

The Waltham Recreation Board held their December meeting on December 6, 2017 at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center, 510 Moody St., Waltham MA.

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

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 taped by WCAC, Waltham's local cable channel and would be shown on the local channel at a later date.

A motion to approve the minutes of the November 8, 2017 monthly meeting was made by Jerry Walker seconded by Thomas Creonte and voted unanimously.

The monthly bills were circulated and signed by all Board members.

In reviewing the Statement of Accounts, Director Abruzzi referred to the first page. He stated that it reflected current balances in General Operating Accounts. The second page refers to appropriations and balances for Capital Improvement Accounts. Director Abruzzi noted that there would be changes in the Capital Improvements Accounts, as he recently went before City Council to request additional funds for future projects. He reported that all accounts are in good standing.

On the agenda next were the 2017 Youth Sports Group Annual Presentations. The first group to present was Waltham Youth Basketball. Representing the group was Mr. Brian Wilder. He began by explaining that he and his father, Mr. Fred Wilder, simultaneously act as the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary of the league. Mr. Wilder continued by informing the Board that the number of participants continues to rise from year to year. This year there are already 300 participants. He stated that gym space continues to be their biggest challenge and it is also their biggest expense. Mr. Wilder informed the Board that this year they will be partnering with the Waltham High School Basketball program for fundraising. He stated that the children are having fun and that is the main objective of the program. Board member Thomas Creonte asked if each player playing on a travel team, has to also play in town. Mr. Wilder answered, saying that those who play travel do in fact have to play in town. Director Abruzzi asked Mr. Wilder if there was medical training available to the coaches. Mr. Wilder responded by stating that at this time there was not any medical training available, mostly due to time and expense. Director Abruzzi offered to train coaches in the program. He stated that Assistant Director, Kim Scott and Recreation Supervisor, Kara Greeley are currently in the process of becoming Certified CPR/First Aid instructors. This will be helpful, as larger groups will be able to receive training. Director Abruzzi stated that it is the goal to have the majority of the City's organizations trained. Board member, John Graceffa suggested that the league should be familiar with the location of the AED monitors in the facility, in the event of an emergency. With nothing further to report the Board thanked Mr. Wilder and his family for their dedication to the program and the community.

Waltham Youth Girls Basketball was next on the agenda. Representing the group was Mr. Reid Lyons. Mr. Lyons began by stating that the leagues numbers are steady and that the league is fortunate enough to have the leadership of Patty Connors Beck and Stacey Connors Noel. He reported that Waltham Youth Girls Basketball plays in the Metro West league, and that it is a great

league. The participants were able to play some local teams and also travel for games. Mr. Reid reported that last year the 7<sup>th</sup> grade travel team, Coached by Julie Rando Ranucci (a program alumni), had an undefeated season. Unfortunately, the team lost in the final game by (1) point. He stated that girls from the Waltham High School Basketball team continue to volunteer as assistant coaches. Mr. Lyons stated that Ms. Stacey Meehan runs skills for the players and that she essentially handles the league. They keep it simple, the priority is having fun and teaching fundamentals. When he was asked if the league paid custodial fees, Mr. Reid stated that as with the Boys program, gym rentals were their biggest challenge and expense. He informed the Board that next year it will be his and Mr. Jim Kenney's 25<sup>th</sup> year involved in the program. Mr. Lyons concluded his presentation by thanking the Board for their continued support.

The next group to present was Waltham Youth Soccer. Representing the group was the organization's president, Mr. Mike Guzzi. Mr. Guzzi began by informing the Board that the group's participant numbers continue to grow. He reported that as of this day there were 830 children enrolled in the program. There are 40 teams at the younger level and 75 teams in total. He stated that the biggest challenge is field space. The fall season is slightly more challenging due to day light savings time, and losing daylight. Mr. Guzzi informed the Board that the league contracts coaches from Mass Premier Soccer to run skills programs. They also evaluate the players without the children knowing that they are being evaluated. Board member, Thomas Creonte asked Mr. Guzzi about the phone expense listed on their financials. Mr. Guzzi responded by explaining that the league pays for the phone and internet at Veteran's Memorial Field, as the league runs all of their registration through the internet, and it is a necessary expense. When Director Abruzzi inquired about coaches and CPR/First Aid Training, Mr. Guzzi stated that there are currently 135 coaches registered in the league. Director Abruzzi stated that with that many individuals to train, awareness training would be sufficient, rather than the CPR/First Aid. He continued by saying there is always CPR/First Aid trained staff on site at the fields and there is an AED monitor in the event of an emergency. Mr. Guzzi informed the Board that they give (6) scholarships every year to Waltham High School students. He also works with Waltham Public School principals in identifying children who may not have the opportunity to play due to financial restrictions. The league issues the scholarships for those children to play in the league. Director Abruzzi stated that it is amazing to see the amount of people on a Saturday at the fields and how well organized the program is. Mr. Guzzi was commended for his continued dedication to the program and thanked for his presentation.

The next item on the agenda was the Capital Improvement Budget Proposal for FY 2023. Director Abruzzi asked the Board to refer to a two page document in their folders. He explained that this was the Capital Improvement Program Summary form which listed the items/projects by priority with proposed budget figures. The request identifies a list of improvements that the Recreation Department feels will be necessary during the next 5 years. The following items that were on the list that were discussed were; Basketball/Tennis/Water Spray Park Resurfacing, Playground Structures & Resurfacing, McDonald Playground Improvements Design & Construction, Rink Surface Replacement and Maintenance Vehicle. It will be submitted to the Mayor after the list is approved by the Recreation Board. Director Abruzzi continued by explaining the importance of each line item. The second page listed the Mayor's recommendations for the Recreation Department for FY 2018-2022. He explained that some of the items listed for 2018 are already being addressed. A motion to approve the Capital Improvement Budget Proposal for FY 2023 was made by Gary Vallerand, seconded by Stacey Tully, and voted unanimously.

Next on the agenda was the 2018 Prospect Hill Park Permit fees. Director Abruzzi asked the Board to refer to a four page document in their folder that included the 2018 Prospect Hill Park permit application, and break down of permits that have been issued within the park over the last (5) years. Each year statistics are reviewed and a fee structure is decided upon. Director Abruzzi recommended that the fees for picnic permits remain the same. Board member, John Graceffa made a motion for the Prospect Hill Park Permit fees remain the same for 2018, seconded by Gary Vallerand and voted unanimously.

Next for discussion, was the Waltham Community and Cultural Center facility use and Field Permit Applications and fees. Director Abruzzi began by directing the Board to a copy of both the 2018 Field usage application as well as the Waltham Community and Cultural Center building use request form. He informed the Board that although he will not be recommending a change in the fee structure, he will be adding a line to the priorities of use for non-Waltham nonprofit or charitable organizations. With this change nonprofit groups will be higher on the priority list for a field as opposed to a for profit group that reserves a field annually. Director Abruzzi stated that the Waltham Community and Cultural Center building use application was updated for 2018 with no changes. He recommends that the fees remain the same. After a brief discussion, a motion to modify the Athletic Field use permit request policy was made by Board member, John Graceffa, seconded by Wayne Cook and voted unanimously. Board member Gary Vallerand asked if birthday party statistics were included in the Waltham Community and Cultural center fact sheet. Director Abruzzi responded by stating that they were not, but that we do have statistics for our birthday parties. Mr. Vallerand asked if they could be available for a future meeting. He stated that he has been to numerous birthday parties and that they are fantastic. Board member, John Graceffa made a motion to accept Director Abruzzi's recommendation that the fee structure remains the same in 2018 for the Waltham Community and Cultural Center Building rental, as well as the Athletic Field rental, seconded by Jerry Walker and none opposed.

For the Director's report, Director Abruzzi began by updating the Board on the Elsie Turner/Graverson Project. He informed the Board that the bid opening that was scheduled for the following day was rescheduled to December 13, 2017. Director Abruzzi explained that after the bid opens he will be seeking the funds from the City. The goal is for construction to begin in the spring of 2018. The pre bid meeting was last week and it was well attended. His hope is that with the competition, the projects' cost will be reasonable.

Next, Director Abruzzi updated them on the Hillcroft Playground Project. He informed the Board that renderings were developed by Weston and Sampson. They are on the web site for the public to view and to comment on. The City of Waltham Engineers have to work on a resolution for the drainage issues before the project can move forward.

The Veterans' Memorial Rink Project will be going out to bid for the equipment to replace the compressors and dehumidifiers. Once the bids are submitted funding will be sought. Director Abruzzi then mentioned that all AED monitors that were leased for the summer season have been returned. Director Abruzzi informed the Board that he will add budget lines to support the purchase of 1-2 monitors per year. He stated the goal is to have a monitor at each facility throughout the City. Director Abruzzi referred to a copy of an email from the newly hired Recreation Supervisor, Mr. Ben Kiwanuka. The email thanked the Board for this opportunity and selecting him for the position. He informed the Board that Mr. Kiwanuka began his employment the previous day and that we are very happy to have him as part of our department.

Director Abruzzi informed the Board that the Prospect Hill Stewards will have their final meeting of the year on December 13, 2017 at the Prospect Hill Park Recreation Building. He will attend the meeting and he extended an invitation to Board members.

Furthermore, Director Abruzzi stated that he attended a City Council Finance Committee meeting to request funds for the design of the Cornelia Warren Playground Project. He was pleased to announce that the committee approved the request. His hope is that the funds will be available soon. Director Abruzzi continued by informing the Board that he will be attending the December 18, 2017, Waltham City Council Meeting to request funds for the Prospect Hill Park Project. He asked the Board to complete and return the "emergency contact" form in their folders.

Director Abruzzi discussed a letter from the Mayor that was forwarded to them by Assistant Director, Kim Scott. The letter detailed the proposed Master Plan for the Fernald Property. According to the plan the Recreation Department would control parcel 1 for recreation and open space. He explained that he did not have a lot of information at this time but as information became available to him he would update the Board. Board member Wayne Cook requested clarification on which buildings on the property are under jurisdiction of the Recreation Department. Director Abruzzi stated that he would seek more information.

The last item Director Abruzzi discussed was Berry Park at Prospect Hill. He informed the Board that he had recently visited the site. Director Abruzzi asked the Board to choose a date for a site visit. He would like the Board to see the area so that ideas can be developed in order to improve the site. The City of Waltham Consolidated Public Works is currently fixing fencing and removing downed branches to better secure the area.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Thomas, seconded by Stacey Tully and voted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa DiBlasi, Clerk