

The Waltham Parks-Recreation Board held their February Board Meeting on Wednesday, February 7, 2024 at the Waltham Recreation Department, 510 Moody St, Waltham, MA 02453.

Present were: Wayne Cook, Tom Creonte, Patricia Curtin, John Graceffa, Jennie Scafidi, Stacey Tully, Gary Vallerand and Jerry Walker. Absent was Richard Scanlon.

Also present were Director, Kim Hebert and Assistant Director, Ed Kelley II.

Chairperson Jerry Walker called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

A motion was then made to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2024 Parks-Recreation Board Meeting by John Graceffa and seconded by Tom Creonte. All were in favor.

The monthly bills were circulated and signed by all Parks-Recreation Board Members.

Director Hebert reviewed the statement of accounts explaining that the accounts detailed the current balances in operational and capital budget accounts, and directed the Board to the Capital Improvements accounts page, highlighting the newly added account for 190 Trapelo Road. This account is for the Universal and Memorial areas of the new project. Director Hebert continued explaining that on the next page was a request to City Council for playground surfacing improvements to Monsignor McCabe and Lazazzero playgrounds. Capital accounts are being consolidated for funding this request. All accounts are in good standing.

Annual Youth Sports Presentations were next on the agenda.

Waltham Youth Football and Waltham Youth Hockey were both rescheduled to the March Parks-Recreation Board Meeting.

Waltham Youth Soccer was next on the agenda and were represented by Carolina Lara who provided a summary of the League's year and financial report. Mrs. Lara stated that the League is very healthy with over 900 participants which is the largest number they have had. Due to the healthy number of participants, the Youth Soccer Board's focus is on working on coach development. The Board thanked Mrs. Lara for her efforts and a great season.

Next on the agenda was the "2024 Proposed Summer Program Fees". Director Hebert stated that in 2023, the Parks-Recreation Board approved returning rates to pre COVID amounts. Director Hebert recommended maintaining the rates for one more year, with only a minor increase. These increases would be bringing art, drama, and basketball programs to \$115, comparable to other half day sports programs.

A motion to approve the "2024 Proposed Summer Program Fees" was made by John Graceffa and seconded by Tom Creonte. All were in favor.

Next on the agenda was the "2024 Summer Staff Rates". Director Hebert stated that in 2023, the Parks-Recreation Board approved increasing rates to follow the State of Massachusetts' minimum wage. As the Recreation Department strives to stay competitive in staff recruitment

and retention, Director Hebert requested a \$1.00 increase to all seasonal/part-time hourly rates for the FY 2025 budget.

A motion to approve the “2024 Summer Staff Rates” was made by Wayne Cook and seconded by Tricia Curtin. All were in favor.

Next on the agenda was the “Community Development Block Grant Request”. Director Hebert referred to handouts in the Board’s folder. These handouts included the request and letter to the Housing and Community Development Director, Robert Waters, for construction costs to the Logan Park and McKenna Playground projects that recently started the design process. Once approved, the request and letter will be sent to City Hall. When approved by the Mayor and City Council, the funding would be available in October of 2024.

A motion to approve the “Community Development Block Grant Request” was made by Wayne Cook and seconded by Stacey Tully. All were in favor.

Director’s Report:

Logan/McKenna Park Design – Beals & Thomas are contracted for design services of Logan Park and McKenna Playground and basketball improvements. A public meeting was held on Wednesday, January 31, 2024. Approximately 30 residents, elected officials and City employees were present.

Outdoor Athletic Field/Facility Permits- These applications became available online starting February 1, 2024. Received requests are being reviewed and approved and will be sent out at the end of the month for the Spring season

Ranger Update- Park Ranger Adam Green provided a year in review of all projects and tasks he has been working on. In 2024, a group of volunteers will be taking over the role of Stewards of Prospect Hill which will provide more hands and resources for the property. On the reverse of the report, was a proposed sign for a Boy Scout’s eagle project intended for the restoration of the base of a windmill in Berry Park. The scout has been working with Adam Green as well as the Historical Commission on this project.

190 Trapelo Road - Director Hebert informed the Board that a pre-construction meeting was held on Friday, January 26, 2024 for the universal and memorial areas. Construction will begin later in February. Green Acres Construction and Landscape was awarded the contract for construction. Due to the high level of vandalism on the entire property; the Recreation Department is working with the Mayor’s office and Police Department. Additional fencing, beginning at the fence at the Lawrence School, east onto Trapelo Road and continuing along the residential neighborhood to Waverly Oaks Road, will be added to the current contract. This would reduce accessibility to the 190 Trapelo Road property through neighbor’s yards. A communication to the Historical Commission was also provided noting that the fencing will be a part of this project. Director Hebert also notified the Board that the Mayor is putting the request to restore the historical names for the property of 190 Trapelo Road, the buildings under care, custody and control of the Recreation Department as well as renaming of the main street into the property before City Council. Additional buildings/structures will be requested to be transferred

to the Recreation Department. These buildings/structures will assist with indoor bathroom and storage needs.

Rink Update- The year is flying by as the rink season is in its final months. An update from Assistant Superintendent, Ryan Kelley, was provided. The season has been extremely successful and busy. The staff have done a tremendous job with schedule coordination of the many groups as well as continuing to keep the building in great condition. The DCR Commissioner will be meeting with the Mayor later this month (February 24th) to discuss the State properties within Waltham. The rink is a topic scheduled for that meeting.

Infield Project Update – The construction fencing has been taken down in recent weeks. The intent was to keep the facilities closed until spring, but due to excessive dog use within the fenced in fields, construction fencing has been removed. Director Hebert has spoken with the Police Department about “Dog Leash” enforcement. The City Ordinance does not prohibit dogs on parks/fields but it does require them to always be on leash. These facilities will need additional grooming from CPW this Spring season.

Amusements- Ed and Ryan Kelley recently attended a National Conference for CEU’s and certification for Ryan as Amusement Mechanic. This certification will be helpful operating the amusements safely and meeting State of Massachusetts regulations.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Tom Creonte and seconded by Wayne Cook, all were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ed Kelley
Assistant Director of Recreation