

The Waltham Recreation Board held their April Board meeting on April 11, 2018 at the Prospect Hill Park Recreation Building, 314 Totten Pond Road, Waltham, MA 02451.

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

Also present was; Director, Nick Abruzzi and Assistant Director Kim Scott

Chairperson Richard Scanlon called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. He announced that the meeting was being taped by WCAC, Waltham's local cable channel and would be shown on the local channel at a later date.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2018 Board Meeting by Board Member, Jerry Walker, seconded by John Graceffa and voted unanimously.

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

In reviewing the Statement of Accounts, Director Abruzzi referred to the first page of the Statement of Accounts. He noted that routine spending has taken place. He informed the Board that the Veterans Memorial Skating Rink has closed. Staff will be purchasing supplies to clean and repaint. Director Abruzzi stated that the Veterans Memorial Athletic Complex has opened. He noted that the Veteran's Memorial Athletic Complex line item will begin to fluctuate as field permit fees are collected and the maintenance staff is paid. The second page refers to appropriations and balances for Capital Improvement Accounts. Director Abruzzi explained that as the weather begins to warm up, Capital Project's will be commencing. As a result, there will be movement in these accounts. He stated that all accounts are in good standing.

Director Abruzzi stated that prior to the April Board meeting, Recreation Board members met and walked the Berry Park area of Prospect Hill Park. Director Abruzzi asked Board members for their thoughts on what and how improvements could be made to the area. He continued by informing the Board that he and Assistant Director Scott would be working on an RFP for design services specifically for Prospect Hill Park in the near future. Director Abruzzi stated that he would like the design to include a multi-year plan for upgrading facilities and the safety of all areas of the park. Some initial Board thoughts pertaining to Berry Park included: survey work to determine the perimeter of the area, a formal entrance and potentially adding onsite parking. Other comments included defining and clearing already established trails, exploring the history of the property and specific highlights to historical elements. Director Abruzzi said he will work with staff to develop a tentative map and establish if trails connect with those already established within the park.

Director Abruzzi referred to a letter that was emailed to all Board members from the Historical Commission. He explained the letter outlined survey work that will soon begin on historical walls throughout the City. This survey will pay special attention to the walls located at Prospect Hill Park/Berry Park, Shady's Pond Conservation area, and the Mackerel Hill Conservation Area. Director Abruzzi continued by explaining that these walls have historical relevance dating back to the 1600's. Director Abruzzi informed the Board that any individuals surveying the walls or in the park for this purpose, will need to be easily identified, as well as having a proper background check completed.

On the agenda next for discussion was the FY 2019 Budget Proposal. Director Abruzzi noted that there is a reduction in the cost of water in this year's budget. The City of Waltham's Recreation and Water Departments have been working together to lower the rate since all the facilities are utilized by Waltham Residents, at no cost. The Recreation Department will now be charged a Tier 1 rate and will not receive sewer charges going forward. Director Abruzzi greatly appreciates the efforts of the Water Department. Another change to the proposed budget includes additional funds for evening supervision of facilities and staffing for supported recreation programs. Director Abruzzi implemented additional night supervision this past fall. He stated that the additional staff has been a tremendous help in the building supervision and the expansion of evening recreational offerings. The final major change to the budget is the offset of salaries and wages. Board members had a discussion regarding the positive feedback they have received from residents. Director Abruzzi wanted to take a moment and thank all of the Recreation Department staff that helped gather the information needed in creating the budget. A motion to approve the FY 2019 Proposed Budget was made by Tom Creonte and seconded by Tricia Curtin. All were in favor.

During the Director's Report, Director Abruzzi discussed the following:

Cornelia Warren Park - The design contract has been signed with Beals and Thomas, Inc. An introductory meeting will be held on Friday April 13, 2018 with City of Waltham representatives and Beals and Thomas Inc. Director Abruzzi is excited about working with a fresh perspective in parks and facility designs. The current proposed improvements to Cornelia Warren Park are to the access/egress and parking areas and to the softball field, as well as the addition of golf amenities. There will be no interruption to league play in 2018.

Graverson Playground/Elsie Turner Field – Green Acres Landscape & Construction has begun preparing both locations for improvements. Safety fencing has been added as well as erosion controls. Trees and site amenities are being removed. Green Acres is working at a rapid pace at both locations.

Hillcroft Playground – The finalized park plan was already approved by residents. The City's Engineering Department has been diligently collaborating with Recreation Department design firm Weston and Sampson, Inc. on resolutions to the neighborhood drainage concerns. A final plan including drainage is being finalized now and will be presented to the Conservation Commission in the upcoming months. Director Abruzzi wanted to take a moment and thank the City of Waltham Engineering Department on completing a resolution to improve conditions.

Bobby Connors Playground – Carolyn Cooney & Associates met on site today with Recreation Department Representatives and the City of Waltham's Tree Warden, Kevin Thompson. The initial community meeting for this location occurred in the spring of 2017. Carolyn Cooney & Associates are working on renderings to present to the neighborhood in the near future.

Summer Registration – Online registration began today, April 11, 2018. Summer Walk In registration will occur on April 25, 2018, beginning at 7:30 am.

Dodgeball Tournament – The first annual community dodgeball tournament was held on March 24, 2018. Director Abruzzi directed everyone's attention to an event summary flyer included in their packet. This event saw over 100 individuals with 16 teams participating. Each team consisted of two middle school age youth, two high school age youth and two adults. Director Abruzzi informed the Board that he participated and had a great time. He congratulated Recreation

Supervisor, Kathy Gross and Kaytie Dowcett and Marcia Cruz-Redding, from the Waltham Partnership for Youth, for coordinating this successful event. Recreation Supervisor, Kathy Gross, is looking to also add an adult tournament in the near future.

WCCC HVAC Improvements – Ambient Construction will begin mobilizing at the end of April. To accommodate all of the Building's neighbors, construction will begin in the Basement, while school is in session. When school concludes for the year, they will move to the 2nd floor and work from the top floor down. A two week notice will be provided to building tenants to help with relocation and accommodate construction.

Veteran's Memorial Rink- The funding for the renovations has been appropriated. The funding will need to be properly advertised for three weeks and then the contract for construction can be signed. This project will include a new dehumidification system, compressors and a reclaim system. The facility will be more energy efficient as a result of these improvements. To add to the energy efficiency, renovations to the Rink's roof are being considered as well as the addition of solar panels.

Artificial Turf Fields - All artificial turf fields have been opened. The building at Veteran's Memorial Athletic Complex will be opening within the next week. The building is closed from late fall to early spring. The Youth Soccer Association begins their season this week, on April 14, 2018. Grooming of the artificial turf is scheduled to occur in the next couple of weeks. Director Abruzzi informed the Board that with the heavy winds in early March, a tree fell damaging perimeter fencing and safety fencing. An insurance claim has been made to replace damaged items. The City of Waltham Tree Warden, Kevin Thompson cut up and removed the tree that had caused the damage.

Prospect Hill Park – The vehicle access gate to the park will open on Sunday, April 15, 2018. Picnic permits are being issued for organized group activities within the Park.

OSHA Training – All Recreation Facilities and Maintenance staff are attending a City sponsored OSHA training this week.

Wayside Trail – Director Abruzzi made note of an informational flyer and map enclosed in the Board folders. Meetings have been recently held to educate the community on the development of this multi-use path, noting recreation elements that will include Waltham.

German Women's Lacrosse U20 Team – Director Abruzzi informed the Board that an International U20 German Woman's Lacrosse team was in the Waltham area recently, and had requested the use of our facilities for practices. With the inclement weather, the fields were not available, but the Recreation Department was able to accommodate the team with use of the Waltham Community and Cultural Center's gym during the morning hours of their visit. The team was very thankful for this accommodation.

Social Media – The Recreation Department has been using Facebook for a number of years to assist with communication and marketing. Recreation staff is looking into options to expand our social media presence to include Instagram. Recreation staff is looking into defense mechanisms to ensure the safety and privacy of our residents. A revision to the current picture/social media waiver is being taken into consideration. Once the Recreation Staff has the proposed revisions, the City of

Waltham Law Department will review the proposed waiver prior to being presented to the Recreation Board. Safety and Privacy of our participants is priority.

Waltham Walks – Director Abruzzi noted that the kick off of Waltham Walks recently began. He was extremely impressed with the number of walkers who turned out on that cold, wet evening. He praised Healthy Waltham Director, Stacey Tully and staff for a great community initiative. Director Abruzzi then asked Stacey Tully to elaborate on future walks that are planned. Stacey Tully began by thanking the Recreation Department Staff for their involvement and energy towards these walks. Walks have been scheduled in all nine wards and residents are welcome to walk in as many as they like. Stacey Tully then passed along a list of all the walks that will be occurring.

In other business, Gary Vallerand informed the Recreation Board that there will be Steward Training at Prospect Hill Park on April 21, 2018 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The topic of discussion is invasive species. Two vista clearings will be scheduled for the end of April/early May.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Tom Creonte and seconded by Stacey Tully, all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kim Scott, Assistant Director