

The Waltham Recreation Board held their February meeting on February 12, 2020 at the Waltham Recreation Department, 510 Moody St, Waltham, MA 02453.

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

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 cable channel and would be shown on the local channel at a later date.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2020 Board Meeting by Jerry Walker, seconded by Tom Creonte. All were in favor.

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

Director Abruzzi reviewed the Statement of Accounts explaining that the two pages in their folders detailed current operational and capital budget accounts. Routine spending has occurred in the operational accounts. There is one line item on the capital budget account page that has seen movement. The Veterans Field account has seen a decrease of close to \$36,000 as funds have been encumbered for additional benches and a shade structure, at this location. All accounts are in good standing.

The first annual sports group presentation for the evening was Waltham Youth Basketball Association. Brian Wilder, Treasurer presented that enrollment has stayed consistent, 250 – 300 youth. Registration for the younger age levels was larger than the other age groups. There were six teams in each age division. The youngest teams participated in clinics and instructional programming, the middle age divisions participated in the in-house program and the oldest athletes engaged in a combination of travel teams and in-house programming. The High School athletes assisted with practices, providing role modeling within the basketball community. The rental of the gym was the league's largest expense. The league and the school custodians have a great working relationship. The Board thanked the league for their contribution.

The next youth group to present was Waltham Youth Soccer, represented by Mike Guzzi, President. The league is very vibrant with close to 1,000 athletes registered. Mr. Guzzi stated that commitment to the new CORI/Concussion trainings have made coaches and volunteers harder to retain. Director Abruzzi noted that facility maintenance fee in the leagues financial report refers to a partnership to install the new playground at the Veterans Memorial Athletic Complex. City of Waltham, Youth Soccer as well as CPC provided funds. Winter clinics were held at Northeast Elementary School for athletes' grade two and up. Custodial fees were charged by the School Department, for use of the gym. Mr. Guzzi explained that the GPS Training/Tournaments expense provided players and coaches with training in and out of season. Mr. Guzzi also explained that the IRS audited the league this past season. Additional expenses were encumbered for the use of the CPA to assist with the audit. The Board thanked the league for their hard work.

The final youth presentation of the evening was Waltham Youth Football represented by Francois Joseph, President as well as Bernie McDonald, Board Member. Mr. Joseph stated that the League Waltham Football has been associated with has merged with the Hockomock League, increasing

total teams overall. Mr. Joseph explained that this past season the league saw great enrollment. The individual teams all played well. Over 90 athletes participated in the flag football program. This past season, the Waltham Football program utilized Lowell Field as their home. Portable lights were brought in to assist with later practices. A special rate was provided or contractors donated the portable lights for the season. The practice schedules were modified early on in the season, due to the EEE threat. The league representatives were very pleased with Lowell Field and look to utilize it again next season.

The Cheer program had a great season. Cheer coordinators Jen Thibodeau and Kerry DiStefano were excited for the 36 non competing cheer athletes who provided a showcase, at the conclusion of the season. The other three teams were very successful, where the B team won the National Championship. The Board thanked the representatives for their time and effort.

The New England Orienteering Club's request for their annual meet held at Prospect Hill Park on May 9, 2020 was next on the agenda. Director Abruzzi stated this event has occurred for numerous years with no reported concerns. If approved Park Ranger, Adam Green would be working with this organization for event coordination. A motion to approve the New England Orienteering Club's request for an event on May 9, 2020 was made by Tom Creonte and seconded by Wayne Cook. All were in favor.

The February Dedication review period was next on the agenda. The Dedication Subcommittee reviewed all completed applications last week and presented two for consideration.

The first application that was presented was for Mr. Joseph Lazaro. Mr. Lazaro, a retired Recreation Board member and advocate for golf for all, influenced adaptive golf throughout the community. The application request is to name the putting green, being installed at Cornelia Warren Park, in his honor. A motion to approve the dedication request for Mr. Joseph Lazaro was made by Jerry Walker and seconded by Tom Creonte. All were in favor.

The second application presented was for Mr. John Peacock. Mr. Peacock recently retired from the Waltham Chamber of Commerce and was an active member of many committees throughout the community. The application request is for a bench dedication at Lowell Field. A motion to approve the dedication request for Mr. John Peacock was made by Jerry Walker and seconded by Stacey Tully. All were in favor.

The Dedication Subcommittee requested a revision to the criteria, on the application. This revision would allow for the criteria to be more specific on the individual's impact within Recreation, in Waltham. The current and proposed language was provided in the Board's folder. A motion to approve the revised criteria to the Dedication Request was made by Wayne Cook and seconded by Tom Creonte. All were in favor.

The 2021 Operational Budget proposal was next on the agenda. Director Abruzzi drew attention to the one-page document, in the Board's folder, the first column is the current FY 2020 budget and the second column is the proposed FY 2021 budget. The budget request was for approximately a \$48,000 increase. The increases would include \$10,000 for additional part time staff to assist with community events, birthday parties and new amenities at Prospect Hill Park. This would also include the increase of the hourly rate. \$3,000 increase would include additional Chill Zone location offerings and staff, with a higher hourly rate. A \$10,000 increase would be for grounds keeping supplies to assist in maintaining the now 12 spray parks as well as supplies needed to assist

the new Park Ranger in his daily tasks. \$8,000 to support recreation contract labor. This would allow for maintenance and repair for the many new attractions at Prospect Hill Park.

Other increases include; van rental for the newly renovated LEAP program, additional rentals of portable restrooms for the newly renovated facilities as well as additional staff for the LEAP program. Pre calculated step raises are also included in this budget. There is a reduction in general expanses at the Veterans Memorial Skating Rink as the updated refrigeration and reclaim systems are more energy efficient.

A motion to approve the FY 2021 budget was made by Wayne Cook and seconded by Stacey Tully. All were in favor. A roll call for this vote included:

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Stacey Tully	Yes
Tricia Curtin	Yes
Tom Creonte	Yes
Wayne Cook	Yes
Jerry Walker	Yes
Richard Scanlon	Yes

Director Abruzzi drew the Board's attention to the two-page Capital Improvement Budget. The first page reflected projects currently being worked on and the anticipated completion date. The second page was the five-year allocation of funding for projects.

The current budget process combined the operational and capital budget requests. The Mayor will be meeting with each Department to review both budgets. No vote is needed for the Capital Budget, as there has been no additional projects added.

The Community Development Block Grant Request – Year 46 was next on the agenda. There are three items being request for this upcoming funding cycle. Thompson Playground and McDonald Playground are currently in design for renovations. The request for \$100,000 for construction, at each location, was listed on the request. The additional funding for construction would be requested from the City of Waltham. The final requested item would include installation of ADA composite restrooms for the Lowell Field location. Once approved by the Recreation Board, the YR 46 CDGB request will be forwarded to the Planning Department. A motion to approve the Community Development Block Grant YR 46 request was made by Jerry Walker and seconded by Tricia Curtin. All were in favor.

The election of the 2020 Chairperson and Vice Chairperson was next on the agenda. Jerry Walker made a motion to nominate Richard Scanlon as the Chairperson, for the next year. The motion was seconded by Tom Creonte, all were in favor. Tom Creonte made a motion to nominate Jerry Walker as Vice Chairperson for the next year and it was seconded by Stacey Tully. All were in favor.

## **Director's Report:**

**Recreation Staff Thank You** – Circulating, with the monthly bills, was a thank you letter to all Park and Recreation full time and part time staff from the Recreation Board. Director Abruzzi requested the Board review and sign the letter. Director Abruzzi would ensure that all staff receive a copy.

**Law Department Training** – The City's Law Department will be holding a training for all Boards and Commissions in the near future. The Recreation Board is scheduled to have its training during the April meeting. More information will be shared as the date gets closer.

**McDonald Playground & Thompson Playground** – Recreation staff met with the design team to view potential improvements for both locations. A second public meeting will be scheduled in the spring, at each location.

**Prospect Hill Park** – The base area improvements are moving forward, as the best route for improvements are determined, given the complicated conservation issues. The design team continues to move forward and renderings of the potential improvements are anticipated.

**Spring Programs** – The spring brochure can be found in the Board's folder. There are many new and exciting special events and adult programs. The Board was encouraged to take a moment to look through the many great opportunities being offered.

**Hillcroft Playground** – The Certificate of Compliance has just been issued from the Conservation Commission. This is one of the final items needed to complete the Hillcroft Playground improvement project.

**Dual Language** – Director Abruzzi has recently spoke with Safety Officer Ann Frassica and Principal Nwosu regarding a revised bus route for the School to improve area traffic and safer pick up and drop off. Proposed plans will be shared with the Board as they project moves forward.

## **Other Business**

Tom Creonte wanted to take a moment and mention that he had the opportunity to meet with Park Ranger, Adam Green at a recent meeting. He was very excited about the energy, passion and knowledge shared during the meeting.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Tom Creonte and seconded by Wayne Cook. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kimberly A. Scott  
Assistant Director