

# MAYOR'S REPORT

**August 16, 2022**

Last week, Our new Superintendent of Recreation, EJ Tarpey and I did a ride around to all the parks. We are looking forward to him starting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and continuing to bring enhancement to our parks and recreation programs. In addition, we stopped over at Music in the Park to see our opening act Dr. Dick at Shappell Park. Remember, music in the park is every Thursday 6-9pm until September 29<sup>th</sup>.

We continue to see businesses open in town, from small to large. This past week, Council Vice President Clark and I welcomed Rapaen Cuisine to our downtown. It is located on S. Main St, next to Soma. All the best to owner Wilson Patino. I am also excited to announce that Shopify will be moving the new building at Bridgepoint 78. Working with private industry we are seeing the most redevelopment in over 100 years.

Our infrastructure programs are continuing to move forward, the sidewalks are completed at the triangle in Hillcrest and on Warren St with more to come in the coming weeks. In addition, AQUA water will continue to work in Phillipsburg to replace and upgrade the lead service lines. We appreciate AQUA working to expedite these replacements and upgrades.

Last week, Commissioner Kern, Town Council and I joined Norwescap and Senator Booker as Norwescap received a \$1.05 million check from the federal government that will go towards improving food security in NJ. Thank you, Senator Booker, and Norwescap for all you do for our community. In addition, after the event, I met with Senator Booker, Council Vice President Clark and Councilman Kennedy to discuss the possibilities on getting an at grade crossing on N. Main St. The meeting was productive and agreed to help us get it done.

The FYC has now completed the 5-week Summer Playground Program! The following is a summary of the program:

- Week #4's theme was one of their favorites: HERO WEEK! Along with a ton of activities, the kids experienced visits from the Phillipsburg Police Department, Fire Department, and Emergency Squad!
- The 5th and final week of the Playground Program focused on "PRIDE." The Staff led a park clean-up day and multiple lessons on what it means to take pride in their school work, their neighborhood, and everything they do! They also selected a theme for their park, created decorations, and Mr. Mark visited as the Celebrity Judge. He brought ice-pops to the and named Firth Playground as the "Best Overall" with their Winter Wonderland/Christmas theme!
- Week #5 continued with "Worldly Wednesday" series and featured Ms. Elaine Malcolm who shared about Jamaican Culture. She shared a video portraying what it was like to grow up

in Jamaica, including washing clothes by hand, ironing without electricity, school uniforms, and the challenges of not having running water. Ms. Elaine shared that she moved to the States in 1974 and runs a business with her husband. She also brought some Jamaican food and taught a traditional dance. Worldly Wednesdays were added to the Playground Program in an effort to provide education on varying cultures and foster acceptance, tolerance, and inclusion.

- The last day included a “What I love about my playground” activity, pizza party, and an award ceremony.
- Four of the six staff rotating through the schedule attended the Playground Program as children and all six live in Phillipsburg. Not only did this program provide for kids of P’burg, but it also provided opportunities for young adults of P’burg to work! Kelly Post-Sheedy and the entire FYC team understands the importance of keeping the Program alive and well, as evidenced by their commitment, positive attitudes, and continuously going above and beyond to create awesome childhood memories and enriching experiences.
- Despite extremely high temperatures and some rain, attendance grew each week. Firth Playground ended with a cumulative attendance of 128, with 19 unique youth served. Walters Playground has a cumulative attendance of 177, with 32 unique youth served. In total, 51 unique youth have attended for a total of 305 services rendered. The data shows that once the kids got to the Playground, they kept coming back!

On behalf of the Town of Phillipsburg I would like to thank the FYC Board of Directors, Kelly Post-Sheedy and the entire FYC Staff, for working together on such a successful 2022 Playground Program. We look forward to working with you on many more opportunities in the future.

This is now one of the most important statements I have made as mayor. As you know, we have had an uptick in shooting calls in the past year. These incidents are the number one priority of the Police Department and our Town as a whole. I assure the residents that all available resources are being used to identify these suspects. I would ask the community, as a whole, to assist our Police Department in any way possible. If you see anything suspicious, call the Police Department. If you have cameras and live in the area of Hudson Street and Schultz Ave or Hudson Street and Pear Alley please review them and contact the Police Department. We need everyone's help to address these issues. It will continue to be our number one priority.

Respectfully Submitted,

Todd M. Tersigni, Mayor