

The Waltham Recreation Board held their November meeting on November 8, 2017 at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center, 510 Moody St., Waltham MA.

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

Also present were Director Nick Abruzzi and Assistant Director, Kim Scott.

Mr. Scanlon called the meeting to order at 5:31 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 October 18, 2017 Board meeting was made by Jerry Walker, seconded by John Graceffa and voted unanimously.

The monthly bills were circulated and signed by all board members present.

Statement of Accounts were reviewed by Director Abruzzi and he explained that all accounts are in good standing. The first page is an update of all operational accounts and the second page is a list of our capital accounts. The balances have not changed much since our last meeting only 2-3 weeks ago.

Director Abruzzi began the youth organization presentations by explaining that Waltham Baseball/Babe Ruth could not attend last month's meeting and were added to tonight's agenda.

First youth sports organization to present was Waltham Baseball, which has merged with Babe Ruth. President Bill Hanley mentioned that there was an 8% increase in registration. This increase includes six Babe Ruth teams. A Rookie/Instructional division was created this year, to facilitate skill development between T-Ball and Minors. Ten year olds will tryout this coming season, to determine if they will be placed in the minor or major division. This is new for 2018. Director Abruzzi asked about the City Tournament and Mr. Hanley explained that it went extremely well and they are looking forward to it again next year.

The second sports organization to present was the Waltham Track Club. Joe Tranchita, Treasurer introduced the new Club President Jack Wozek. Mr. Tranchita noted that winter registrations have increased, with more than 40 youth participating. There were approximately 120 youth enrolled in Cross Country this past year. New equipment was purchased this year, which was a major expense. Board member John Graceffa asked Mr. Tranchita how long he has been involved in the Track Club. Mr. Tranchita mentioned that it was over 40 years. The Board commended Mr. Tranchita on his dedication and commitment to the sport.

The next youth sports organization to present was Waltham Youth Lacrosse. David Becker, League President, noted that their season operates from April to June. They utilize High School fields. This past year, there was a large number of athletes on the U15 team. To provide more playing time, this large team will be split into two teams for next year. Mr. Becker mentioned the positive working relationship the league has with the Waltham High School Lacrosse Team.

The Waltham High School players assist the league as mentors and recruited to be officials. The Girls Lacrosse program has merged this year into the Youth Lacrosse program increasing enrollment. A focus is placed on the younger age groups, developing skills throughout the year.

Director Abruzzi inquired about the certification of helmets. Mr. Becker explained that all helmets are inspected and only lacrosse certified helmets are utilized. He went on to explain that all coaches must complete a Level 1 Certification and head coaches are required to have a Level 2 Certification. Coaching development is important and trainings are available. A large expense, this year, was the purchasing of new girl's uniforms.

The final sports organization to present was Girls Softball. President Stephen McGovern noted that they hosted the City/Town Tournament this year and it was a great success. There was approximately 17 teams registered. With the wet weather that weekend, they were appreciative of surrounding towns for providing fields to compensate for rain delays. The off season clinics planned for this year include: pitching, hitting, and proper technique. The Recreation Board commended the Girls Softball organization for the large number of scholarships and equipment provided so that no girl was turned away or went without. A new end of year celebration was held this year and was deemed a great success, a family Halloween Party. Backpacks were distributed as a thank you to those who participated.

Next on the agenda was a discussion about Capital Improvements with Mayor McCarthy. She outlined the improvements scheduled for Bobby Connors, Hillcroft, Elsie Turner and Graverson Playgrounds. Mayor McCarthy informed the Board of her thoughts she had for development and renovations to two particular parks. Mayor McCarthy stated that the City Council is interested in returning skiing to Prospect Hill Park. She wants to encourage more people to come into the park. She also noted that a new play structure and improvements to walking paths were needed. The plan is to also offer something different at Prospect Hill and would like the Boards ideas. Improvements to this Park will need to be approved by the National Park Service and the State of Massachusetts. Mayor McCarthy made mention of a future collaboration with an Equestrian Unit that Director Abruzzi is working with to help patrol the open space throughout the City.

The second Park she discussed for improvements was Cornelia Warren Field. This piece of property and the person whom it is dedicated are rich in Waltham History. She would like to see the land surveyed, improvements made to the Men's Softball field and the addition of a diving range. Director Abruzzi noted that he is meeting with a representative next week to consider options for the driving range. Renovations would also need to be made to the current concession stand and parking area.

The Mayor thanked the Recreation Board for their continual support and dedication to the recreational opportunities throughout the City of Waltham.

Next on the agenda was to review and approve the 2018 Bay State Games. Director Abruzzi summarized the success of past years. It was noted that this event provides positive attention and revenue to the Veterans Memorial Complex. A motion to approve the request was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by Stacy Tully and all in favor.

## Director's Report

Before the report could begin, Jerry Walker wanted to mention that he recently visited the Veterans Memorial Rink and was extremely pleased with how great it looked and how helpful the staff were. Director Abruzzi continued by stating that he was also very delighted and that the facility was going to increase in activity. The High School's practices and games would begin right after Thanksgiving and the public skating would begin on November 17<sup>th</sup>.

Director Abruzzi referred to a summary page about a new event, Halloween in the Park. Director Abruzzi mentioned that he challenged the Recreation Supervisors to offer a few additional family events, highlighting the many great recreational facilities. This first year event was a huge success. With 43 families enrolled, over 130 people used inflatables, went on a scavenger hunt and played haunted mini golf. A family movie was shown at dark. The next new opportunity is a "Family Fun Night" planned for this winter at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center. Board Member Gary Vallerand asked to include the Stewardship Program next year.

After Chill, an expansion of the Chill Zone Program, specifically for those in grades nine and ten has been a huge success. Many members who have aged out of the Chill Zone Program, are excited to continue to have a safe, exciting place to hang out. As the City continues to make renovations to the Church Street property, additional programs will be added.

Graverson Playground and Elsie Turner Improvement plans are now at 100%. Bidding for construction is scheduled to open on December 7th. The goal is to start construction in the spring of 2018.

A Hillcroft Public Meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday, November 14 at 6:15 p.m. at the Prospect Hill Recreation Building. Designer Weston and Sampson will present final designs.

Director Abruzzi noted that three staff (Nick Abruzzi, Kim Scott, and Ed Kelley, Jr.) will be attending a Certified Playground Safety Inspector course in 2018. With the number of playgrounds within the City, the more education the City has in evaluating playgrounds the safer the play facilities will be for the Community.

As requested, a follow up from last month's sports group presentation, Warrendale Little League was asked to provide further clarification on their parade expenses. They responded by explaining that new banners were purchased this year for the kids to carry and they paid to have Wally the Green Monster appear at the parade.

As a final note from Director Abruzzi, he asked to take a minute to thank the Board and Recreation Staff for all their hard work, support and dedication while he was out of the office.

In other business Board member, Gary Vallerand confirmed that the clean-up that was scheduled to occur at Little Prospect at Prospect Hill Park with himself and the Stewards is going to be rescheduled to next spring.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by John Graceffa and second by Stacey Tully and voted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted,

Kim Scott  
Assistant Director