

The Waltham Recreation Board held their February meeting on February 15, 2017, at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center, 510 Moody St., Waltham MA.

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

Also present was Acting Director Nick Abruzzi.

Chairperson, Richard Scanlon called the meeting to order at 5:45 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 to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2017 meeting was made by Jerry Walker seconded by Stacey Tully and voted unanimously.

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

In reviewing the Statement of Accounts, Acting Director Abruzzi noted that the first page reflected current balances in General Operating Accounts. He noted that in the General Operating Accounts there was a new line item for a gift of \$10,000 from Wolverine Worldwide. The second page lists appropriations and balances for Capital Improvement Accounts, no significant changes since meeting just a few weeks ago. Acting Director Abruzzi informed the Board that the accounts were healthy.

The first item on the agenda was the Youth Sport Group Annual Presentation from Waltham Youth Hockey. Acting Director Abruzzi informed the Board that due to a schedule conflict the Representative for Waltham Youth Hockey would not be able to attend the meeting and they asked to be included on the agenda for the March Board meeting.

Next on the agenda was the proposal of a possible merger of Waltham Baseball and Waltham Babe Ruth Baseball organizations. Representing Waltham Baseball was Mike DiStefano, one of the league's Board members, and representing Waltham Babe Ruth was the league's President, Dr. Vin Faila. Acting Director Abruzzi began by asking the Board if they were able to review the letters submitted by each organization in support of the merge. With confirmation that the Board did review the letters, Waltham Baseball's representative, Mike DiStefano began by stating that both organization's Board's voted unanimously in favor of the merger. He informed the Board that there will be one registration web site. When Acting Director Abruzzi asked if the organizations would continue to play in the same leagues they currently play in. Babe Ruth President responded by stating that, yes they would continue to play in their individual leagues, but they would be under one umbrella, with one Board and representatives responsible for each level. Dr. Faila continued by stating that he feels the merge will create the opportunity for more competitive Baseball in Waltham. He also felt that many families are unfamiliar with registering for Baseball after 5th grade and feels with the merger it will be more convenient for these families. He also stated that after a discussion with Warrendale Little League's new President, Tim O'Toole, he believes that there will eventually be (1) youth baseball program in the city. Board member, Gary Vallerand stated that due to logistics the leagues will remain separate. Acting Director Abruzzi stated that his hope is that the merger is positive for both leagues and that he believes the merger will be beneficial for the leagues and families. He informed the Board that he supports the merger. Board member, Jerry Walker stated that if there is a smooth transition system in place, the merger will be great. Board member

Tricia Curtin expressed concern that the merger could discourage Warrendale Little League families from registering for Babe Ruth. Dr. Faila responded by stating that he doesn't believe it will. With no further questions a motion to approve the merger of Waltham Baseball and Waltham Babe Ruth Baseball organizations was made by Board member, Gary Vallerand, seconded by Jerry Walker, all in favor.

On the agenda next was the Eagle Scout Project update. Jason Kiesling began by introducing himself to the Board. Acting Director Abruzzi asked Mr. Kiesling to explain the process and execution of this project. Mr. Kiesling informed the Board that he began by emailing Mayor McCarthy. Mayor McCarthy then directed him to the Consolidated Public Works Director, Mr. Stew LaCrosse. With the direction of Mr. LaCrosse, Mr. Kiesling with his group removed fencing and animal houses near the barn at Prospect Hill Park. Then returned the land to its natural state. When Board member, Jerry Walker asked how he found the process of procuring permission for this process. Mr. Kiesling responded by stating that there was an abundance of paper work. Mr. Walker asked if the Recreation Board could write a letter formally thanking Mr. Kiesling for his hard work. Acting Director Abruzzi responded by stating that he would communicate with Mr. LaCrosse and write the letter. Mr. Kiesling was thanked for his presentation.

For discussion next on the agenda was the Community Development Block Grant Request -Year 43. Acting Director Abruzzi asked the Board to refer to C.D.B.G Proposal in their folders. It was a list of capital improvement projects and amounts for which Community Development Block Grant funds are requested. All of the requests and some of the property locations are eligible for the funding. Acting Director Abruzzi informed the Board the he attended a meeting and the deadline for the requests is March 8, 2017. He will be submitting the request to planning before that date. A motion to approve the Community Development Block Grant Request – Year 43 was made by Board member, Gary Vallerand, seconded by Stacey Tully, voted unanimously.

The election of the Waltham Recreation Board Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson was next on the agenda. Nomination of current Chairperson Richard Scanlon, for the Chairperson position was made by Gary Vallerand, seconded by Tricia Curtin, all in favor. Next, Gary Vallerand nominated current Vice-Chairperson Jerry Walker for the Vice-Chairperson position, the motion seconded by Stacey Tully, all in favor.

Next on the agenda was the Summer Staff wage increase. Acting Director Abruzzi asked the board to refer to a sheet in their folders that shows a historical look at summer staff wages over the last 7 years. Board member, Jerry Walker noted that there had not been an increase in (4) years. Acting Director Abruzzi informed the Board that there is a greater increase in the wage amount for Program Assistant Supervisors to hopefully attract more qualified individuals. After a brief discussion, Board member, Jerry Walker made a motion to accept the proposed wage increase for summer staff, seconded by Stacey Tully, voted unanimously.

During the Directors Report, Acting Director, Nick Abruzzi informed the Board that the Spring Registration brochure is scheduled to be distributed to schools by the end of the week. He expressed his excitement of the diversity of the programs that will be offered. Acting Director Abruzzi continued by informing the Board that Southgate Consulting Design Services was chosen to design the Rink Compressor/dehumidification Project. He stated his hope is to have the design completed at the end of March.

Acting Director Abruzzi informed the Board that Field Permit Request forms were available beginning February 1st. He stated that there is already numerous requests. He is anticipating a busy season. Acting Director Abruzzi continued his report by informing the Board that the completion of the Design Plans for the Elsie Turner and Graverson Projects is very close. Stating that construction should begin at the end of May or early June.

Acting Director Abruzzi informed the Board that Recreation Supervisor, Kara Greeley will be running the 2017 Boston Marathon, raising money for the Melanoma Foundation of New England. He stated that Ms. Greeley is working with the Foundation for a grant for sunscreen dispensers to be installed in different parks including Prospect Hill Park. Acting Director Abruzzi informed the Board that RFP's were in process for those as well.

Acting Director Abruzzi stated that next week was February Vacation. There will be programs running at the Waltham Community & Cultural Center as well as the Waltham Youth Hockey February Vacation Hockey Tournament.

In closing Acting Director Abruzzi commended the Veteran's Memorial Rink staff and the Recreation Department staff, stating that with the retirement of Recreation Director, Sandra Tomasello and Facility Supervisor, Robert McCarthy, it was challenging at times. All of the Recreation Staff rose to the occasion.

In other business, Board Chairman, Richard Scanlon informed the Board that he was disappointed to discover that Waltham High School only has (1) skier competing out of the Lexington program. He stated that he would like to contact Prospect Hill Ski team for participants in 8th grade. Board member, Jerry Walker stated that the principals from the middle schools should be contacted. Stating that the principals are familiar with MIAA policies.

Board member, Gary Vallerand asked if a Representative from the Recreation Department could be involved in the scheduling of the Little League Baseball City Tournament. Acting Director, Nick Abruzzi responded by stating that he has a scheduled a meeting with the leagues, one of the topics discussed will be incorporating the City Tournament into both leagues' schedules.

With no further business, Board member Jerry Walker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Stacey Tully, all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa DiBlasi, Clerk