

The Waltham Recreation Board held their June meeting on June 15, 2016 at the Prospect Hill Park Recreation Building 314 Totten Pond Road, Waltham MA.

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

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

Mr. Scanlon called the meeting to order at 5:30 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 May meeting was made by Jerry Walker seconded by Stacy Tully and voted unanimously.

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

In reviewing the Statement of Accounts, Director Tomasello all account balances reflect amounts according to Auditor reports distributed as of June 2, 2016. She continued by stating that the accounts are in good shape and is confident we will be fine through the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2016.

Director Tomasello continued asking Board members to review the Capital Improvements Accounts on the following page of the Statement of Accounts. She reminded the Board of a discussion they had regarding a number of smaller balances in various accounts during last month's meeting. Director Tomasello stated that she would like to combine those balances and have them be brought forward into the rink account to be used to contract a consultant for design services for rink improvements.

The first item on the agenda was the final approval for the proposed design for Graverson Playground Improvement Project. Director Tomasello began by introducing Mr. Ben Gary, the lead designer for both Graverson and Elsie Turner projects, with Marshall/Gary LLC. She continued by stating that the designs that Mr. Gary would be presenting, were the same designs presented at a community meeting held at the Prospect Hill Recreation Building on May 31, 2016. There was a vote taken at the community meeting and all those present at the meeting were in favor of the proposed design. The proposed design was also posted on our web site for additional comments, no comments were received.

Mr. Gary began by referring to a site map of the area. He highlighted some of the features of the design beginning with the new children's play area's which includes a small splash pad. Mr. Gary continued his presentation by highlighting the new bench area with trees. It has been proposed that the basketball court be dedicated in memory of Ron Felt. The basketball courts will be resurfaced. New LED lighting is included in both tennis and basketball courts. Mr. Gary mentioned that the drainage problems will be addressed with (2) bio retention areas. He continued by stating that he has consulted with Bill Doyle Chairman of the Conservation

Commission and they agreed that flagging would be done along the perimeter of the park to mark the wetlands.

With his presentation of the Graverson Playground Project complete he answered questions from the Board. Director Tomasello asked if Mr. Gary had a preliminary cost estimate of the project. He responded by stating that the estimated cost of the project is 1.4 million dollars, which includes a contingency as well as some extra features that were not included in the original design. Board member Gary Vallerand asked if the lighting at the tennis courts were being replaced. Mr. Gary responded by stating that poles were remaining and that the fixtures will be replaced with LED lights for better lighting of the area and a better system to control the lighting as well. Board member, Jerry Walker asked if the baseball field would be natural grass. Mr. Gary answered by stating the whole project will be natural grass that will have to be maintained. Mr. Walker also asked questions regarding the restructuring of the Trapelo Road area. He then asked if Mr. Gary was working with the Engineering Department in regards to the drainage/sewer restructure and asked if the department had done a site visit. Mr. Gary stated that in preparing the design he met with Engineering Department head, Mr. Steve Casazza and other City officials on many occasions. A motion to approve the proposed design plan for Graverson Playground was made by Jerry Walker, seconded by Stacey Tully and voted unanimously.

On the agenda next was the presentation for final approval of the proposed design for Elsie Turner Field. Mr. Ben Gary began his presentation by noting some of the significant changes out in the field pertaining to engineering and wetlands. He highlighted the small play area, softball field, shaded bleachers and dugouts, as well as a concrete slab that eventually can be used for a small building for storage and restrooms and a larger, more defined parking lot accommodating (40) parking spaces. Mr. Gary continued by informing the Board that with numerous neighborhood meetings with representatives from Waltham Girls Softball and members of the Waltham Land trust in attendance. Both groups came to an agreement in support of this proposed final design that all parties are happy with. Mr. Gary stated that he feels with both party's ideas they helped create a better design. Board member, Thomas Creonte inquired about the parking issues. Director Tomasello answered by stating that there were concerns about a historical stone wall potentially being compromised and trees cut down. She reported that all parties agreed that traffic along Trapelo Road and the need to maximize parking to address safety concerns. Ward 3, City Councillor, George Darcy, III was in attendance. He voiced his concern regarding the right hand part of the parking lot should be open all year for cross country skiing. Mr. Gary explained that the gate will remain open for anyone utilizing the walking trails and other recreational opportunities as weather permits. Board member, Tricia Curtin asked if there would be a right turn only policy for exiting the parking lot. Director Tomasello responded by stating that would be something the traffic commission would be consulted on. Councillor Darcy asked if there would be signs for the park and if so what kind of signs. Mr. Gary responded by stating that there would be a standard granite sign at the park entrance and a trail sign stating rules and regulations consistent with Waltham Recreation's trail policies. Board members thanked Mr. Gary for his presentation. Board member Gary Vallerand made a motion to approve the proposed design plan for Elsie Turner Field, the motion was seconded by Thomas Creonte, all in favor.

Skiing at Prospect Hill – Feasibility Study was next on the agenda. Director Tomasello began discussions by informing the Board that on May 16, 2016 herself along with Recreation Board Chairman, Richard Scanlon appeared before the Waltham City Council Economic and Community Development Committee to share their thoughts on having skiing return to Prospect Hill Park. She continued talking about the endless memories that are priceless of skiing at Prospect Hill Park. Director Tomasello feels we offer similar experiences with the City operating the Veteran's Memorial Rink for the Waltham Community. Both Director Tomasello and Chairman Scanlon raised concerns for the cost of providing skiing and thought an alternative might be privatizing the service to a company, allowing a lease of the property for the winter months. They are not in favor of leasing the property during other months of the year. She continued discussions by informing the Board that City Councillor, Robert Waddick suggested that the Board consider having a feasibility study done to research the details of skiing in the area. Director Tomasello suggested the cost for the study should be included in our Capital Improvement Budget. With no further questions, Board member, Thomas Creonte made motion to include a skiing at Prospect Hill Park Feasibility study in the next Capital Improvement Budget Proposal, seconded by Stacey Tully, and voted unanimously.

Next on the agenda was the matter of Veteran's Athletic Complex – Use of Revolving Account Funds for Design Services. Director Tomasello informed the Board that the revolving accounts are healthy, as shown in the monthly budget reports. Director Tomasello stated that replacement of the turf at the Complex is included in the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan. She continued by saying that the turf on the fields is over (10) years old and although they are in good condition they have had an increase in sections needing to be repaired, having reached their life expectancy. Director Tomasello explained that the process will be lengthy and that it will have to be done in phases. Director Tomasello stated that a design plan would include the possibility of converting the natural turf softball field to synthetic turf as well as available options to consider in the softball field dimensions and an addition of a children's play structure. A motion to allow revolving account funds to be utilized for design services at Veteran's Athletic Complex was made by Thomas Creonte, seconded by Stacey Tully, and voted unanimously.

The proposed schedule for the Youth Sport Organizations to appear before the Waltham Recreation Board 2016/2017 was next on the agenda. All Board members present reviewed the schedule. A motion to accept the proposed schedule was made by Jerry Walker, seconded by Thomas Creonte, and all in favor.

During the Director's Report Director Tomasello informed the Board that summer staff has been finalized. She stated that all summer staff has been First Aid and CPR Certified by Assistant Director, Nick Abruzzi. Director Tomasello informed the Board that summer staff training sessions have begun which included a contractor that specialized in social media topics as part of their training. She continued by updating the board on summer enrollment numbers. Stating that over 2200 children are registered for summer programming. This number does not include those utilizing the spray parks and playgrounds. Director Tomasello explained that although the spray parks will be opened unsupervised this weekend weather conditions will warrant the schedule. She reported that the Drake Playground Project is moving along phenomenally.

Director Tomasello informed the Board that she and James LaCrosse from Planning appeared before the Community Preservation Committee to request funding for the Peter Gilmore Playground Project. She was pleased to report that the Committee voted unanimously in favor of the funding request. Board member, Thomas Creonte commended them on their presentation. Director Tomasello explained the next step is going before the Long Term Debt Committee on June 20, 2016 and then the contract can be executed and a pre-construction meeting can be scheduled. She reported the estimated cost of the project is 1.7 million dollars.

In other business Board member, Jerry Walker moved that the meeting continue in Executive Session to discuss the matter of the Antico Tower at Prospect Hill Litigation Status and adjourn the regular session meeting from Executive Session. Stating that continuing in open session could be detrimental to legal strategies. A roll call vote was taken to enter into Executive Session. (Record of vote attached)

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa DiBlasi, Clerk

