

The Waltham Recreation Board held their October Board meeting on October 13, 2021 at the Waltham Recreation Department, 510 Moody St, Waltham, MA 02453.

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

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

Chairperson Richard Scanlon called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2021 Parks-Recreation Board Meeting by Jerry Walker, seconded by Gary Vallerand. 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 explained at the September meeting balances had not been carried forward from fiscal year 2021 to 2022 which is why dates and balances still reflected June 2021 balances. The City of Waltham Auditing Department recently completed all carry forwards and the pages were updated reflecting balances as of October 1, 2021. Director Abruzzi noted that on the Capital Improvement page, there was a decline in the Veterans Memorial Field account. Over the last few years, improvements to the facility have been made to include: a shade structure, new benches, a children's playground, new signage, sports netting, turf repair and grooming as well as design services for replacement of the turf. All accounts are in good standing.

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

Warrendale Little League was next on the agenda. Bill Burgess, Treasurer, provided a financial summary of their year and summarized their season. Warrendale Little League did not have a season in 2020 due to the pandemic. This season, the focus was on developing the Rookie and AA League. Skill based clinics were offered with additional playing times for all the teams. Fiscal decisions were made to reduce field maintenance and to not operate the concession stand so that resources could be devoted to the League's development and rebuilding. Waltham Little League welcomed the older divisions of athletes. Overall, the season was a great success and the fundamentals of baseball were shared with the athletes. The Parks-Recreation Board thanked Mr. Burgess and the League for their time and perseverance.

Waltham Girls Softball was next on the agenda. League President Tricia Dagostino provided a summary of the League's year and financial report. After canceling the 2020 season, Mrs. Dagostino stated that 197 athletes were registered, making this year the largest fall season to date. This season, a new U8 program was developed and was very successful. The League hosted a successful tournament this year, despite an umpire shortage. The end of year outdoor banquet will be held later in October. A Trick or Treat event will be held, where athletes in uniform can run the bases for treats. Mrs. Dagostino will be stepping down as President at the conclusion of this season. A new President and Board have been elected. Mrs. Dagostino and

past president Mr. McGovern will stay involved as Legacy members. The Parks-Recreation Board thanked Mrs. Dagostino for her time and services to the League.

The Prospect Hill Park Petition was the next item on the agenda. Director Abruzzi noted that at the September 2021 Parks-Recreation Board meeting a petition was presented recommending that the hours of vehicle access into the park be reduced. Prospect Hill Park was closed to vehicle traffic due to construction this year. The Park users enjoyed a different experience, as being aware of vehicle traffic and associated noise did not impact their time within the park. The Parks-Recreation Board discussed options for reducing the hours of vehicle traffic, while being cognizant of picnic permits and events within Prospect Hill Park. Director Abruzzi recommended that a survey be sent to the Waltham community. The survey results will be reviewed and the Parks-Recreation Board will make the decision for the 2022 season.

### **Director's Report:**

**Prospect Hill Park Project Update** – The consultant and Recreation staff have begun to work on the final punch list for the project. It's anticipated that the project will be completed in the next one to two weeks.

**McDonald and Thompson Playgrounds Project Update** – The consultant and Recreation staff have begun to work on the final punch list for the projects. It's anticipated that the projects will be completed in the next one to two weeks. Director Abruzzi praised Green Acres Landscape and Construction for their ability to strategically work on such small properties.

**Lowell Field** – Carolyn Cooney and Associates was selected as the designer for the field improvements. Director Abruzzi went to the City Council to request funds and the funds were approved. Director Abruzzi plans to begin meeting with the designers in the near future.

**Fernald Property** – The City Council recently provided care, custody and control to the Recreation Department for Parcel 2A-1. This parcel is approximately 15 acres that will be added to Parcel 1 (104 acres).

Director Abruzzi will be attending City Council in the near future to seek funding for design for Parcel 1 (104 acres). A public meeting will be held once the contract and funding have been secured. This public meeting will be held via zoom to optimize the community input.

**Prospect Hill Park Mural** - In the Parks-Recreation Board folder is a picture of a mural recently completed on the barn door at Prospect Hill Park. This mural was completed by Brown University student Oliva Maliszewski as part of a community outreach project. Director Abruzzi thanked Ms. Maliszewski for her time and efforts.

**Government Center and Fitch Gyms** - The City Council recently gave care, custody and control of these two gyms to the Waltham Recreation Department. These two facilities will provide future opportunities for seasonal programs and indoor locations for summer programming on inclement weather days. Healthy Waltham is currently storing food at the Fitch

Gym and the Recreation Department will continue to work with them until a permanent home is found.

**Summer 2021 Registration Statistics** – In the Parks-Recreation Board folder are two packets; one packet was the summer attendance and registration statistics and the other a presentation of summer photos. The majority of programs were held outside. Director Abruzzi thanked all full time and part time staff for their efforts.

**Veterans Field Design** - NESRA Engineering has been hired to design plans and specifications for replacing the turf fields at the Veterans Memorial Athletic Complex. Director Abruzzi has recently begun meeting with the consultant and it's anticipated that the designs will be completed in the next few months. The bid for construction will ask for prices to replace one field, three fields or all four fields. Following Bay State Games in July, the construction would occur and be completed prior to the start of the fall season.

**Veterans Rink Update** – The Rink opened September 7, 2021 and the season is going well. Everyone is wearing a mask while indoors. The schedule is back to full capacity and the new skating/hockey programs developed during the pandemic will continue this coming season.

**Prospect Hill Park Fitness Equipment** - The Recreation Department is currently working with representatives from Fifth Avenue at City Point to add fitness equipment to a trail within Prospect Hill Park. This half mile trail will have five fitness stations divided along the trail. The Parks-Recreation Board will review and vote on the plans at a future meeting and then Director Abruzzi will request the approval of the donation through the City Council. This will be a great partnership for the City of Waltham and the Fifth Avenue at City Point who abuts Prospect Hill Park.

**Upcoming Events** - In the Parks-Recreation Board folder is a flyer for a Halloween family event to be held at 510 Moody St. scheduled for Saturday, October 30, 2021 from 12:00 noon – 4:00 p.m. Another flyer is for a Plant Walk with Lesley Sneddon to be held at Prospect Hill Park on Saturday October 23, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

**Wellington Property** - In the Parks-Recreation Board folder are before and after pictures of the progress of the land clearing. As the Parks-Recreation Board saw earlier in the evening, it's incredible to see the land cleared. The Parks-Recreation Board will continue to decide the future for that parcel and funding for future improvements.

**Veterans Field Scoreboards** - Two new scoreboards have been purchased for the softball fields. The scoreboards are expected to be installed in the next few weeks.

### **Other Business**

Parks-Recreation Board Member Stacey Tully stated that she is currently taking Pickleball and Golf lessons with Recreation Department. She is amazed with the patience and adaptability of Recreation Supervisor Ben Kiwanuka.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kimberly A. Scott  
Assistant Director