

The Waltham Recreation Board held their October meeting on Wednesday, October 19, 2015 at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center, 510 Moody St., Waltham MA.

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

Also present was 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, Assistant Director, Nick Abruzzi noted that the first page reflected general operating accounts and the second page was the capital improvement accounts. Assistant Director Abruzzi reported that there were few changes to the operating accounts and there was no change in the capital funds and that as of that day all balances were current.

The first item on the agenda was the Prospect Hill Park Stewardship Program update. Representing the group was Ward 1 City Councillor, Dan Romard. Councillor Romard began by informing the Board that the program was up and running, not perfect, but still a great, viable program. He stated that without a Steward Leader there was some confusion in the beginning of the season, but after communicating with Subcommittee Chairman, Gary Vallerand, all incidents were reported to the appropriate departments for resolution of the issues. Councillor Romard continued by informing the Board that he would like to continue to receive funding from the City for the program and he reported that he will speak with Mr. Vallerand and the Stewards to devise a plan to utilize the funds properly, so the funding is not forfeited. When Councillor Romard spoke about the storage unit accessibility being a challenge, due to the unit being locked and the program not having access to a key, Assistant Director Abruzzi responded by informing him that past Steward Leader, Chris Leary was issued a key and it was the assumption of the Recreation Department that Mr. Leary gave the key back to the program when he resigned. Councillor Romard responded by informing the Board that he would look in the documents Mr. Leary returned to him. Assistant Director Abruzzi informed Councillor Romard that if the program is in need of another key, it can be replaced. Councillor Romard informed the Board that he would like to do a year end close out appreciation event. Subcommittee Chairman, Gary Vallerand stated that he would like to attend and asked permission for use of the Prospect Hill Recreation Building for the event. Assistant Director Abruzzi responded by stating that would be fine, but there would have to be a (2) week notice once the date is determined. With no further questions

the Board thanked Coucillor Romard for his presentation and commitment to the program.

Next on the agenda was the Annual Youth Group presentation. The first group on the agenda was Waltham Baseball. Assistant Director Abruzzi informed the Board that President of the Waltham Youth Baseball organization, Bill Hanley had contacted him earlier in the week and requested to have their presentation moved to next month's Board meeting, due to an unforeseen conflict for himself as well as the organizations Treasurer. He granted Mr. Hanley's request to be added to November's agenda.

Babe Ruth Baseball league was on the agenda to present next. Representing the league was their President, Dr. Vin Faila. Dr. Faila began by informing the Board that it was another successful year. He continued by informing the Board that the fee schedule had remained the same. Dr. Faila was pleased to report that their summer ball program, which plays in a league in Arlington went 14-0 and won the whole tournament. He stated that there is talent in Waltham. Dr. Faila praised the sponsors and mentioned the shack was very profitable this season. Assistant Director Abruzzi commended Dr. Faila, stating that (3) years ago the league was not very strong and there was concern that the league may fold. Since that time the league has done amazing under Dr. Faila's direction. He was thanked for is hard work and dedication to the community.

Warrendale Little League's presentation was next on the agenda. Representing the League was the league's President, Andrew Arena, Vice President, Tim O'Toole, and Treasurer, Bill Burgess. Mr. Arena began by presenting the Board with a copy of the 2016 Warrendale Little league Yearbook. He then thanked Assistant Director Nick Abruzzi and CPW for having the fields open and looking great for their opening day. Mr. Arena informed the Board of some significant investments the league had made. These improvements included a storage unit that replaced the large trailer that has been removed, a new fryerlator for the shack and new uniforms. Online registration and web site is going well for the upcoming season. Mr. Arena continued by telling the Board that High School Baseball Coach, Steve Laforest and Rich Cordani ran clinics that were very successful. Mr. Arena stated that registration is steady with a slight drop in numbers from the previous year. He continued by informing the Board that they have opened registration to 4 year olds. They are working with CPW and Assistant Director Nick Abruzzi to construct a small rookie field within the park. They are calling it the "Rookie field of Dreams". Mr. Arena introduced the league's Treasurer, Bill Burgess. Mr. Burgess began by commending the Warrendale Little League Board, stating that there was great chemistry and did a great job working together for another successful season. Mr. Burgess introduced Isabella Contessi, a student at Mount Alvernia High School, the winner of last year's Emerging Leaders Program. Isabella participated in many events, including a Chamber of Commerce meeting. She also took part in the interview process for the 2016 Emerging Leader Finalists. He continued discussions regarding the emerging leader program stating that with the program's success it has been expanded to offer opportunities to the youth of the Town of Watertown as well. With the help of City Councillor, John McLaughlin, Watertown's Chief of Police, Mike Lawn and State

Representative, John Lawn. Mr. Burgess explained that participating in the program gives the students the opportunity to receive a college recommendation letter.

The following participants were recognized: Christopher (CJ) Kelleher, Brendan Murphy, Jillian Pappas, Lillian Schaufus, Oliva Platt, Gina Duffy, Bria LaForest, Michael Burke, John Logue, Emma Schaufus, John Dooley, Aiden Newell, Matthew McLaughlin, Isabella Contessi, and Dom Cosco. There was applause for all participants and Chairman Scanlon congratulated all of the students and thanked Warrendale Little League for their presentation.

Next on the agenda was the approval of the Drake Playground donation. Director Sandra Tomasello requested to make a donation of a shade tree to replace the tree to replace the weeping willow and a park bench to be placed at newly renovated Drake Playground. During construction a weeping willow was removed due to disease and Director Tomasello thought it would be an appropriate donation. Assistant Director Nick Abruzzi informed the Board that he went before City Council and it was approved and voted unanimously. Board member, Gary Vallerand made a motion to approve the donation of a park bench and tree by Director Sandra Tomasello, seconded by Stacey Tully and voted unanimously.

During the Directors report Assistant Director, Nick Abruzzi asked the Board to refer to the summer report in their folders. He commended all recreation staff members for their assistance on the report. He also thanked Recreation Supervisor Kim Scott (In Attendance) for taking all of the information and compiling the final product. Assistant Director Abruzzi stated that the report puts the final stamp on the summer of 2016 and that he read through the report and realized that summer program participant numbers increased by at least 500 participants from last year. He continued by updating the Board on the Capital Projects. Assistant Director Abruzzi informed the Board construction at the Gilmore Playground is ongoing and going well. The contractor is working on completing utility work and site preparations. The parking lot project in the back of the building is progressing as well. The contractor is finishing the wall on Beech Street and will then continue the wall on High Street. Elsie Turner and Graverson Projects design plans are near 100% complete. We will be meeting with the City of Waltham Consultant for this project next week to finalize plans for both locations.

He informed the Board that the proposal to install live video streaming of games at the rink has been withdrawn. Assistant Director Abruzzi stated that when he spoke with the state, there was no clear answer. After discussions with Waltham Youth Hockey President, Mark Hickey, it was decided due to privacy and contractual issues the proposal would be withdrawn. Assistant Director Abruzzi discussed the new improvements to the Veterans Memorial Skating Rink. As part of a joint project with the State Massachusetts, new lights were added to interior and exterior of the facility. Other improvements included automatic light switches in all rooms and variable speed drives that were installed on pumps and condensers to improve efficiency and reduce electric usage.

In other business, Assistant Director, Abruzzi informed the Board of a late filing by Plympton Elementary School asking for the use of Drake Playground for their Halloween

Fall Festival. There was a motion made to allow them use of the Playground for the event made by Board member, Gary Vallerand, seconded by John Graceffa and voted unanimously.

In other business, board member Gary Vallerand asked if Assistant City Solicitor, Francis Craig could be invited to a Board meeting to update the Board on the status of the pending litigation regarding the Antico Tower in Prospect Hill Park. Assistant Director Abruzzi responded by stating that he would send a communication to Attorney Craig to attend November's Board meeting.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa DiBlasi
Waltham Recreation
Board Clerk