

The Waltham Recreation Board held their January Board meeting on January 24, 2018 at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center, 510 Moody St., Waltham MA.

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

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 move Mayor Jeannette McCarthy to the first item on the agenda was made by Jerry Walker and seconded by Wayne Cook. All in favor.

The Mayor thanked everyone. She then stated she had (2) items to discuss. Mayor McCarthy informed the Board that all City buildings were going to need to be considered when addressing the issues with over population within the Waltham Public Schools. Mayor McCarthy wanted the Recreation Board to be aware that the Waltham Community & Cultural Center would be included as a possible location. She stated that she will make every effort to make sure the Chill Zone program continues to operate in the building. She continued by informing the Board that she has submitted an application to CPC to request funds for the construction of the Elsie Turner/Graverson Project. Funds will also be requested for playground improvements to MacArthur Elementary School playground. Board member, Thomas Creonte asked if the funds for the MacArthur Elementary School playground would also be requested through CPC. Mayor McCarthy responding by stating that the funds would be requested through CPC. She continued by thanking Recreation Director, Nick Abruzzi, Assistant Director, Kim Scott and the members of the Recreation Board for their outstanding work within the community. Mayor McCarthy concluded discussions by informing the Board that the CPC meeting will be held on February 6, 2018.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2017 Board meeting was made by Wayne Cook, seconded by Stacey Tully 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 reflects current balances in General Operating Accounts with routine spending. He reported that all accounts are in good standing. The second page refers to appropriations and balances for Capital Improvement Accounts. Director Abruzzi noted the addition of two new line items on the report. The first item was Recreation Reseal/Repair Courts he explained that this will allow for continued maintenance on surfacing within parks. The second item was Design Services for the renovations at Cornelia Warren Field.

Next on the agenda was Recreation staff recognition. The Recreation Facilities and Maintenance Employees were present. At the request of the Recreation Board, to meet Department employees, the full time and part time staff were all introduced by Director Abruzzi. He explained that these individuals are responsible for overseeing the maintenance of Veterans Memorial Rink and Veterans Memorial Athletic Fields as well as being a presence at Prospect Hill Park and the Waltham Community and Cultural Center. Staff included: Ed Kelley Jr, Assistant Superintendent

of Recreation Facilities, Full Time present -Ryan Kelley, and Ed Kelley Sr. Greg Taylor was working at the Veterans Memorial Rink. Part Time staff present included; Sean Kelley, Mark Gardner, Frank McGovern, Rich Philpott and Tom Fitzsimmons.

Next on the agenda was an annual youth sports group presentation from the Waltham Youth Football and Cheer organization. Francois Joseph and Jen Thibodeau were present to discuss their successful season. Jen Thibodeau began discussions by informing the Board that she was excited to announce that the 3rd and 4th grade cheerleading teams competed in the National Cheerleading Championships in Orlando, Florida and came in 4th in the country. This year the Kindergarten team was the largest. Francois Joseph noted that the league they participate in consists of eight towns. He informed the Board that youth play flag football until grade 4. They are then given the option to play tackle or flag. He was surprised by the number of youth who chose to play tackle this past season. Coaches are required to participate in extensive training that includes first aid/CPR and concussion training. This past year, the practices and home games were held at Leary Field. With many of the youth living in close proximity to the field, the program had more consistent involvement than in past years. They will submit a request for 2018 for use of the concession stand and Cornelia Warren Playground to store concession items, stating that obtaining the storage will allow them to purchase concession items in advance. They were thanked for their presentation.

Prospect Hill Ski Team was on the agenda next. Brian Bower, Roni Sue Bower and Kristen Keane represented the organization. They began by informing the Board that for the first time in the programs history, their first race of the season was cancelled due to the extreme cold. "Meet the Champions" was held at McDevitt Middle School on October 1, 2017. These motivational Para Olympic Athletes inspired and created enthusiasm towards the upcoming winter Olympics. Funding for this special event and the purchase of new equipment, as well as safety netting was provided by a grant from the Kelly Brush Foundation, USSA and local fundraising. Coaches are all first aid/CPR certified and are also required to receive concussion certification. It was noted that overall enrollment was down this year. They believe that this is contributed to the improvement of the economy and that families are able to afford skiing together and weekend ski trips. The goal for the 2018 off season is to increase recruitment. Brian and Roni Sue Bower wanted to thank Blue Hills for being extremely affordable and accommodating. They mentioned the lease negotiations ongoing between Blue Hills and DCR. They hope for many more successful seasons.

Next on the agenda was the Drake Improvement Fund Transfer request. Director Abruzzi noted that the Drake Playground Improvements Fund had a small balance and would like to request a transfer into a Veteran's Memorial Athletic Complex play structure equipment fund. He asked the Board to refer to a color rendering of a potential play structure in their folders. Director Abruzzi stated that with so many youth and families utilizing Veteran's Memorial Complex, the need for play equipment to occupy siblings and youth between games and practices is evident. This play structure would be a community project with funds contributed by the Waltham Youth Soccer Association. A motion to transfer the remaining balance of the Drake Improvement Fund to a newly established account for Veteran's Memorial Athletic Complex play structure project was made by Jerry Walker, seconded by Stacy Tully. All in favor.

A discussion regarding the 2018 Summer Program Registration Fees was next on the agenda. Director Abruzzi informed the Board that the Recreation Department works with third party companies to provide programs that are affordable to all Waltham Residents. Program fees remained the same in 2017 with the exception of a \$10.00 increase in the Chill Zone Summer Programs, helping to offer daily field trips. There was also a small increase to the Animation Flix

program. This technology based program has collaborated with the Recreation Department for a number of years. This is the first year they are recommending a \$10.00 increase to cover technology improvements. A motion to approve 2018 Summer Registration Fees was made by Thomas Creonte and was seconded by Wayne Cook and voted unanimously.

On the agenda next was a request for the use of the Veteran's Memorial Complex May 25-28, 2018 (Memorial Day weekend) for the 2018 Needham Soccer Tournament. Director Abruzzi made note that this will be the 9th year this tournament has taken place at the complex. This organization has always been extremely clean and respectful of the property. They hire Recreation Facilities part time staff to assist with supervision. The organization pays to rent the facility without use of the building to the Recreation Department to cover facility costs, as well as providing a scholarship to the Waltham Youth Soccer Association. A checklist of safety and facility expectations is provided and agreed upon each year. A motion to approve this request was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by Thomas Creonte and voted unanimously.

Next on the agenda was a request from the Friends of Waltham High School Boys Hockey for a fundraiser at the Veterans Memorial Skating Rink. Director Abruzzi asked the Board to refer to a letter from the Waltham High School Boys Hockey Booster Club. The Booster Club provides benefits to the youth who participate in high school sports. This fundraiser would provide a family skate and a "Meet and Greet" of Waltham High School hockey players. This event would take place on February 25, 2018. John Graceffa mentioned that each year the senior class population increases and the Boosters are trying to provide as many opportunities for these seniors who are graduating as possible. Director Abruzzi explained how important the relationship is between the youth and high school players and the older kids serve as great role models to look up to. A motion to approve the event was made by Jerry Walker and seconded by Stacey Tully. All in favor.

Director Abruzzi informed the Board that he received an email from a parent whose family participates in Waltham Youth Hockey. This parents' concern was for the safety of those crossing Totten Pond Road. Veterans Rink has groups/teams rotating through each hour, requiring vehicles to park across the street at Prospect Hill Park. Director Abruzzi has communicated with the City of Waltham Traffic Engineer and let him know we would be discussing this issue at the January meeting. Director Abruzzi requested the Board allow him to write a letter to the Traffic Commission requesting a full traffic signal be installed. Board members requested that we include a request to coordinate the traffic signal at the intersection of Winter Street with the new light across from the rink. A motion to request a Traffic Study of Totten Pond Road in the area of Veteran's Memorial Rink and Prospect Hill Park was made by Jerry Walker and seconded by Gary Vallerand. All in favor.

Director Abruzzi began the Director's Report by informing the Board that the design funds for Cornelia Warren Park have been received. The Recreation Department is working with the Purchasing Department to create the RFP for Design. The RFP should be ready within the next few weeks.

The bid opening for the Graverson/Elsie Turner Project was held on December 13, 2017. Green Acres of Lakeville Massachusetts was the lowest bidder. Funds have been requested through CPC.

The Veterans Memorial Rink Improvement project went out to bid and came back with bids in excess of a million dollars. The bid included air conditioning to make the use of the facility in the summer months more comfortable. The bid amounts were deemed too excessive and discarded.

Director Abruzzi, with the city's purchasing agent agreed that they would put the bid out in (2) phases. A bid for labor and materials recently went out separately. There are many positive affects this project will have on the Rink.

Included in the folders, is the Staff Training schedule. Staff will be going to professional development trainings throughout Massachusetts over the next several months. Director Abruzzi noted that Kim Scott and Kara Greeley, have already begun the process of becoming certified as First Aid/CPR instructors.

Director Abruzzi noted that in the folders, is a summary of activity at the Veterans Memorial Rink provided by Assistant Superintendent, Ed Kelley, Jr. With public skating, public hockey, youth hockey and high school hockey scheduled every day, the rink is an extremely busy facility. Board member, Jerry Walker inquired on the maintenance issues referenced in the report. Director Abruzzi stated that the dehumidifier and compressor issues will be resolved with the upcoming proposed capital improvement. Director Abruzzi also noted, that he is working with Bill Forte of the City of Waltham Building Department to resolve the roof issues at the rink. The Rink is scheduled to close for the season on March 30, 2018.

It was requested by Board member, Gary Vallerand at the December Board meeting for an update on statistics for birthday parties offered by the Recreation Department. Director Abruzzi directed the Board to a statistic sheet in their folder. He explained page one summarizes the parties offered from September 2016 – June 2017. There were 77 Value Parties (up to 15 friends) and 82 Plus Parties (up to 25 friends). Page two highlights parties from September 2017 – December 2017. There was a combined total 70 parties held. Parties continue to be successful. The option to have Mini Golf Parties is also available, weather permitting, late spring and early fall.

The Recreation Staff is working with the Waltham Police Department to create emergency safety protocols including ALICE training. A meeting with all Summer Third Parties/Contracted Organizations will be held this coming spring. Training will include updated safety procedures in alignment with all Recreation Department Policies. Director Abruzzi explained how important it was to have outside organizations that offer programs through us take part in all the same training protocols.

Director Abruzzi made note that a map of the Fernald Property was emailed to all Board Members. He explained that the map allows you to zoom in to get a better look at the property.

Director Abruzzi requested all Conflict of Interest Certifications, Acknowledgements and Emergency Contract Forms be turned into Kim Scott at the conclusion of the meeting.

Director Abruzzi informed the Board of some new recreation opportunities that are being added to Prospect Hill Park and other locations, including a Carousel. Mini Golf will be evaluated and seasonal repairs will be made in the upcoming months. A Laser Tag system has also been purchased which will save the Recreation Department money over time due to reducing the need to book trips to laser tag locations.

Board member, Jerry Walker requested that the Recreation Board visits the newly acquired properties in the spring, Berry Park and The Fernald property as well as construction sites once projects get started.

Motion to adjourn made by Tom Creonte and seconded by Gary Vallerand, all in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kim A. Scott, Assistant Director