



Allentown

435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pa. 18101

Meeting Minutes Recreation Board

Thursday, September 4, 2025

8:00 AM

Bucky Boyle Recreation Building

[Minutes are considered a draft until approved at the next meeting.]

Roll Call

Board Members & City Administration:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nancy Witt - Chair	<input type="checkbox"/> Zaleeae Sierra
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Julie Ambrose-Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/> Mike Comick
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ana Tiburcio	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Josh Novak
<input type="checkbox"/> Ray Nunez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dave Snyder
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rebecca Kiss	<input type="checkbox"/> Hamp Smith
<input type="checkbox"/> City Council	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> William Rhoades
<input type="checkbox"/> Mike Hanlon (City Clerk)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mayor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dave Eddinger	

Parks and Recreation Staff in Attendance:

Bryne Heffner-Bair, Chris Hendricks, Lucinda Wright, Priscilla Reyes
Guest Allentown Parknership Executive Director Ruffian Tittman

Minutes

June 5, 2025, Minutes Approval

Motion to approve the minutes as written made by: B. Kiss, 2nd by D. Snyder, All voted in favor. **Motion carried.**

Communications

Welcome to new member William (Bill) Rhoades and Committee introductions
President of Fish and Game Protective Assn. They float stock for the state now in the Lehigh Valley. Work with Wildlands on riparian buffer maintenance. Sunday fly fishing class at Camp Olympic.

P&R Reports

Various Project Updates – Bryne provided a written report and shared several highlights: reported the **Bogert's Bridge** work will begin now; will stop when it gets too cold; and will resume in the spring. Will fix the sag, add slate roof. **Dixson Bridge** construction done; waiting for the bridge itself; likely ribbon cutting late Sept. **New mini pitch** at Jordan funded through US Soccer associated with the World Cup. **Skate Park** construction completed, just need to finish some access/stair work. Saturday, Sept. 13 ribbon cutting at noon. **MLK Trail** – working n phase 1 permitting; phase 2 RFP was issued; phase 3 will be later this year. Delays on the **Master Plan** – new schedule will be sent out. **Roosevelt pavilion** installed; still need to add tables. Considering a spray park where the building was. **Rose Garden** change orders needed to finish the project. **Tree work** happening throughout several parks. **WPA project** manual for Lehigh Parkway underway.

Renaming **Valania Park** by City Council on 9/17 with celebration the next day. This generated discussion around the history of signage at Valania over the past three years and the lack of movement on that promised signage; and what feels like a rush to rename the park will an undetermined amount community input. Lucinda reported she was not deeply involved in the naming. Members acknowledged the challenges of unpacking history and choosing how to represent it.

The park was not built until the 1976 but the part of the city is the oldest part, it is listed in the charter of Northampton. So the history to tell is the history of the people.

Motion to present the following position statement from the Board of Recreation to Mayor Tuerk:

The Board of Recreation members adamantly oppose the renaming of this park at the next City Council meeting because the board was not consulted, informed or involved in any way. There appears to have been no or very limited community input. The people who live in the area are very attached to this park. The Board of Recreation has been requesting movement from the city on the historical signage at Valania that was to be part of the renovations. The Board feels it is premature to rename the Park without having done the work of involving the community in uncovering and presenting the history of the park.

Motion made by: Becky Kiss

Seconded by: Bill Rhoades

All voted in favor. **Motion carried.**

Recreation Updates – Chris Hendricks – Highlights from the written report:

Challenging summer with heat and then rain necessitated changing locations on sport leagues.

Year 110 for Summer Playground Program – staff did a great job – very passionate, and the kids were very receptive to the staff. Romper Day and Dorney Park events were highly successful.

12 movies – 8 have happened. Well received. Last one is 10/24.

Fishing & Fun in the park in partnership with the LV Center for Independent Living – 9/27 in Lehigh Parkway.

Friday night soccer skills & drills in Jordan Park (open to residents and nonresidents).

Basketball Skills & Drills; King/Queen of the Cours both starting.

West Park Concerts were postponed during the fair because all of the benches are relocated to the fair.

Yoga in the Park through the end of September in several parks.

New Youth Group: Allentown Falcons

Football at MiniVikes (Percy Ruhe) and East Side.

Aquatics – saves across all pools decreased dramatically; it was a great summer. The new leadership model was successful. Partnered with YMCA to run 3 learn to swim sessions across the city and residents benefitted.

Monday Funday was expanded this year. Kyle does these throughout the city. It was quite popular. 3 weeks in a row: active play, guided play, PAL cookout. Will still do Jordan Park (Sept) and Franklin Park (Oct). Next year will schedule with the movies to cross-promote.

Special Events Updates - Priscilla

Last **concert** at UT 9/12; very successful partnership with ArtsQuest.

Bumba on the Beach at Cedar Beach coming up.

Trick or Treat falls on 10/31 and the **walking parade** will be 11/1 (raindate 11/2). Looking for volunteers, sponsors, vendors, candy donations, etc. **Wants Rec Commission members to be involved** in some way. Team planning for Dia de los Muertos at Arts Park.

Lights in the Parkway – 29th Annual – begins Nov. 28 ends Tues, Jan 6. Added some new displays. There will be 7 walking days (every Monday and Jan 6). Looking for food sponsors, volunteer groups. Will alert to preview night.

MyRec Platform has the master calendar – must be registered and have an account, and then you will get emails and alerts: **AllentownPA.myrec.com**

Director/Deputy Director Updates - Lucinda

Old Business

New Business

- Saturday, Ripple Celebration in the Park 12-3pm at Franklin Park – 10th Anniversary of Ripple Community Center
- Parks team has updated many parks with bathroom timers – very helpful.
- Anna – Old Fairgrounds Park looks a little bit abandoned.
- America250PA – city plans? City working with the Lehigh County committee with Fadia; the 4th of July celebration will be part of it. Hometown heroes banner program. Will be looking to bring the city to life throughout the entire year.

Adjourn – 9:15 am Motion made by Becky and 2nd by Bill.