

The Waltham Recreation Board held their April Board meeting on April 13, 2022 at the Waltham Recreation Department, 510 Moody St, Waltham, MA 02453.

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

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

Vice Chairperson Jerry Walker called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. A motion was made to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2022 Parks-Recreation Board Meeting by John Graceffa and seconded by Stacey Tully. All were in favor.

The monthly bills were circulated and signed by all Parks-Recreation Board Members.

Director Abruzzi reviewed the statement of accounts explaining that two pages in their folders detailed operational and capital budget balances. Director Abruzzi noted that routine spending has occurred since last meeting and with the rink closing down and as the staff prepares for spring and summer programs funds will be spent readying facilities and purchasing program supplies. The rink staff is currently painting and cleaning the rink for next season. All accounts are in good standing.

Mayor McCarthy was next on the agenda. Mayor McCarthy began by stating that she has sent a request to the Law Department for an opinion on what can be done to give preference to Waltham residents at park facilities. The opinion will be shared with the Parks-Recreation Board when she receives it. Mayor McCarthy has received concerns regarding out-of-town users monopolizing pavilions as well as park users not using the parks appropriately, especially at Bobby Connors Playground. Mayor McCarthy expressed her concerns about facilities potentially being overused. She was also concerned that with future developed land, park facilities will continue to draw out-of-town visitors.

Mayor McCarthy acknowledged that the parks have signage for proper use and she as well as City employees have visited the parks and spoken with neighbors and park users.

Each neighborhood park has abutters that report concerns. The safety of the residents and City employees is important when determining education and enforcement of those not using facilities appropriately.

Director Abruzzi noted that the Law Department reviewed, in the last year, the policies and procedures for field and facility rentals. These are approved by the Parks-Recreation Board annually. As of April 1, 2022 designated pavilions within parks can be permitted. Policies, fees, and reservation information can be found on the Waltham Recreation Department web site. Signage can be found at each pavilion under the care and control of the Recreation Department. The Parks-Recreation Board will evaluate the pavilion reservation system at the end of the season.

Prospect Hill Park – Vehicle Access Road Hours was listed next on the agenda. Director Abruzzi reminded the Parks-Recreation Board of the email that was sent confirming a time change for the gate opening at Prospect Hill Park to vehicular traffic. The new time for this year is 10:00

a.m. which allows people to enjoy the park during early morning hours without the concern of vehicles on the road. This new time will be evaluated at the end of the fall season and a decision for next year will be made based on the feedback. To this point, all feedback has been positive regarding the time change. An official vote was requested from Director Abruzzi.

A motion was made to approve the opening of the Prospect Hill Park vehicle access road to 10:00 a.m. by Stacey Tully and seconded by Jennie Scafidi. All were in favor.

Directors Report:

Lowell Field – Carolyn Cooney and Associates continue to work on design plans for Lowell Field Playground. We hope to bid for a contractor over the next few months. The Recreation Department is working with Waltham Football on alternate locations for practice if the field is out of commission during their season.

Summer Registration – Summer registration was held online today and numbers were very strong for all programs. We are currently in the hiring process and planning staff trainings and safety protocol trainings.

Prospect Hill Park Amusements – Two new amusements are being installed at Prospect Hill Park this week. We will be applying for state inspection approval and hope to be open in early May weather permitting. Springfest at Prospect Hill Park is on May 7, 2022 and we hope to have the rides operational for that event.

Fields – All artificial fields and grass fields are now open. Special thanks to Matt Philpott for all of his efforts on the fields and working so well with our department.

Pavilion Reservation – The new pavilion rental online reservation system began on April 1st. We have seen numerous rentals and Adam Green, Park Ranger, is happy with the process so far. In your folders is a copy of the signs we have installed at all pavilions as well as a breakdown of locations that can be permitted and not permitted. Approximately 40 permit reservations have been made.

Capital Improvement Projects – In your folders is a breakdown of the capital improvements that have been completed over the last 7 years. The handout shows before and after photos and we have spent over 20 million dollars to upgrade these facilities.

Eagle Scout Project – Thanks to Peter Marriott for his Eagle Scout Project that improved a site at the top of Prospect Hill Park. In your folders is a picture of the improvements and we will send a thank you letter to Peter for his efforts.

Veterans Field Scoreboards – In your folders are photos of two new scoreboards that we purchased and installed at the two Veterans Softball Fields.

Volunteer Day – In your folders is a picture of volunteers with Adam Green at Prospect Hill Park Clean up Event held on March 26, 2022. Over 30 people participated in the event. The

cleanup focused on the sunset trail and removed trash, debris and an old broken-down fence and wire. Thanks to Adam and the volunteers that made this possible.

Kara Greeley – Congratulations to Kara Greeley for making a programming presentation at the recently held MRPA Conference. It was great to see Kara serve as a mentor to the professionals in the industry. Extremely proud of her leadership.

Site Visit – The Parks–Recreation Board was invited by Director Abruzzi to attend a site visit at Fernald Property prior to the next meeting. Information will be sent out with more information.

Other Business

Parks-Recreation Board Member Tricia Curtin inquired on the ownership of the fence line along the Berry Park area in the Market Basket parking lot. Director Abruzzi noted that research has recently occurred on the ownership of the fence line. It was determined that it's City of Waltham property.

Parks-Recreation Board Member Gary Vallerand noted the work was completed at Nipper Maher Park as well as Monsignor McCabe. He also inquired on the scoreboard at Nipper Maher Park.

Parks-Recreation Board Member Jennie Scafidi asked if it was possible to plant flowers around a dedication plaque at Nipper Maher Park. Director Abruzzi asked her to send details so CPW could know what to anticipate.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by Tricia Curtin, all were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly A. Scott

Assistant Director