BOROUGH OF MOUNTAIN LAKES RECREATION COMMISSION

Monthly Meeting Minutes – Quick Notes

Minutes for January 20, 2026, at 7:30 PM via Zoom

Call to Order

A monthly meeting of the Borough of Mountain Lakes Recreation Commission was held on January 20, 2026, at 7:30 PM via Zoom teleconference. The meeting was presided over by David Keyt, with Heather Hornyak serving as secretary.

Attendance

- Voting Members: David Keyt, Heather Hornyak, Shaun Lehrer, James Aitken, Derek Jackson, Julia McVeigh, Mark Odenwelder, Ilaxi Rana, Rob Wianecki
- Non-voting Members: Laurie Stepper (Recreation Director), Arian Nanda (junior member)
- Members not in attendance: none
- Guests in attendance: none

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting on November 18, 2025, were approved as submitted.

Recreation Director's Report (Laurie Stepper)

- Coordinating details for Junior and Clinic Track, including facility permits, registration, and league fees.
- Conducting inspections of racks and rings needed for repairs.
- Sending employment applications to 2025 Summer Recreation Program staff on their intent to return this summer, including tentative availability. This will help with determining how many new staff are needed.
- Planning logistics for Summer Recreation Programs, including open registration dates, increasing summer fee for lakes suggested (family, per resident, day pass, guest pass) to keep up with minimum wage increase, facility reservations, and expenses.
- Attended NJRPA presentation on "Engage and Include: Building Adaptive Adult Programs."

Upcoming Events & Important Dates

March 2026

- Rack and Ring Renewals: Registration window opens.
- Summer Recreation Programs: Registration opens for all summer sessions.
- Sat, March 28: Astronomy Event at Halsey Field.
- Sun, March 29: Annual Egg Hunt at Haswell Park.

April 2026

New Rack and Ring Applications: Open window for new applicants.
Sat, April 18: Trout Derby at Birchwood Lake.

Save the Date: Friday, July 3: Independence Day Fireworks over Mountain Lake.

New Business

1. **Volunteer Verification & Background Checks**

   Objective: Establish a formal policy/procedure for all volunteers working with children, like the processes followed by Junior Laker lacrosse and basketball, Tri-Town Little League, etc.

   a. Option A: Adult volunteers complete and email a verification form directly to Laurie.
   b. Option B: Sport coordinators submit a consolidated list of volunteers along with a signed agreement.

   Compliance Agreement: Laurie will draft a formal agreement for all partner entities (quasi-entities) to sign. This document will confirm that the organization agrees to mandatory background checks for all volunteers.

   Tracking & Verification: Develop a system to track fingerprinting status and background check results.

   Maintain a master "State List" to verify individuals who have passed.
   Program Oversight: Determine if the Mountain Lakes Rec Dept requires additional info from quasi-entities that facilitate their own programs.

2. **Facility Rental Process & Policy Update**

   Current Status & Challenges: The current rental form is too limited, covering only basic logistics (date/time/location) and insurance minimums ($500k for homeowners; $1M for public entities). We are seeing an increase in "odd requests" that our current policy is not equipped to handle.

   Objectives for Policy Revision: Comprehensive Agreement: Develop a more comprehensive rental agreement like neighboring municipalities to better protect the Borough.

   Permitted Use Guidelines: Create a definitive "Allowed vs. Prohibited" list for activities on Borough property.

   Commercial Activity: Investigate and establish rules regarding the sale of goods/merchandise on public property.

   Logistics & Requirements: Formalize requirements for live entertainment, sanitation (bathroom access), and increased insurance thresholds.

   Facility Rental Subcommittee: A subcommittee has been formed to vet policies from other communities and adapt them to meet the needs of Mountain Lakes. Subcommittee members: Derek Jackson, James Aitken, Julia McVeigh, IIaxi Rana, and Arian Nanda.

- **Announcements**
  - Next meeting is scheduled for February 17, 2026.

- **Adjournment**
  - The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.