

Borough of West Reading Recreation Commission Meeting

Monday, August 3, 2026

Meeting called to order at 6:07pm

Members present: Israel Arce, Colleen English, John Harvey, Kristin Hawley, Heather Jagielski, Taryn Shillady

Members absent: Ryan Oberly

Borough Council members present: Bethany Bower (left 6:45pm), Denise Drobnick (chair)

Borough Staff present: Mike Esterly, Recreation Director

Public Comment

None.

Motion to approve the minutes from June 2026 made by Heather Jagielski. Seconded by Taryn Shillady. Motion passed (8-0).

Welcomed new commission member, Israel Arce.

Upcoming Events

No involvement in French Fry Fest or National Night Out this year.

Karaoke Competition, Sept. 6, 4-8pm

- Held at 3rd and Spruce
- Registration begins at 3:15pm
- Volunteers for registration and throughout event

Pups in the Pool, Sept. 7

- No volunteers needed

Haunted House

- Theme and new ideas in process
- Schedule for help constructing and decorating coming soon

Christmas Tree Lighting

- Tree is no longer standing after car accident in Delaney Circle
- Discussed options for how to move forward with planning for this year. Options include artificial tree, hosting event at new location (new civic property on Penn Ave – former gas station), alternate decorations
- Will continue to discuss ideas when more information on potential funds is available.

New Events

Discussed potential with Smooches for Pooches, a 501(c)(3) that benefits pet rescues. They hold annual event in May that raises funds for local pet rescues and Safe Berks.

The collaborative event would be a concert-in-the-park style event on October 31, that would include a pet parade. The Haunted House would also be open. Smooches for Pooches will organize music and sound, as well as vendors. Vendors may include food and alcohol. Recreation will offer volunteer support and fee waivers. Smooches for Pooches will collect and retain vendor fees; Recreation would collect and retain ticket fees for Haunted House admission. Event will be family friendly and may include trick or treat (with vendors handing out candy). Event will serve as a fundraiser for Smooches for Pooches, as well as Recreation, and be mutually beneficial.

Event date: Saturday, October 31, 12-4pm

Motion to amend the agenda to include an action item to vote on supporting Smooches for Pooches and Recreation collaboration made by Heather Jagielski. Seconded by Taryn Shillady. Motion passed (8-0).

Motion to recommend that Borough Council approve the Smooches for Pooches and Recreation collaboration with Recreation for an event on October 31 at the West Reading Pavilion, including approval for alcohol and Recreation fee waivers made by Kristin Hawley. Seconded by John Harvey. Motion passed (8-0).

Briefly discussed 2027 event calendar; discussion will continue at future meetings.

Recreation Director Updates

Playground program ended on July 31. Successful year.

Good year at the pool.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Kristin Hawley. Seconded by Heather Jagielski. Motion carried (7-0).

Next meeting: Tuesday, September 1.

Respectfully submitted,
Colleen English
Recreation Commission Secretary