

The Waltham Recreation Board held their January meeting on Wednesday, January 27, 2016, at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center, 510 Moody St., Waltham MA.

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

Also present were; Director Sandra Tomasello and Assistant Director Nick Abruzzi.

Chairperson, Richard Scanlon called the meeting to order at 5:35 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 December 9, 2015 meeting was made by Jerry Walker seconded by Thomas Creonte and voted unanimously.

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

In reviewing the Statement of Accounts, Director Tomasello noted that the first page reflected current balances in General Operating Accounts and the second page lists appropriations and balances for Capital Improvement Accounts, stating that all accounts are still healthy. Board member, Thomas Creonte asked what the status was of the completion of the Cedarwood project. Director Tomasello responded by informing the Board that there was a meeting scheduled for the following day, to address minor vandalism.

On the agenda next was the annual Youth Organization presentation. The first organization to present was Waltham Youth Football. Representing the group was Board member John Bourque and the League's Secretary, Kerri Falzone. Mr. Bourque began by informing the Board that numbers were great and that they had a great year. When Director Tomasello inquired how their first year as part of the new Youth Football League, Mr. Bourque responded by stating that the transition went very well. Board member, Thomas Creonte asked what the difference between the (2) leagues were. Mr. Bourque's response was that the American Youth Football League has no weight requirement stating that teams are "grade based". He continued by informing the Board that the American Youth Football is the same format as Pop Warner Football.

Mr. Bourque continued discussions informing the Board that they are currently playing in the DCL Tri-Valley League. Stating the goal is to have all teams playing in the DCL. He informed the Board there were (3) contact teams, grades 4 through 8 and (2) flag teams, grades 1 through 3, stating that flag numbers were far greater than with actually enough for 3 teams, but stated that the number of teams had to be declared before the beginning of the season. Board member, John Graceffa stated that he feels that due to concussion concerns it would be great for the program's future to begin contact at a later age. Mr. Bourque informed the Board that Waltham had a 7th grade team that competed in the American Youth Football National championship game. He stated that when competing against the age based team as opposed to grade base, there was a significant difference in skill. Mr. Bourque feels that this year was a great learning experience and will plan differently next year. Board member, Thomas Creonte noted that the shack income was low and proceeded by asking if that was typical. Kerri Falzone responded by explaining that due to a low number of volunteers they were only able to have the concessions available during games, not practices. With no further questions, they were thanked for their presentation.

The next organization on the agenda was the Prospect Hill Ski Team. Representing the program was Treasurer, Brian Bower and President, Kristie Keane. Mr. Bower reported the program is doing great with the numbers of participants continuing to rise. They continue to have teams competing at every level U-8 to U-18. He began by noting that safety is and will continue to be the organization's number one priority. He informed the Board that they purchased their own netting for competitions and that their liability insurance continues to rise significantly. Mr. Bower expressed how fortunate the organization was stating that there were over 30 coaches, parents and volunteers who are CPR, First aid and CDC Concussion Certified. Board member, Jerry Walker applauded the organization for inviting Para Olympian, Chris Waddell to share his amazing story. For a full report on the Prospect Hill Ski Team please refer to the handout distributed by the club and part of the Board package. Mr. Bower thanked the Board and the Recreation Department for allowing them to utilize the Recreation Building at Prospect Hill Park for registration and dry land training and their continued support of the program.

Next on the agenda was the Waltham Community & Cultural Center's available classrooms. Director Tomasello provided each board member with a 2nd floor lay out of the building depicting available classrooms. Director Tomasello explained that the Board would need to vote to declare the rooms as temporary surplus so the City would consider leasing the available space to other community organizations. Board member, Jerry Walker asked Director Tomasello if anyone had approached her requesting the use of the available space. Director Tomasello responded by informing the Board that the Waltham Public School Department had inquired about the space. Recreation Board member and Waltham School Committee Member John Graceffa informed the Board that the Waltham School Committee voted in favor of forming (2) dual language kindergarten classes. He continued by explaining that the original location of the classes were proposed to be offered at the Waltham High School, but was decided it would not be appropriate for 5 year olds to be housed with High School aged students. Mr. Graceffa informed the Board that the School Committee feels the Waltham Community & Cultural Center would be perfect due to the location of the building and the program linking well with the Waltham Family School which is also housed in the building. Board member Thomas Creonte made a motion to declare available rooms on the second floor of the Waltham Community & Cultural Center as temporary surplus. Seconded by Jerry Walker and voted unanimously.

Next was the Annual Community Development Block Grant Proposal – year 42 for July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017. Director Tomasello explained the proposal, which listed the project and funds requested which would be sent to the Planning Department. She explained that improvements at the Waltham Community & Cultural Center and Koutoujian Playground would be eligible along with ADA restrooms/concession building proposed for Elsie Turner Field. A motion to accept the Community Development Block Grant Proposal – year 42 was made by Board member Gary Vallerand, seconded by Thomas Creonte, all in favor.

On the agenda next was the Annual Memorial Day Soccer Tournament at Veteran's Complex. Director Tomasello began by informing the Board that this is an annual event that has been hosted at Veteran's Complex since it was opened. She recommends approval of the use of the field for the event, stating that it is very well run and Assistant Director Nick Abruzzi is in contact with organizers to ensure that regulations are met. A motion to approve the use of Veteran's Complex for the Annual Memorial Day Soccer Tournament was made by Board member, Gary Vallerand, seconded by John Graceffa and voted unanimously.

Director Tomasello began the Director's Report by updating the Board on the Capital Projects. She informed the Board that the request for Capital Funds for Drake Playground is in process with the City Council. Director Tomasello was happy to announce that the contractor who did the Cedarwood Playground improvements came in with the lowest bid and will be awarded the contract, coming in at \$1,130,000.00 which was below the cost estimated by the consultants. She continued by informing the Board that the Graverson and Elsie Turner projects were moving forward and that it was discovered that there are some land restrictions on the 385 Trapelo Road parcel that was incorporated into the Elsie Turner Plan. Director Tomasello sent a communication to the Law Department seeking their assistance with hopefully resolving the issue. She continued by reporting the spring program brochure is going to print and that she will be meeting with Recreation Supervisors to discuss summer programming this week.

In other business, Director Tomasello informed the Board of a communication she received from Board member, Wayne Cook (who was unable to attend the meeting) regarding safety lighting and crosswalks at Veteran's Memorial Complex on Forest Street. Mr. Cook shared a conversation via email he had with Councillor Dan Romard. Director Tomasello's recommendation is to ask Councillor Romard to ask the Board for a letter of endorsement supporting safety lighting and additional crosswalks when he addresses the Traffic Commission in regards to the matter.

Director Tomasello addressed the Board in regards to the Prospect Hill Park litigation status, stating that City of Waltham Attorney, Francis Craig was planning to be in attendance to update the Board on the current status of the matter and to possibly discuss litigation strategy. Unfortunately, Attorney Craig was detained and could not attend the meeting. Director Tomasello recommended the item be tabled until the February Board meeting. A roll call vote was taken to table the Prospect Hill Park litigation status. (See Roll Call Vote attached)

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Thomas Creonte, seconded by John Graceffa and voted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa DiBlasi, Clerk