

The Waltham Parks-Recreation Board held their May meeting on May 12, 2021 via a Zoom Meeting.

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

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 April 14, 2021 Parks-Recreation Board meeting by Jerry Walker, seconded by Wayne Cook. 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 referenced two pages in the Parks-Recreation Board's folder detailing operational and capital accounts. Director Abruzzi stated that routine spending and expenses had occurred since last meeting and that the first payment of \$143,000.00 to Green Acres Landscape & Construction has been processed out of the Prospect Hill Park Capital Improvement account. All accounts are in good standing.

The next item was Proposed Park Improvement Presentation by Mr. Phil Moser, Conservation Commission. Mr. Moser shared a study that was recently completed by CEI Engineers that looked to improve shore restoration along Hardy Pond. The areas, Mr. Moser focused on during this presentation were the shore line at Lazazzero Playground and the end of Shore Road. The CEI report and this presentation focused on the Flood Zone of Hardy Pond. The topics discussed included land improvements to reduce erosion, the trees and vegetation that could be planted to stabilize the shoreline and recommendations for storm water management. Proposed improvements focused on additional plantings to support the water front and deter the geese from moving from the water into the Park, creating swales to control the water and formalizing access to the water front.

Additional discussion was had about potentially expanding the fishing pier to allow for multiple individuals to utilize this amenity simultaneously, as well as other alternatives to expanding fishing at this location. Additional information was requested on how vegetation would assist in deterring geese from coming on shore. Mr. Moser provided an explanation on the habits of geese.

Director Abruzzi inquired how the proposed plantings would impact current boundary lines of the baseball fields. The CEI report was directed to not impact the baseball field. It was discussed that extending fence lines and delineating the buffer zone would improve the safety and separate the areas.

The CEI report provided a cost estimated of approximately \$249,000.00 for these improvements. Mr. Moser explained that it would be ideal to have the project completed in one phase versus multiple phasing of the project. Mr. Moser stated that if the Parks-Recreation Board was interested in pursuing this project, the plan would be presented to the Mayor, funding would be sought for design and construction. As the Parks-Recreation Board has care and control of this land, the only additional permitting needed would be the NOI from Conservation Commission.

The Shore Road area was next part of Mr. Moser's presentation. Mr. Moser noted that the Parks-Recreation Board does not have care and control of this area. This area would be a team effort working with the CPW and Engineering Departments. The goal of improving this location would be to reduce pavement and restore greenspace. Observation and discussion were had by neighbors and Hardy Pond Association members on the use of the highlighted area at end of the Shore Road pertaining to parking and vehicle turn arounds. The CEI Engineers report estimate the project to cost approximately \$111,000.00. The Hardy Pond Association worked with a Landscape Architect to provide a parallel design plan from feedback received from a survey given to the area neighbors and Hardy Pond Association members. This end of Shore Road area would need a variety of work to improve the storm water runoff, provide formalized access to the water and adding storm sewers on Shore Road. Future steps for this site would be more involved than the Lazazzero Playground improvements, including additional permitting.

The Parks-Recreation Board thanked Mr. Moser for his time and efforts. Feedback was provided that the Mayor should be provided the presentation and plans so she is aware of the future conservation opportunities and include the multitude of City Departments. Prioritizing the Parks-Recreation Board's five-year Capital Improvement plans will need to be considered focusing on the impact to park land. Mr. Moser stated that there was no urgency to this project but asked if he could reach out to Director Abruzzi to continue the conversation.

Bay State Summer Games was next on the agenda. Director Abruzzi noted that this event has been held at the Veterans Athletic Complex in the past and they have been a pleasure to work with. Bay State Games will follow all City and State COVID-19 protocols. Director Abruzzi will continue to monitor the State of Massachusetts Guidelines and work with the Bay State Games Organization as the Games gets closer. If approved, the Bay State Games organization will be paying a fee for use of the facilities as well as relining fields.

A motion to approve Bay State Summer Games was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by John Graceffa. All were in favor.

The Summer 2021 Staff was the next item on the agenda. Director Abruzzi stated that there is a good balance of new and returning applicants. All new applicants were interviewed by Recreation Supervisors. Once approved, the list will be sent to Human Resources and the Mayor. All employees will attend mandatory orientation sessions including First Aid/CPR/AED trainings.

A motion to approve the Summer 2021 Summer Staff was made by John Graceffa and seconded by Gary Vallerand.

Director's Report:

Prospect Hill Park Capital Improvement Project - A site meeting for the Parks-Recreation Board was held a last month. Demolition has recently been completed and site preparation for the amenities and storm water management will be the focus for the next few weeks.

McDonald/Thompson Playground Capital Improvement Project – Demolition is just about complete at both locations. Site preparation and connection to utilities for the spray parks is schedule for the next few weeks. On May 3, 2021, a ground breaking ceremony occurred commencing the start of the projects. Signs with plans for the project are posted on the fencing at both locations.

Public Buildings – The Mayor recently announced that City Buildings will reopen on Monday, May 17, 2021. The Recreation Department is very excited as indoor space will be important as recreational programs will begin to utilize these areas. Indoor space will also be used in the event of inclement weather for future programs.

Bench Dedication –On Monday, May 3, 2021 City Council approved the request for the Bench Dedication that the Parks-Recreation Board approved at the March 2021 meeting. The family will be contacted in the upcoming weeks with the next steps.

June Parks-Recreation Board Meeting – The June 9, 2021 meeting will be held in person at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center. A zoom option will be made available for the Community and those Board members not available to attend in person. A Mandatory Conflict of Interest Training, with Pat Azadi from the Law Department, will be held prior to the Parks-Recreation Board Meeting at 5:00 p.m. Director Abruzzi requested any Board Members not able to attend to contact him to schedule an alternate date to participate in the training.

Fernald Property – The Mayor recently requested that quotes be sought to add rolling doors to the buildings at the Fernald Property that are under the care, custody and control of the Recreation Department. This will assist with security and protect the buildings from future vandalism. Pricing is also being sought for environmental abatement for these buildings.

Summer Basketball Clinic – In the Parks-Recreation Board's packet, there is a flyer for the newly added basketball clinics that will be offered this summer.

Other Business:

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kimberly A. Scott
Assistant Director