

Borough of Wildwood Crest Tourism Commission Meeting

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Crest Pier Recreation Center

Meeting called to order by Brian Cunniff at 4:02 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
	Chrissy Casiello, Tourism Commission	not present
	Dennis Hall, Tourism Commission	present
	Lester Klayman, Tourism Commission	present
	Frank Basile, Recreation Supervisor	present
	Brian Cunniff, Asst. Rec Supervisor/TDC secretary	present

A quorum is present.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Brian Cunniff asked the members to remain standing and observe a moment of silence in memory of TDC and GWTIDA committee member Bob Patterson, who passed away over the summer.

Mayor Cabrera stated that a search will be conducted for a residential member to serve on both the TDC and GWTIDA boards.

Brian Cunniff stated that, overall, the summer event season went very well. The opening of the Crest Arts Pavilion added a new layer to what is being offered. Plans are to have events at the CAP Monday through Thursday evenings next year in an effort to draw people to the building in the evening hours. Brian stated that the retail vendor, Beach Brew USA, did very well in the daytime and helped bring people in to see the building. The recreation department held some events there this summer. Some did better than others. Hopefully, with a year under our belt and more exposure, events there will thrive next year, particularly after the outside landscaping is complete.

Frank Basile added that the recreation department is promoting the art concept and allowing artists to display their creations for a fee. For the month of October, there are three artists that have their items on display. Artists can make money back through sales of their art pieces. Frank added that inquiries have come in from other artists, as well as other members of the public looking to rent the building.

Brian Cunniff added that the merchandise store in the CAP building was received well and sales were brisk this summer. He credited staff member Nick Holland with spearheading that work.

Dennis Hall thanked the borough and the elected officials for having the foresight to renovate the building and turn it into the arts pavilion.

Frank Basile added that parking was a bit of an issue this summer but that should be alleviated for next summer after the outside work is done over the winter.

Mayor Cabrera stated that the three Seward Johnson public art sculptures that were placed around the borough were mostly well received. He understood some people didn't like them but for the most part they were a hit with the general public.

Mayor Cabrera stated that all beach street-end entrance areas south of Rambler Road are complete and have been overwhelmingly successful and positive. He said the borough is laying the groundwork to improve street-end beach entrances north of Rambler Road. Won't be able to add decks but the borough has received permission from the state to widen the entrances and add railings, foot showers, bike racks and benches.

Mayor Cabrera stated that the Cape May County Open Space program will be awarding \$1.043 million to the borough for work on the exterior of the Crest Arts Pavilion. Hoping to go out to bid in October, with construction beginning toward the end of this calendar year. Should be finished in time for next season. Parking, EV charging stations, bike racks, small outdoor pavilion, major landscaping improvements among the work.

Mayor Cabrera said one of the issues the borough is wrestling with is what to do with the large rock that is on the grounds there. Dennis Hall commented that perhaps it should be worked into the new landscaping. Lester Klayman mentioned perhaps dedicating the rock to the Fox family, who originally donated the land to the borough.

Mayor Cabrera stated that he has been contacted by a race group to possibly take over the Crest Best Swim Best and Crest Best Run Fest that did not occur in 2023 after DelMoSports pulled out. Mayor Cabrera would like to see those two events return next year. Running event would be in early to mid October. Swim event would be in June, depending on tides. He said he is expecting a proposal soon.

Mayor Cabrera commented that the new pickleball courts at Wisteria and Ocean were mobbed this summer and were a big success. Always good to bring in new facilities, amenities and events that support tourism. He added that the shade structure is due to be installed in November and that the current rundown building there may be replaced before next summer as well.

Dennis Hall stated that he witnessed an annual bathtub race in Berlin, Delaware, recently. A huge signature event for that town. Perhaps Crest could come up with something similar. Brian Cunniff commented that he doubts the JIF would ever approve such an event. Would have to be run by a privately.

Mayor Cabrera announced that the holiday tree-lighting ceremony is set for Dec. 1 at 5 pm at Sunset Lake. Changed from 6 pm so not to conflict with the holiday parade in town that evening. Lester Klayman asked if the Crest Arts Pavilion would be decorated for the holidays. Frank Basile responded that it would and that a holiday tree-decorating event is tentatively scheduled for the building for the weekend of Dec. 9-10.

There was some talk of possibly having a bike-decorating contest for Christmas in July. Brian Cunniff responded that we already have the festival and boat parade that weekend but that it's something we could look into.

Meeting adjourned at 5 p.m.