

The Waltham Parks-Recreation Board held their April meeting on April 14, 2021 via a Zoom Meeting.

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

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

Chairperson Richard Scanlon called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He announced that the meeting was being recorded through the Zoom app and would be shared to WCAC, Waltham's cable channel and would be shown on the local channel at a later date.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2021 Parks-Recreation Board meeting by Wayne Cook, seconded by Gary Vallerand. All were in favor.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2021 Parks-Recreation Special Board meeting by Gary Vallerand, seconded by Tom Creonte. All were in favor.

The monthly bills report for the last month will remain in the Recreation Department Office. Director Abruzzi requested that the Parks-Recreation Board stop by the office in the next week to review and sign the bills report.

The Statement of Accounts was the next item on the agenda. Director Abruzzi stated that routine spending and expenses had occurred. The operational budget will see an increase in revenue as summer registration recently started and the Activenet check will soon be deposited. An increase in spending will also be seen within the Veterans Memorial Rink account, as end of year cleaning and painting supplies, will be purchased. All accounts are in good standing.

Annual Youth Sports Presentations was next on the agenda. Waltham Youth Hockey, represented by Paul Aborn presented. Mr. Aborn stated that the most recent financial document that was audited was sent to the Parks-Recreation Board for the 2019-2020 season. He stated that the last year has been very challenging. He commended the hockey parents and Rink staff for their cooperation and team efforts. The concession stand closed a month earlier than usual due to the COVID-19 shut down and overall sales were down. Mr. Aborn discussed how seasonal startup expenses come from the concession stand line item, each year. The benefits of the concession stand impact families who are at the facility throughout the day. Approximately 500 children participated, this past season. Approximately six youth opted out of playing during the 2020-2021 season. The Board thanked Mr. Aborn for his time.

The request for the Annual Needham Memorial Day Weekend event was the next item. Director Abruzzi noted that this event has been held at the Veterans Athletic Complex for close to ten years. The Needham Soccer Club will follow all City and State COVID-

19 protocols. The event is usually a tournament with teams playing multiple times per day, but current regulations prohibit that type of schedule. For 2021, teams will only be playing one game per day. Director Abruzzi will continue to monitor the State of Massachusetts Guidelines and work with the Needham Soccer Club.

A motion to approve the Annual Needham Memorial Day Weekend Soccer Request was made by Tom Creonte and seconded by Jennie Scafidi. All were in favor.

Dual Language Little Free Library Request was next on the agenda. A letter of request with photos was provided to the Parks- Recreation Board for consideration. As the letter indicated, the Dual Language PTA would like to consider the placement of a Little Free Library, at 510 Moody Street. The PTA and Dual Language School would cover all expenses for the Library and would stock it with books written in English and Spanish. The request also indicated that the Dual Language School may be interested in taking the Library with them when they move to another facility in the future. Director Abruzzi stated that if approved, he would work with the PTA and School to pick a location and coordinate logistics.

A motion to approve the request for a Little Free Library by the Dual Language was made by Tom Creonte and seconded by Gary Vallerand.

Director's Report:

Prospect Hill Park Capital Improvement Project - Demolition of the site is just about completed. The Contractor, Green Acres Landscape and Construction, has been great to work with and has done a great job. Most of the tree work is completed and removal of the existing parking lot is anticipated for the next few weeks. A Parks-Recreation Board site visit at Prospect Hill Park will be on Thursday, April 15, 2021 beginning at 4:30 p.m.

McDonald/Thompson Playground Capital Improvement Project – Green Acres Landscape and Construction is the contractor for these two locations. Construction has begun at both locations and demolition and tree removal is under way.

Maintenance Issues – An inventory of all the parks was recently conducted. A need to have signs replaced and posts and gates repainted was an identified need. Recreation staff are working to have sign panels replaced at Veterans Athletic Complex and Yvon Cormier has been repainting sign posts and park gates throughout the City. Director Abruzzi thanked Mr. Cormier for his time and effort. These improvements have given a new and fresh look to the facilities.

Veterans Rink Update – The Rink closed for the season on Saturday, April 3, 2021. The staff are in the process of preparing the building and equipment for next season. Director Abruzzi commended the Staff for a great job with dealing with the challenging year, while keeping everyone safe. Request forms for 2021-2022 season will be sent out in the near future.

Summer Registration – Registration began on Tuesday, April 13, 2021. In the Parks-Recreation Board packet, previously emailed, a breakdown of registrations numbers per program was provided. In the first hour of registration, almost 560 receipts were processed. Summer Fun will be relocated to Lowell Field for the summer of 2021 as the Capital Improvement project proceeds at Prospect Hill Park. Take home boxes will continue to be available for the summer season.

Summer Basketball Clinic – Recreation Staff recently met with Mike Wilder on developing a summer basketball clinic in the Parks for a couple of weeks. More information will be sent once it is confirmed.

Fernald Committee – Director Abruzzi attended the Fernald Reuse Committee on Monday, April 12, 2021. The Committee voted to give the Recreation Department care, custody and control of the 104 acres of parcel 1 for future recreational opportunities. The parcel transfer includes three buildings: Hillside, Admin and Canteen. The Parks-Recreation Board was provided a copy of the presentation Director Abruzzi provided to the Fernald Reuse Committee. The next step in the process would be create an RFP to hire a designer and start the process of Citywide community input meetings. There are many possibilities for passive and active recreation amenities at this location.

Summer Staff – Recreation staff are currently working on recruiting and interviewing summer staff. A finalized list of summer employees will be provided at the May Parks-Recreation meeting for approval.

Bay State Games – Due to COVID, the typical Bay State Games format will not be allowed based on current State of Massachusetts Protocols. Recreation Staff are meeting with the Bay State officials in the near future to discuss potential modified possibilities for their event. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

Other Business:

Board Member, Tricia Curtin asked if contract tracing will continue to be done. Director Abruzzi explained that contracted tracing occurred throughout the Rink Season. Summer Programs will have daily health screening, rolling drop off/pick up and designated health area, comparable to 2020 summer season.

Additional conversation was had about the Hawk Sign at Veterans Skating Rink needing a fresh coat of paint.

A motion to adjourn was made by Tom Creonte and seconded by Wayne Cook. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kimberly A. Scott
Assistant Director