

The Waltham Recreation Board held their May meeting on May 20, 2020 via a Zoom Meeting.

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

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

Chairperson Richard Scanlon called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. He announced that the meeting was being recorded through the Zoom app and would be shared to 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 February 12, 2020 Board Meeting by Wayne Cook, seconded by Stacey Tully. All were in favor.

Director Abruzzi reviewed the Statement of Accounts explaining that the two pages in their folders detailed current operational and capital budget accounts. Since the February 2020 Board Meeting, operational spending has been for COVID-19 related items, specifically park signs. Capital accounts have remained consistent with the exception of Cornelia Warren Park. MJ Cataldo Inc. has continued the park renovation project and is close to completion. Smaller accounts balances will be removed as part of IRS requirements in the upcoming months.

The next item on the agenda was the 2020-21 Board Meeting Calendar. The projected dates are consistent with the traditional schedule. As the 2020-21 school calendar has not yet been released, slight modifications may occur to the calendar to accommodate vacation weeks. A motion to approve the 2020-21 Board Meeting Calendar was made by Jerry Walker and seconded by Gary Vallerand. All were in favor.

The Dual Language Principal Rochelle Nwosu sent a letter to the Recreation Board requesting the use of Room 217 for the continued expansion of the Dual Language Program. This room, is currently occupied by the Waltham Philharmonic Program. The Board had discussion on the expansion of the Dual Language Program in relation to the Waltham Community and Cultural Center and building usage of building tenants. Board discussion was also had regarding future plans for the second floor of the building. A request was made for either the new Waltham School Superintendent and/or Principal Rochelle Nwosu to appear before the Board in the fall of 2020 to discuss the future of this School program, at this location. A motion was made by Stacey Tully not to allow Dual Language to occupy Room 217 at the Waltham Community Cultural Center, if an alternate location cannot be found to relocate the Waltham Philharmonic Program. The motion was seconded by Tricia Curtin. All were in favor

The May Facility Dedication review period was next on the agenda. The Dedication Subcommittee reviewed all completed applications, this past week and presented one for consideration.

The application that was presented was for Stephen R. McGovern. Mr. McGovern is the past president of Waltham Girls Softball from 2012 – 2019. After much Board discussion the motion was made by Jerry Walker to support the Dedication Subcommittee's decision to vote for a bench or plaque at Elsie Turner Field. The motion was seconded by John Graceffa. All were in favor. In accordance with the Dedication Policy, the bench plaque would be at the expense of the applicant.

Next on the agenda is a request from the Conservation Commission to plant wildflower seeds along the Basketball/Hockey Court at Cedarwood Playground. The motion to approve the request to plant wildflower seeds by the Conservation Commission was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by Wayne Cook. All were in favor.

Late Submission – Phase 1 Recreation Facility Reopen plan was the next item on the agenda. The plan presented by Director Abruzzi listed the recreation facilities that would be reopened based on the State of Massachusetts reopening guidelines. This plan would take effect on Monday, May 25, 2020. A revision to the provided plan would be to add the reopening of playgrounds to Phase 2. Board discussion was had regarding the sanitations of Phase 2 recreation facilities including playgrounds and spray parks. Director Abruzzi stated he has had conversations with CPW regarding sanitation of these areas. Reopening Phase 2 and 3 are listed on the plan as well and will be updated as future guidelines are provided. Director Abruzzi stated that the final approved plan would be forwarded to CPW and Waltham Police. A motion was made by Jerry Walker to approve the Phase 1 Recreation Facility Reopening Plan and seconded by Gary Vallerand. All were in favor.

Director's Report:

Cornelia Warren Park – MJ Cataldo Inc. has been consistently working and the project is nearing completion. Photos were shared of the park projects recently completed putting area, Ninja Warrior Area as well as Playground. The field was recently sodded. The parking lot will be one of the final areas to be completed.

McDonald Playground & Thompson Playground – Design plans for both locations have been provided from NESRA Engineering. The Recreation Department will be reviewing and providing feedback to the design options as the plans move forward.

Hillcroft Playground – The final pay requisition for Hillcroft Playground is being processed. This will complete this project.

Prospect Hill Park – The plans for Base Area park improvements are 85% completed. These plans are being circulated to City Department's for review as Hedlund Design Group prepares to submit them to the Conservation Commission.

Summer Staff – Recreation Supervisors have been interviewing candidates for the summer season remotely over the phone to be prepared in the event we are able to run summer programs.

Spring Virtual Programs – A newly released Virtual Spring brochure has received positive feedback by the community. Recreation Staff are releasing videos and downloadable challenges.

Summer Programs – As the Recreation Department awaits guidelines for summer programs, staff is working on alternative programming options to our traditional offerings. The School Department buildings are not available for use this summer. Social distancing and decreased enrollment guidelines will also create a different summer experience. Recreation Staff have been working from home to provide these unique opportunities online as well as meeting regularly to plan and prepare. Director Abruzzi wanted to take a minute to praise part time staff Sean Kelley and Recreation

Facilities Assistant Superintendent Ed Kelley, Jr. for assisting with park closing coverage, enforcement and maintenance.

Other Business

Board Member Gary Vallerand took a minute to commend Recreation Staff for the newly released Spring Virtual Programming. He also wanted to take a minute to bring attention to the part time and full-time staff that have assisted with keeping parks and facilities closed and safe during these times.

Board Member Jerry Walker took a minute to praise the Recreation Staff for their response to and creative thinking regarding the new offerings as well as the COVID-19 protocols.

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

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kimberly A. Scott
Assistant Director