

The Waltham Recreation Board held their January Board meeting on January 23, 2019 at the Waltham Recreation Department, 510 Moody St, Waltham, MA 02453.

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

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 December 5, 2018 Board Meeting by Wayne Cook, 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 two pages in their folders detailed operational and capital budget accounts. Director Abruzzi explained the first page is the operational accounts. He stated that routine spending has occurred over the last month with one notable change in the Rink - Salaries and Wages account. This account is higher this month due to a transfer that occurs twice per year from the Recreation account. The transfer is to support the Rink budget and make up for the spring and summer months when the rink is closed and the employees work outside. The Capital Account balances are close to last month with a change in the Veterans Memorial Field Play Structure account. With the new play structure installed and the project complete, the payment was processed and the balance was updated to funds expended from encumbered. All accounts are in good standing.

Next on the agenda was the Youth Sports Groups Presentations.

Waltham Girls Softball was represented by President Stephen McGovern and Vice President Trish Dagostino. Mr. McGovern announced that he is stepping down and Vice President Dagostino will be assuming the Presidents duties starting this coming season. The Board asked how long Mr. McGovern has been affiliated with the Girls Softball program. With over 12 years of service in various roles, Mr. McGovern will continuing on as a U 12 coach. The Board thanked Mr. McGovern for his years of service and dedication to the program. Mr. McGovern and Mrs. Dagostino continued, stating that the program is now offering three seasons of play. Many girls will go to Watertown for the indoor winter program. The league has expanded its U8 program to included weekly games. Girls Softball is always looking to expose the Waltham youth to different levels of play at different locations. They take the teams to view local high school and colleges games. They have also worked on "Branding" the league by distributing t-shirts and jackets with the League name on it. Board Member Jennie Scafidi asked if they had a working relationship with the new High School softball coach. Mrs. Dagostino said that she has open communication with the High School Softball coach and they are working together to feed the High School program from this league. Plans for 2019 season include developing a U21 program and a program for people with disabilities. The Board thanked them for their time

Next on the agenda was Prospect Hill Ski Team, represented by President Dennis Keohane and Treasurer, Brian Bower. With the recent weather, races have been canceled. Mr. Bower is hoping to have the games rescheduled in the near future. Mr. Bower also noted there has been a decline in athletes, approximately 30 less over the last two years. Mr. Keohane noted that there is an increase in the U18 programs and they are excited to develop the younger age groups. As a way to bring attention to the Ski Team, an Alumni Reunion was held on November 30, 2018. This event was well attended with current and past athletes. Prospect Hill Ski Team is an affiliate of both Eastern Mass. Buddy Werner League and USSA. They provide the guidelines for coach development as well as concession awareness. All coaches and volunteers are First Aid/CPR certified. The Board thanked them for his time.

The final youth presentation was Legion Baseball represented by Manager Mike Peterson. In 2018 the Board voted to provide support for the developing Legion organization within Waltham. Mr. Peterson gave a brief history of the development of the program. The League now has a solid group of participants that are eager to play. The Waltham Legion team plays in District 5 with 10 other teams. 18 are on the roster with all but one being a Waltham residents. Mr. Peterson has been the manager for the last few years and Ivan Colon has been the Head Coach. The Board thanked Mr. Peterson for taking the initiative to revitalize this program and for his dedication to Waltham Baseball.

Cheri Ruane and Amanda Gaal from Weston and Sampson Inc. were available to present the final plans for Hillcroft Playground. The consultants reviewed the planned improvements to include added drainage as well as a new walking path, play structure, picnic area and multipurpose basketball/hockey dasher board system. The facility will have universal accessibility. A question was posed regarding an irrigation system. It was explained that the park is currently in a low, wet area so irrigation was not recommended. The consultants have been working with the City's Engineering Department to create a plan to capture and direct the water correctly with a slow release system. The Conservation Commission has been involved as well. Hillcroft Playground will maintain its neighborhood park feel with updated amenities. The consultants made note that the neighborhood was very involved in the community input process. After discussion a motion to approve the Hillcroft Playground Capital Improvement plan was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by Stacey Tully. All were in favor.

The presentation of final plans for Bobby Connors Playground Capital Improvement Project with Carolyn Cooney and Associates was rescheduled until a future date.

2019 Summer Registration fees was next on the agenda. Director Abruzzi provided the Board with a breakdown of all programs planned for summer 2019 that included pricing from last year and proposed pricing for this summer. All program fees are remaining the same with the exception of the Summer Chill Zone program. This program was formerly a four day field trip based program with one day of drop in on Fridays. In 2019, it will be changing to a five day trip program. The additional \$15.00 per week will support the added field trip. In addition to the increase in the Chill Zone program, there will be five new programs offered this coming summer. A motion to approve the proposed 2019 summer registration rates was made by Wayne Cook and seconded by Tom Creonte. All were in favor.

Director Abruzzi drew the Boards attention to the next packet in their folders referencing the proposed 2019-2020 Veterans Memorial Rink Rental Agreement. There was a couple minor changes regarding the use of ice rentals to one time users. The highlighted new sections brings the

renter's attention to the fact that ice use is for specifically ice hockey or free skating. At no time will a renter be able to combine the two uses at the same time. This written policy is for the safety of all those participating. A \$500 deposit may also be required for these onetime private use rentals, to ensure that all safety and building policies are followed. The other highlighted new section includes the 50 minute ice rental rate. A motion to approve the two changes to the Veterans Memorial Rink Rental Agreement was made by John Graceffa and seconded by Tom Creonte. All were in favor.

Next on the agenda was the rates for ice rental at the Veteran's Memorial Skating Rink for the 2019/20 season. Director Abruzzi proposed that the 2019-2020 season rates remain the same as this past year. He also proposed that the 2020-2021 season rates increase by \$10.00 per 50 minute rental. The current rates are \$200.00 for nonprofit/youth groups and \$220.00 for profit/private groups. Increasing the rates, according to lease agreement, requires approval from the Department of Conservation and Recreation, which in some cases takes months. By requesting the increase now we will have ample time to notify consumers of the future increase to allow them time to budget effectively. Starting the 2020/21 season, the rates would be \$210.00 for nonprofit/youth groups and \$230.00 for profit/private groups. Director Abruzzi provided the Board with a historical break down of the rates since the City of Waltham took control of the rink in 2005. In addition, a comparison of area rinks and their rates, was provided as well. With the suggested increase Waltham would still remain one of the lower priced facilities in the area. A motion to maintain the rate during the 2019-2020 season and to increase the rate by \$10.00 for the following year was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by Wayne Cook. All were in favor.

An additional request from Bay State Games has been received for use at the Veterans Memorial Athletic Complex. The Board has already approved their annual Bay State Games Tournament that is held annually at the field complex. The approved dates are July 9<sup>th</sup> to July 14<sup>th</sup> and they would like to add Saturday, June 29, 2019. This works perfectly as all youth and high school programs are completed at this point and summer use will begin later in July. This one day addition would be used for Ultimate Frisbee and Field Hockey. A motion to approve the additional date requested for June 29, 2019 was made by Wayne Cook and seconded by Jerry Walker. All were in favor.

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

**Chill Zone/After Chill** - Included in the Board folders is a two year look back at the enrollment for the Chill Zone (grades 6 – 8) and After Chill (grades 9 – 10). The enrollment numbers are significantly higher this year even with the gym at the Recreation Department being closed for the first month of this year, due to the HVAC project. The program operates Friday and Saturdays. Hours are staggered to allow both groups to use the facility without overlapping. It's been noted that members have not been arriving on Saturday's until about 2:00 p.m. Beginning in March, the Saturday hours will be modified to operate from 2:00 – 8:00 p.m. This time change will free up staffing and funding that will soon be used when the 14 Church St. property opens this spring.

**Winter Carnival** – In the Board Folders is a summary for the Winter Carnival Event held on Friday, December 21, 2018 from 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. This family free community event showcased the variety of amenities offered at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center. On this very rainy evening, 350 individuals packed the building, utilizing the many activities offered. A breakdown of the total cost to operate the family free event was provided. The program was in the neighborhood of \$3.00 per participant to run. Food, drinks and snacks were sold for a modest fee. Thanks to

Recreation Supervisor Kathy Gross for organizing this event and to the other full time and part time staff who assisted. The Winter Carnival now gives the community 3 seasonal free family events. This event joins 4<sup>th</sup> of July at Prospect Hill and Halloween in the Park in October. Plans are already under way for a spring event to make it one for each season.

**Veterans Memorial Rink** – In the Board folders is an update from Ed Kelley Jr. regarding the activity at the Veterans Memorial Rink. Director Abruzzi wanted to acknowledge the unbelievable job that the Rink staff are doing and has received lots of positive feedback. The Rink is in full operation and is looking forward to upcoming special events including the Skate with the Hawks and the February School Vacation Hockey Tournament.

**14 Church St.** – Director Abruzzi provided a flyer for the Board to review that included photo's before/after of the 14 Church St property. The facility is still waiting for the ADA accessible lift to be installed and completed. Once that is finalized the facility is scheduled to open this spring. Chill Zone and other programs will be offered there.

**Prospect Hill Park** – The survey for Prospect Hill Park was extended to February 1, 2019 to increase community input. At this time over 500 surveys have been received. The results will be presented to the consultants and Mayor for further planning.

**Lesley University** – Director Abruzzi has been working with representatives from Lesley University about a potential partnership. The Athletics Department would like to use Elsie Tuner Field and possibly Veterans Athletic Complex for day time practices/games. In exchange for field usage, they would work with the City to coordinate Capital Improvement projects to the facilities.

**Other Business** – Gary Vallerand requested a follow up regarding the safety concerns on Totten Pond Road. Director Abruzzi noted that he did follow up and a warning light will be installed in the near future. Additional discussion was had on potential additional parking.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Tom Creonte and seconded by Jerry Walker, all were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kimberly A. Scott  
Assistant Director