

The Waltham Parks-Recreation Board held their January Board Meeting on Wednesday, January 10, 2024 at the Waltham Recreation Department, 510 Moody St, Waltham, MA 02453.

Present were: Tom Creonte, Patricia Curtin, John Graceffa, Jennie Scafidi, Stacey Tully, Gary Vallerand and Jerry Walker. Absent were Wayne Cook and 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 December 6, 2023 Parks-Recreation Board Meeting by Tom Creonte and seconded by Stacey Tully. John Graceffa abstained. All other Board Members 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. All water bills for summer irrigation and spray parks were recently processed. This was reflected in the Kaleidoscope/Spray Park operating accounts. All accounts are in good standing.

Annual Youth Sports Presentations were next on the agenda.

Waltham Youth Basketball Association Treasurer, Brian Wilder, provided a summary of the League's year and financial report. Mr. Wilder stated that the League had 240 inhouse and 90 travel league participants, which resulted in a good year where the kids had a lot of fun. Mr. Wilder also mentioned that Junior Varsity and Varsity Highschool players coached teams. The 5th and 6th grade teams are coached by JV players, and the 7th and 8th grade teams are coached by Varsity players, which has been a success. The Parks-Recreation Board thanked Mr. Wilder for his efforts and a successful season.

Next on the agenda was The Prospect Hill Ski Team represented by President, Dennis Keohane. Mr. Keohane provided a summary of the League's year and financial report. He stated that the Ski Team had a wide range of communities involved in the Prospect Hill Ski Team program. When asked about league safety certifications, Mr. Keohane stated that all Board members and coaches are CPR and USSA certified. Within these certifications are extensive background checks and a safe sports course. The Parks-Recreation Board thanked Mr. Keohane for his efforts and a successful season.

Lou Thompkins Baseball was next on the agenda. Mike Peterson represented Lou Thompkins Baseball and provided a summary of the League's year and financial report. This year the League consisted of three teams, 13u, 15u and 17u and each team consisted of 15 players. Also, five reserve players were kept to practice or substitute games in the event of absences. Mr. Peterson highlighted the success of all the teams, highlighting the 15u team making it to the finals for their league, and the 17u team for exceeding expectations and playing in the semifinals. The Board thanked Mr. Peterson for his efforts.

Next on the agenda was the “2024 Veterans Rink Application and Fee”. Director Hebert stated that updated dates could be seen in the Veterans Memorial Skating Rink permit application and fees. No other updates were recommended. A financial breakdown was provided for the current year and was comparable to December 2022 year-to-date reports. Director Hebert confirmed that the State had acknowledged receipt of the request from the Mayor for renewal and/or purchase of the Rink and no other information has been provided.

A motion to approve the “2024 Veterans Rink Application and Fee” was made by John Graceffa and seconded by Tom Creonte. All were in favor.

Next on the agenda was the “2024 Outdoor Permit Application and Fee”. Director Hebert explained that updated dates could be seen in the Outdoor permit application and fees. No other updates were recommended. A six year look back was provided of rentals for turf and natural grass facilities. Director Hebert mentioned that there was a decline in rentals in 2023, as Veterans Athletic Complex was closed from June 1 – September 1 for renovations. The 2024 permit will available for download from the City’s web site on February 1, 2024.

A motion to approve the “2024 Outdoor Permit Application and Fee” was made by John Graceffa and seconded by Jennie Scafidi. All were in favor.

Next on the agenda was the “2024 Pickleball Policy and Fee”. Director Hebert referred to a handout in the Board’s folder, stating what was provided is the pickleball policies previously approved for 2023. Updates included a waiver provided by the City’s Law Department and the addition of an indoor reservation opportunity located at 119 School Street Gym. The indoor options included Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 am. to 2:00 p.m. with a proposed rental fee of \$20.00 per hour. Director Hebert concluded that pickleball feedback continues to include the requests for the City of Waltham courts to be added to “Playtime Schedule” and that the court lighting to remain on for the winter months.

A motion to approve the “2024 Pickleball Policy and Fee” was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by John Graceffa. All were in favor.

Next on the agenda was “Request: 2024 Skate with the Hawks Fundraiser”. Director Hebert introduced the “Skate with the Hawks Fundraiser” by explaining, as in years past, the Friends of Waltham High School requested that this event to be held during public skating at Veterans Rink. The Waltham High Boys hockey team would be present and all admission proceeds would benefit the Boys Highschool Hockey Boosters. Veterans Rink staff would work with the group for an enjoyable and safe experience.

A motion to approve the “Request: 2024 Skate with the Hawks Fundraiser” was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by Stacey Tully. All were in favor.

Director’s Report:

Infield Renovations - Project is nearing completion at McKenna Playground, Nipper Maher Park as well as Lazazzero Playground. Final cleanup is underway.

Logan/McKenna Park Design - Contracts have recently been signed with Beals & Thomas for design of Logan Park and McKenna Playground with basketball court improvements. A public meeting will be held with the Ward Councillors and representatives from the planning department who are funding these renovations on Wednesday, January 31, 2024

190 Trapelo Road - Director Hebert informed the Board that the account number for the improvement project had recently been received and requests for purchase orders had been placed. Once contracts are signed, a preconstruction meeting will be held and the project will begin. Also, Director Hebert stated that the Mayor had put forth a request to City Council to name the left side of Cherry Lane (playground and spray park area) the “Eunice Kennedy Shriver Memorial Grounds”. The Mayor had been in contact with Senator Kerry over the years to name this National Historic Site.

Intergenerational Inclusive Spaces - In a recent Parks-Recreation publication an article appeared about the benefits and trends about the type of facility that will be located at 190 Trapelo rd.

Winter Programs - All winter programs began on January 2, 2024.

New Employee – The new Recreation Supervisor began on January 2, 2024.

McDonald Playground - The sign at McDonald Playground was damaged during the recent Nor’easter storm. The sign was brought to Fast Signs for repair and reinstallation.

Dual Language - Parking passes were issues to teachers/staff for the Chestnut Street public parking lot and “School Parking Only” signage was posted along Moody St. provided limited space with the 510 Moody St Parking lot for school employees. This will allow for shared use of the parking lot for all users of the building.

Baystate Games - The Baystate Games withdrew their request to use Veterans Field for July 2024. A new, more suitable location for their needs was found.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ed Kelley
Assistant Director of Recreation