

The Waltham Recreation Board held their October meeting on Wednesday, October 28, 2015 at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center, 510 Moody St., Waltham MA.

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

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

Chairperson, Richard Scanlon called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He announced that the meeting was being filmed 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 September meeting was made by 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 Sandra Tomasello noted that the first page reflected general operating accounts and the second page was the Capital Improvement Accounts. Director Tomasello was pleased to report that all funds were carried forward, therefore there were no negative balances and that as of that day all balances were current.

On the agenda next was the youth sport group annual presentations. The first group to present was Waltham Youth Baseball. Director Tomasello began by introducing the President of the league, Bill Hanley and Treasurer Sean George. She informed them that Board members had received and reviewed their Financial Statement prior to the meeting. Director Tomasello then referred the Board to the handout distributed by Mr. Hanley that outlined the highlights of their 2015 season. Chairman Richard Scanlon commented that it was nice to see their numbers continuing to rise. Board member Stacey Tully mentioned that keeping the t-ball players interested helps with numbers. President Bill Hanley responded by saying that typically they lose a lot of female players to girls softball at the 7-8 year old divisions. Treasurer, Sean George informed the Board that the league added t-ball to their summer program. Bill Hanley informed the Board of a program on Wednesday nights over the summer for 7-8 year olds transitioning to actual games with umpires. He continued by stating that the program was so popular that they had to cap it due to an insufficient number of volunteers. When Board member Jerry Walker commented on their scholarships offered for registration as well as the deficit in the league this past year. Treasurer, Sean George responded by informing the Board that the last two years the league operated at a surplus which allowed them to improve concession stands, bathrooms and upgrade uniforms.

Board member Thomas Creonte noted that their sponsorship was amazing, asking what the sponsorship fee was. Mr. Hanley responded by informing the Board the fee was \$425. He continued by stating that Little League International and the ESPN Tournament

is a tremendous draw for sponsors. He stated that they have more sponsors than they have teams, therefore some sponsors are only able to have signage at the park and are unable to sponsor a team. Board member Patricia Curtin inquired about the league not having “participation trophies” asking if it was successful. Mr. Hanley responded by explaining that each team had the opportunity to give 3 special awards and all participants received apparel. There were no complaints.

Discussion continued with Chairman Richard Scanlon asking why the league is proposing to change the league age cutoff from April 30 to September 1. Mr. Hanley responded by explaining that they would like to be concurrent with the schools registration age. He continued by stating that in 2018 this will be a requirement from Little League International. Board member John Graceffa asked what the difference is in Little League International. Mr. Hanley responded by stating, with teams from Canada and Latin America. It is a larger organization therefore the league receives better rates on insurance.

Mr. Hanley concluded discussions by informing the Board that they have an anonymous donor who would like to install lights at Nipper Maher Park and that they will be back to discuss that further and seek the Board’s permission. Mr. Hanley and Mr. George were thanked for their presentation.

The next Youth Group on the agenda was Babe Ruth Baseball. Representing the group was President Dr. Vin Failla and Treasurer Larry Gelineau. Mr. Gelineau began by explaining that financially the league is in better shape financially and by putting the uniforms out to bid saved the league a considerable amount of money, along with enormous sponsorship support. Mr. Failla reported that this year he merged the 13 and 14 year olds. They evaluated the kids and placed them on teams with even skill levels. The league decided to have a midseason play off and end of season playoff setting. After the midseason playoffs the league created a new schedule for the second half, matching teams based on their success in the first half. This led to more competitive play and better games. The first half champion played the second half champion under the lights in August along with a step up game for graduating little league players. (30) Little league players participated and the league served free food all day. The umpires donated the food that was served. The day was a huge success. Dr. Failla continued by stating he anticipates large numbers for next year. Assistant Director Nick Abruzzi congratulated them on the leagues tremendous improvement. Chairman Richard Scanlon thanked them for their presentation.

Warrendale Little League’s presentation was next on the agenda. First year League President Andrew Arena presented the Board with a copy of the 2015 Warrendale Little league Yearbook. Mr. Arena began by thanking Assistant Director Nick Abruzzi and CPW for having the fields open and looking beautiful for their opening day April 12th, acknowledging that was not easy with the late winter. He continued by informing the Board he had a great first year as president with a new vice president and shack coordinator. He mentioned that past President John McLaughlin, and previous Shack Coordinator helped make their transition smooth. Mr. Arena continued by telling the

Board that High School Baseball Coach, Steve Laforest and Rich Giordano ran clinics that were very successful. He continued by saying the league had a great showing in the City Tournament. The league also hosted the 9 year old division of the Cal Ripkin tournament. Mr. Arena stated that registration is steady and consistent with previous years. He also stated that their Summer and Fall Ball Programs were at capacity. Mr. Arena asked the board for permission to remove a trailer that is used by Warrendale Little League for storage. He stated that Steven Jelloe volunteered to dismantle the trailer. Mr. Hanley asked for permission to replace the trailer with another storage unit. Assistant Director Nick Abruzzi told Mr. Arena he would meet with them on site to determine what would be the most conducive location for the park. Treasurer Bill Burgess was next to speak. He began by informing the Board that the amount of sponsors doubled from last year. Mr. Burgess introduced Isabella Contessi, a student at Mount Alvernia High School, the winner of this year's Emerging Leaders Program. He continued to speak about the benefits of the Emerging Leaders Program. Mr. Burgess explained that all participants of the program get a general college recommendation and the winner receives a personal recommendation to (3) institutions of their choice. He then took the opportunity to recognize who participated in the Emerging Leaders Program. Mr. Burgess noted that last year's winner John Joseph McLaughlin could not attend, but explained that he would mentor this year's winner. The following participants were recognized: Michael Bontempo, Isabella Contessi, Nora Haggerty, Peter Nguyen, Katelyn Samios, Isabel Savine, Jordan Steward, Setthawit (Tony)Thantheerapong, and Julia Walsh. There was applause for all participants and Chairman Scanlon congratulated all of the students and thanked Warrendale Little League for their presentation.

On the agenda next was an update on the Prospect Hill Park road access. Director Tomasello introduced City of Waltham Attorney Frank Craig. She continued by directing the Board to refer to communications regarding road access. Attorney Craig suggested that the meeting should continue in executive session, asking Chairman Richard Scanlon to declare the meeting enters into executive session. Board member Jerry Walker made a motion to enter into executive session stating that continuing in open meeting would have detrimental effect on litigation strategy, the motion was seconded by John Graceffa. A roll call vote was taken on the motion. Director Tomasello directed all non-board members, the WCAC-TV's videographer to leave the room, with the exception of Assistant City Solicitor, Frank Craig and Recreation Board Clerk, Lisa DiBlasi. Director Tomasello informed the WCAC-TV's videographer the Open Session would reconvene when Executive Session concluded.

As outlined in Public Meeting Executive Session Laws, the Clerk then took a roll call vote to reconvene in open session. (See Attached)

For the Director's Report, Director Tomasello instructed the Board to review a summary of Putt Putt Mini Golf at Prospect Hill Park. She informed the Board the official opening of the facility was July 9, 2015, stating the facility is now closed for the winter season. Director Tomasello informed the Board that because there is no fee to use the facility we asked guests sign in to keep attendance to ensure they were Waltham residents. We documented 900 patrons which is an average of 65 people per week.

Director Tomasello directed the Board to a communication from a Waltham parent with a complaint about a registration matter with Waltham Youth Soccer. She continued by stating this individual had the same complaint (2) years ago. Director Tomasello explained this individual was invited to meet with Assistant Director Nick Abruzzi, Representatives of the Waltham Recreation Board or to appear before the Recreation Board. The parent declined the opportunity to meet at that time. Upon receipt of the complaint the Mayor instructed the City of Waltham Law Department to look into the matter.

Director Tomasello continued her report by informing the Board that Capital Projects are progressing as planned. She mentioned the Cedarwood Playground opening was fantastic and it was the most well attended playground opening she can remember. She encouraged members of the Board to visit the park. Director Tomasello reported that Drake Playground Improvements would be going out to bid within a few weeks. She explained its a perfect time of year to attract contractors to bid on the project.

Winter Registration Brochure is at the printers and will be distributed to schools by November 16th.

In Other Business, Board member Stacey Tully informed the Board that there were only 8 tickets left for the Boston Symphony Orchestra Concert in November. Director Tomasello informed the Board that we have 50 tickets for reservation here in the Recreation Office.

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa DiBlasi
Waltham Recreation
Board Clerk

