

The Waltham Recreation Board held their December Board meeting on December 8, 2021 at Prospect Hill Park, 314 Totten Pond Road, Waltham, MA 02451.

Present were: Tom Creonte, Patricia Curtin, John Graceffa, Stacey Tully, Gary Vallerand and Jerry Walker. Absent were Wayne Cook, Jennie Scafidi 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 November 10, 2021 Parks-Recreation Board Meeting by Tom Creonte and seconded by Gary Vallerand. All were in favor.

Director Abruzzi reviewed the statement of accounts explaining that two pages in their folders detailed operational and capital budget balances. Minimal changes can be seen since the last meeting. Director Abruzzi noted that on the Operational Budget page, the balance of the Recreation Program Account/Community Center has been reduced. Funds have been spent on winterizing and maintenance of the amusements at Prospect Hill Park, the development of an archery range and the purchasing of additional new amusements. On the Capital Improvement page, Director Abruzzi explained that the Fernald Parcel 1 Improvements account for \$315,000 has been added. This is in addition to the \$120,000 previously received. All accounts are in good standing.

The next item on the agenda was the Youth Sports Group Presentations. Waltham Youth Basketball Association will present at a later date.

The Waltham Girls Basketball Program was represented by President, Stacey Meehan and Vice President Jessica Bourne. It was shared that in 2020-21 season, the Program began practicing at Chapel Hill Chauncy Hall's gym and the Waltham Boys and Girls Club. Once the season of travel games began, they were traveling to Foxboro for games only. The 2021-22 season has seen over 140 registrations for intown and travel teams. Ms. Meehan stated that everyone interested will be allowed to play, no try outs will be held this season. The 2021-22 practices and games will be held at Kennedy Middle School. Director Abruzzi offered to assist with practice space if needed. Ms. Meehan and Ms. Bourne are excited for the upcoming new season. The Parks-Recreation Board thanked Ms. Meehan and Ms. Bourne for their time and effort.

The next item on the agenda was the request for the Waltham High School 2022 Senior Prom to be held at Prospect Hill Park. To present the request was members of the Waltham High School Senior Class Holly Mullin, Getzel Frangui and Jason Juarez. Ms. Mullin presented the Parks-Recreation Board with a proposal to hold the 2022 Senior Class prom at Prospect Hill Park. The proposal detailed the prom would be held on Tuesday, May 31, 2022 from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Rentals included a tent, tables, chairs and trash receptacle would be delivered in advance and stored on site. Ms. Mullin requested the use of the indoor bathrooms during the prom as well as storage space for rentals following the event. A volunteer committee will be setting up and cleaning up the event. Director Abruzzi asked that a list of volunteers be provided to the Recreation Department, prior to the event. Food trucks would be hired for the evening. The

event would be supervised by underclassmen's parents and school faculty. Parking was a consideration as well and Ms. Mullin had reached out to request availability of parking at the Veterans Memorial Rink as well as businesses on Totten Pond Road. A police detail and crossing guards will be coordinated for the evening of the event. The Senior Class representatives felt that having an outdoor prom at Prospect Hill Park would be safe, promote a sense of community spirit and provide a cost-effective alternative to previous years. Discussion was had about custodial staff being present the night of the event to keep with up trash and spills. Director Abruzzi noted that a Recreation Staff will also be assigned to this event and will assist with coordination and be onsite for the event.

A motion to approve the Senior Class 2022 Prom request was made by John Graceffa and seconded by Stacey Tully. All were in favor.

The 2022 Waltham Community and Cultural Center (WCCC) Facility Use Permit Application and Fee was next on the agenda. Director Abruzzi noted that this form is completed to secure rental space within the building. It was noted that on page two of the application a proposed change was highlighted in yellow. The previous application had a section referencing a bond that was replaced to have similar language to what is found in the Field Permit Application, revised in 2021. The highlighted section noted a potential for a security deposit, additional fees for larger groups as well as added maintenance. Director Abruzzi went on to note that pricing would remain the same as 2021 with \$125.00 for a two-hour block and \$50.00 for each additional hour. In the Parks-Recreation Board folder was a breakdown of rentals and attendance within the building. Statistics were lower as expected for the last two years, due to indoor building restrictions. A rise in attendance numbers can be seen as an increase in programs and events have returned indoors.

A motion to approve the 2022 Waltham Community and Cultural Center (WCCC) Facility Use Permit Application and Fee was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by Tricia Curtin. All were in favor.

The 2022 Field Permit Application and Fee was next on the agenda. Director Abruzzi explained that the Parks-Recreation Board approved numerous changes to this document in the last year based upon recommendations from the City of Waltham's Law Department. The 2022 application and policies have been updated with date changes, only. The cost will remain the same: \$150.00 for a two-hour time block with \$75.00 per additional hour. A lights fee of \$75.00 will also be charged where applicable and a security deposit of \$500.00, if required. A breakdown of attendance figures for the last few years showed that in 2021 the post pandemic attendance numbers can be seen increasing close to pre-COVID numbers.

A motion to approve the 2022 Field Permit Application and Fee was made by John Graceffa and seconded by Tom Creonte. All were in favor.

The Skate with the Hawks request was next on the agenda. Director Abruzzi drew the Parks-Recreation Board's attention to a request in their folders from Heather Perry and the Friends of the Waltham High School Hockey Boosters. This requested event would be held at the Veterans Memorial Skating Rink on Sunday, January 23, 2022. This event, traditionally held during

public skating, would allow youth and families to skate with Waltham High School Hockey players followed by a meet and greet and puck signing. This event has been successful in years past. Assistant Superintendent Ed Kelley, Jr. would work with Heather Perry to organize this event.

A motion to approve the Skate with the Hawks event on January 23, 2022 was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by John Graceffa. All were in favor.

Director's Report:

Prospect Hill Park, McDonald and Thompson Playgrounds Project Update – The ribbon cutting ceremonies for all three locations were held on November 18, 2021. The parks are extremely well attended and community feedback has been great. The contractor will be back in the spring to finish up small items to complete the final close out at each location.

Lowell Field– The consultant is working on designs for improvements. Once completed the options will be posted on the recreation department website for community feedback.

Fernald Property – A community input meeting was held on December 7, 2021 via Google Meet. The purpose of this meeting was to receive feedback and comments from the community for the land development of Parcel 1 and 2a of the Fernald property. Approximately 110 attendees logged into the Google Meet and shared their passion for the property and its history as well as requested site amenities. Emailed comments and feedback can be sent to Director Abruzzi until Thursday, December 14, 2021. The consultant and Recreation staff will review public input and work to create design options to be presented online for the community to review. Discussion was had about respecting the history and people who lived at this facility as well as research for a universal all-inclusive play structure.

Putt Putt at Prospect Hill Park – The mini golf course at Prospect Hill Park has been removed due to the conditions of the holes. An archery course and new ride amenities will be added in the spring of 2022.

Wellington Property Article – In the Parks-Recreation Board folder is a recent article featuring the hard work and involvement of volunteers at the Wellington Property. The Parks-Recreation Board recently visited this property to view the land clearing.

Wellington Property Committee – Director Abruzzi noted that numerous volunteers are inquiring on the future of this property and additional improvements. Director Abruzzi is recommending a committee of interested members, Recreation Staff and Parks-Recreation Board members be put together to make recommendation for the future of this property. Director Abruzzi will be sending out an email to Parks-Recreation Board members seeking interest.

Veterans Memorial Skating Rink Update – In the Parks-Recreation Board folder is an update from Assistant Superintendent Ed Kelley, Jr detailing operations for the season up to this point. Mr. Kelley noted the variety of recreation programs, youth and adult groups that are seen as the

Rink has returned to full capacity. Director Abruzzi thanked Ed Kelley, Jr and all the rink staff for the exceptional work maintaining a fun, clean and safe facility.

Other Business

Parks-Recreation Board Member Gary Vallerand noted the work completed at Nipper Maher Park as well as Monsignor McCabe.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kimberly A. Scott
Assistant Director