

The Waltham Recreation Board held their February meeting on February 25, 2015, at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center, 510 Moody St., Waltham MA.

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

Also present were; Director Sandra Tomasello and Assistant Director Nick Abruzzi.

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 January 21, 2015 meeting was made by Jerry Walker seconded by Patricia Curtin and voted unanimously.

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

In reviewing the Statement of Accounts, Director Tomasello noted that the first page reflected current balances in General Operating Accounts and the second page lists appropriations and balances for Capital Improvement Accounts, no significant changes. Board member Thomas Creonte noted within the Veteran's Memorial Rink Account, salary and wages were very close to using funds budgeted.

Next on the agenda was Carolyn Cooney with Carolyn Cooney & Associates presenting the Proposed Plan for the renovations of Peter Gilmore Playground. Director Sandra Tomasello introduced Carolyn Cooney and Darryl Bird, design consultants on the project. Director Tomasello directed the Board to the packet that was provided. Ms. Cooney began by talking about the 2 diagonal paths in the design on either side of the area to make the park more accessible to residents. She explained the main focal point in the design would be a fountain with passive green space as well as seating focused on the fountain. Ms. Cooney recommends a memorial plaque dedicated to Peter Gilmore and the history of the park i.e. the site being a former South Side Grammar School. This area's approximately 50' x 70' grass area that will be irrigated, that may be utilized by residents for open play space, bordering this will be (2) shade structures. Along High Street, there will be trees planted in addition to remaining trees for noise reduction and privacy. In keeping with the plan to accommodate "all ages" there is what Ms. Cooney called an "adult playground" with exercise/work out equipment, similar to those planned at Cedarwood Playground, simple pipe structures with (6) stations and safety surfacing. There will be a multi-use basketball/futsal court. The design of the baskets/goals for the court are not finalized at this time. The features will be investigated for safety and durability. The court area would be fenced in along (3) sides. In the design of the playground, the overall play area is approximately equal to the current play equipment space and will remain in the same areas. Although the elements in the playground are not finalized there will be swings, canvas sun shelter and will be fenced in. Board member Jerry Walker asked what kind of fencing would be used, it was explained it would be steel picket fencing. Board member Thomas Creonte asked if the library would be demolished. Director Tomasello reported that it was in fact going to be removed from the site. Board member Jerry Walker asked for clarification on the plaque for the park, would it have historical reference noted on it. Carolyn Cooney said that it was her recommendation, but it would be decided at a later time. Chairman Richard Scanlon introduced Councillor Logan Ward 9. Councillor Logan began by thanking the board for all their work with playgrounds, facilities and programs. Councillor Logan

continued by stating how this new playground would be such an enhancement to the South Side Community and its residents. He then commented on the amount of meetings, public notices distributed through social media and hand delivered by himself to bring us this design. He noted that the initial concern of park abutters was noise and illegal activity that accompany the park, as it exists today in the area of basketball courts. After a constituent came forward at a meeting opposed to not having any court at the park would be a mistake Mayor McCarthy asked the Councillor to speak to residents and neighbors of the area to seek a compromise. This design is the compromise. Councillor Robert Logan along with residents could not be happier with the design. Director Tomasello directed the board to (3) communications she received in support of the design from individuals who were opposed to the original plan, received as feedback after posting on the departments' web site and through social media and on the local news.

Chairman Richard Scanlon then introduced Councillor Stephen Rourke Ward 8. Councillor Rourke began by saying how excited he was for the project. He expressed that he was frustrated at times with the low number of community members that would get involved. Councillor Rourke also reported that he himself had hand delivered meeting notices as well. He feels that the two South Side parks (Gilmore and Koutoujian) will complement each other nicely.

Mayor McCarthy was next to be introduced to comment on the project. Mayor McCarthy thanked the Board, Councillors and all involved in the project. The Mayor also thanked all of the people in the community for participating in the process. She expressed how happy she is with the design. Mayor McCarthy believes the City Council will support the funding for the project completely. Mayor McCarthy then reported that she had signed the bid contract with Mabardy Construction for the demolition of the library on the site. She will allocate \$392,000.00 of upcoming Block Grant money to the Peter Gilmore Playground Project with City money will fund remaining balance of the project. The Mayor continued by commending Director Tomasello for always thinking of the diversity in ages of patrons using city parks.

Former City Councillor Sally Collura and resident of Ward 9, was next to ask to speak. Ms. Collura thanked everyone involved in the process and design of the park, which she called "stunning". She commended the design by saying it has something for everyone. In closing she thanked everyone especially the Councillors for their patience and asked if there was a timeline for the completion of the park.

Board member Tricia Curtin asked if there would be seating around the fountain structure. Ms. Cooney responded by saying that the actual structure had not been chosen at this time. Ms. Curtin had concerns regarding the water treatment and the height of the fountain, would it be too low for children to fall in. Board member Jerry Walker also asked if there was a timeline for completion. Director Tomasello responded by saying that there were still a number of things that needed to be finalized along with research that needed to be done. Director Tomasello reported that she would like to do on site visits to other parks in different cities to research play structures and other elements that would be utilized at the playground. As with all other playground projects, safety is the priority. With the snow and inclement weather recently that has been impossible. She reports that purchasing components directly from the manufacturer is at a discounted rate and will save a considerable amount of money. Board Member Jerry Walker commended Councillor Logan Ward 9 and Councillor Rourke Ward 8, for demonstrating how government should work and how much he appreciates the ethics and love for their community. Board member Thomas Creonte asked if there would be a plan in place to maintain the beautiful new playground. Director Tomasello responded by informing the Board that that is why City Departments such as Consolidated Public Works are involved in the renovation planning, so they may prepare for future maintenance. Board Member Jerry Walker made a motion to accept the design for the Peter Gilmore Playground, as presented seconded by Thomas Creonte, all in favor.

Next for discussion was the Prospect Hill Park Stewardship Programs' annual report to the Board. City Councillor Romard, Ward 1 and Sonja Wadman, Waltham Land Trust to present on behalf of the Prospect Hill Park Stewardship Program. Councillor Romard began by providing the board with a February 2015 PHP Stewardship Program Budget Report. Councillor Romard directed the board to page 3 of the report. He talked about meeting with the Prospect Hill Park Subcommittee and about their upcoming meeting. Along with their "Meet and Greet" at Prospect Hill with representatives from the Waltham Recreation Department, Stewards and the Waltham Land Trust. Councillor Romard informed the Board that he would be asking City Council for additional personnel for maintenance purposes of Prospect Hill Park solely, that would be hired under direction of the Consolidated Public Works Department. He then updated the Board on the status of their funding balance and how funds would be expended. He would like to continue to receive their \$2,500.00 annual budget. With funds available from last year's budget he proposes the funds will be used towards spring start up, planning, maps and possibly creating a web page. Councillor Romard also proposed using "QR" codes in different areas of the park. These codes can be used with an application on smart phones. The codes could provide fun facts and information as to where you are in the park. He would also like to use more funding recognizing the efforts and hard work of all the stewards. Steward Chris Leary was unable to attend the meeting due to a prior personal commitment. Sonja Wadman, Waltham Land Trust added the group's effort to finalize a trail map for the parks' opening in the spring. The map design will be discussed with the Board's PHP Stewardship Subcommittee. Chairman Scanlon thanked them for their presentation.

Mayor McCarthy addressed the Board with regards to Prospect Hill Park and the progress of the Prospect Hill Park renovations. She reported that Planning and the Conservation Committee along with Donna Laswell are working on new signage for the park. She reports the mini golf course will be opening this year. The mini golf course has the standard 18 holes, the project was funded primarily from the Mayor's Account and a great deal of the construction of the elements of the golf course was done by volunteers. She also asked the Board to develop a budget plan for the park. Mayor McCarthy asked that the board make a decision if they will continue with the original Prospect Hill Park Master Plan or if they will be seeking a new master plan. Mayor McCarthy reports that there is a resident of Porter Road who is volunteering time to create a plan for 3 season trails for cross country at other park property. She then commented on how the Waltham Land Trust is asking that the Greenways be connected to Fernald property as well.

On the agenda next was the Waltham Girls Softball Program update. Chairman Richard Scanlon began by stating himself with Assistant Director Nicholas Abruzzi were active in the resolution of the program's issues. He continued by stating that their job was to make sure that the Waltham Girls Softball Program is a program where any Waltham resident has a team to play softball. Their main focus was keeping the program in town as opposed to becoming strictly a travel league. Board member Thomas Creonte asked if there was a new election held. Assistant Director Abruzzi answered that there was not. After a nomination meeting there were (5) people nominated for (5) positions. Therefore, a new Board consisting of Same President and Treasurer with (3) new officers. They are committed to remaining primarily an in town program at the U-10 level and below, U-10 and above concentrating on possible travel teams in the summer. Board member Thomas Creonte asked that they be invited to present to the Board the new changes along with spring enrollment numbers and summer plans. Director Tomasello recommends they come in June, after registration and they have solid numbers. Assistant Director Abruzzi was disappointed with community involvement. A motion to have the Waltham Girls Softball Program come before the board at the June meeting was made by Thomas Creonte, seconded by Jerry Walker, all in favor.

The election of the Waltham Recreation Board Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson was next on the agenda. Nomination of current Chairperson Richard Scanlon, for the Chairperson position was made by Jerry Walker, seconded by Stacey Tully, all in favor. Next Patricia Curtin nominated current Vice-Chairperson Jerry Walker for the Vice-Chairperson position, the motion seconded by Thomas Creonte, all in favor.

Director Tomasello presented the Director's Report. She began by informing the Board of the Prospect Hill Park Stewardship Program "Meet and Greet Social" Thursday, March, 5, 2015. Director Tomasello reported the Spring Brochure has been sent to schools, the Summer Brochure is at the printer. The summer season will begin June 29, 2015 (due to number of snow days) and end the 8 week session on August 21, 2015. Summer employment applications will be available, Friday, March 6, 2015. Director Tomasello alerted the board of the gymnasium and skate n' scoot rooms as the Waltham Community and Cultural Center were closed for 10 days due to large amounts of snow on the roof of those areas. She reported the Cedarwood Project bid was opened with a price of just under a \$1,000,000.00. The request for funding is going before the Long Term Debt City Council on Monday. She is hopeful that contracts are signed and construction should begin, weather permitting mid-April, with construction continuing through spring and summer, with the park closed for those seasons. In the Mayors FY16 Capital Funds she has renovation funding listed for Drake Playground/Hazel Street. Hazel Street re-construction will be done by the City's Engineering Department.

In other business Stacey Tully asked that the Board have a moment of silence to acknowledge the passing of former Recreation Director and City Purchasing Agent, Rusty Mula.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Thomas Creonte, seconded by Jerry Walker and voted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa DiBlasi, Clerk