



WILDWOOD

January 24, 2023

MEMORANDUM

To: Planning and Parks Committee Members

From: Department of Planning and Parks

Re: **Update on In-Person and Virtual Recreation Programs**

Cc: The Honorable James R. Bowlin, Mayor
Steve Cross, City Administrator
John A. Young, City Attorney
Rick Brown, P.E. and P.T.O.E., Director of Public Works
Melanie Rippetoe, Assistant Director of Planning and Parks
Kristin Naeger, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation
Stacy Chanski, Recreation Specialist

Listed below is a summary of the programs and activities the City has completed, or have currently underway, relative to implementing the goals and recommendations that are set forth for parks and recreation in the City's Action Plan 2018. This summary reflects major items that have been the focus of the City, since the Committee's November 2022 meeting:

Wildwood Farms Community Garden

- The 2022 Garden Season came to a close on October 18, 2022, when most vegetation did not survive the overnight freezing temperatures. While most plots have been cleaned out, gardeners are welcome to garden during the winter months. Deadlines for cleaning out plots were December 5, 2022, for those members that are not winter gardening, and January 15, 2023, for those gardeners that continued to the end of the year.
- There are eighty-four (84) garden hopefuls on the waiting list for a plot next year.
- Registration for the 2023 season will begin in February.

Hometown Heroes Banner Program

- Hometown Hero Banners are a great way to give living tribute and honor to those individuals who have served or continue to serve in the United States Armed Forces. The program honors past and present members by featuring local heroes on banners.

- The banners will be displayed along Manchester Road, twice per year, in celebration of Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Following the final display, banners will be given to the hero's family or stored by the City for renewal the following year.
- The program launched on Veterans Day, November 11, 2022, and banners can be purchased online or at City Hall through February 15, 2023.
- Thus far, four (4) hero banners and one (1) business sponsorship banner have been purchased and the City is looking into additional ways of promoting the program.

Wildwood Celebration Commission Meeting

- The Commission did not meet in December, but held its regular meeting on January 4, 2023, at which Members discussed the venue location for the 2023 event, potential revenue sources, parade components and other items.

Feed the Masses

- Parks and Recreation Association (MPRA) Region Four hosted its Third Annual "Feed the Masses" Food Drive Contest this holiday season, during which Parks and Recreation Departments from around the region competed to see which could collect the most food items in November to be donated to the local food bank of their choice.
- Two (2) large totes were placed in the vestibule at the Main Street entry doors at City Hall for the deposit of donations and were there until November 30, 2022.
- The City of Wildwood collected one hundred forty-four (144) items and the City ranked 10th out of twenty-three (23) cities.

Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony

- In partnership with the Wildwood Business Association, the City of Wildwood hosted the City's Annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony on December 3, 2022, from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., at the plaza square in Town Center.
- Local businesses decorated trees along Plaza Drive, in the themes appropriate to them, to help bring the holiday spirit and prepare for the festivities!
- This festive evening was once again a success! The Mayor led the lighting of the tree at 5:00 p.m. and everyone enjoyed the live music from the Kingsbury Place Singers, S'mores, provided by the Wildwood Business Association, along with craft making with volunteers from Living Word, and Santa Claus rounded out the evening!
- Amidst our local businesses, vendors sold hot chocolate, specialty coffee, chili, treats, and more!

Frozen Feet

- Join us on Saturday, January 28, 2023, as the City of Wildwood hosts the 13th Annual Wildwood Frozen Feet Half Marathon Trail Run. The race starts at 8:00 a.m., at LaSalle Springs Middle School!
- This year's course will follow a series of trails located in the City of Wildwood, including the Hamilton-Carr Greenway, the Al Foster Memorial Trail, the Bluff View Trail, the Flow Trail, the Bluff View Connector Trail, the Rock Hollow Trail, and the Zombie East Trail.
- All participants will receive a new, insulated jacket and there will be food and drinks at the finish line, where participants will receive their awards!

- Thus far, there are one hundred fifty-five (155) participants registered for the event and registration will remain open until the morning of the event.

Cabin Fever Hiking Challenge

- Due to the popularity of the event, the City is once again hosting the Cabin Fever Hiking Challenge (last year forty (40) hikers completed the first hike during and immediately after a snowstorm)!
- The challenge consists of two (2) hikes designed to challenge enthusiastic participants! Each route is brand new and has one or more selfie locations along the way, where participants must take a photograph and submit to the Department of Planning and Parks proving they completed the course.
- The first of which takes hikers on a three (3) mile journey, which must be completed between February 1st and February 23rd.
- The second hike will be approximately seven (7) miles that participants will have from March 1st through March 23rd to complete.
- Participants that complete both virtual hikes and submit photos from the selfie stations will receive a Cabin Fever Hiking Challenge T-Shirt for their participation.

Upcoming City Events

January 28, 2023	Wildwood Frozen Feet Half Marathon Trail Run
February 1, 2023	Cabin Fever Challenge - Hike One (1) Begins
March 1, 2023	Cabin Fever Challenge - Hike Two (2) Begins

CONTACT INFORMATION >>> If any of the Committee Members should have any questions or comments regarding this information, please feel free to contact the Department of Planning and Parks at (636) 458-0440.