

Wednesday, Nov. 13, 2024

Crest Pier Recreation Center

Meeting called to order by Brian Cunniff at 4:01 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Reading of the Sunshine Ordinance – In compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231 P.L. 231 175, the notice requirements have been classified as to the time, place and date of holding said meeting by posting notice of the same on the bulletin board in borough hall and by mailing the same to the Press of Atlantic City and the Cape May County Herald.

Roll Call:	Don Cabrera, Mayor/Commissioner	present
	Joanna Lacivita, Tourism Commission	present
	Dennis Hall, Tourism Commission	present
	Stephanie Alicea	present
	Thomas Ankrum	not present
	Frank Basile, Recreation Supervisor	present
	Brian Cunniff, Asst. Rec Supervisor/TDC secretary	present

A quorum is present.

Dennis Hall made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 2024 meeting of the TDC as presented. Joanna Lacivita seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Brian Cunniff distributed copies of meeting dates for 2025.

Brian Cunniff announced that the borough has received the New Jersey Governor's "We Value Our Veterans" Community Award. Borough resident and volunteer Mike Marino, who spearheaded the borough's efforts toward obtaining this designation, accepted the award at a Veterans Day ceremony at the Vietnam War Memorial in Holmdel on Monday. Mr. Marino will officially present the award to the borough at the next meeting of the Board of Commissioners later this month.

Brian Cunniff again advised the members about the TDC budget. Trying to cut costs on live music shows this summer a bit. Brian added that the scheduling of live music for 2025 has already begun.

Brian Cunniff stated that the 2025 borough calendar is in the design process. Hope to get to printer shortly before or after Thanksgiving, with the printed versions delivered to the borough before Christmas.

Brian Cunniff stated that renewals for beach storage box rentals will take place in mid January. Borough residents, particularly the elderly or those disabled, will be given first priority in the booking of any new available rentals.

Mayor Cabrera addressed the lack of funding for entertainment. He said he is meeting with the borough's GWTIDA reps to develop strategic planning toward direction on what they hope GWTIDA should focus on island wide. He said GWTIDA does an excellent job of promoting island events and the island in general, as well as funding some general infrastructure improvements and some events. He added that GWTIDA has a large budget surplus and that maybe our local TDC could make a request to bring more money into our coffers so we can carry out events at the local level where they wouldn't get involved. Brian Cunniff added that GWTIDA has regularly stated that they don't fund weekly events such as a music series, although he did point out that GWTIDA does make an exception for that with the weekly fireworks on the boardwalk.

Mayor Cabrera stated that we as a municipality can pressure GWTIDA and have our reps champion this cause for the borough.

Stephanie Alicea left the meeting at 4:30 p.m. due to a prior commitment.

Mayor Cabrera stated that the 95 percent plans have come in regarding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dune project. He said the borough will take a look and provide feedback. There will be an open meeting in the spring. Plans went from 60 to 65 percent and now to 95 percent. Plans are now getting into the small details of how the dune will be laid out. He said believes it will make major differences to the look and functionality of the beach, which is the borough's livelihood. He added that Mother Nature will do what it wants. If the borough's beaches are tampered with it could change them forever. He added that the \$2 million credit toward rebuilding the fishing pier has been pulled from the plans. He believes the borough may need to push back on these plans.

Dennis Hall stated that this is the same Army Corps of Engineers that built jetties in our area that changed the beaches on the island. He said they can project what may happen with a potential new dune but they don't know for sure what the effects will be.

Mayor Cabrera added that access to the beach could be hampered. He said he's proud that our community has ADA access to the beach at every street end. Once this dune is built, there may only be six ADA accessible areas, whereas every one of our streets ends to the beach is currently ADA accessible.

Dennis Hall asked if the borough's voice means anything.

Mayor Cabrera stated that if the borough takes opposition to this project, it would help if the residents throw their support behind that position. He added that the plans we have today are totally different than the ones of four years ago.

Mayor Cabrera said Wildwood Crest and Wildwood have the most to lose by giving sand to North Wildwood. He said that the Army Corps is concerned with a once-every-100-years storm. Mayor Cabrera said his belief is that any dune isn't going to help with storm surge from a hurricane on the west side, which is where the borough currently has more problems. He said our tidal surge will come more from the bay than the ocean due to the width of our beaches and the current dune system already in place.

Mayor Cabrera said most residents he's heard from would rather not mess with our beach and keep it the way it is.

Joanna Lacivita said the once the word gets out about this she believes most residents would not be happy with these plans.

Dennis Hall asked about local businesses perhaps stepping in and contributing to fund concerts. He added that announcements could be made and signs posted to recognize the sponsors.

Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.