

The Waltham Recreation Board held their November meeting on November 13, 2019 at the Waltham Recreation Department, 510 Moody St, Waltham, MA 02453.

Present were: Wayne Cook, Tom 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 cable channel and would be shown on the local channel at a later date.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2019 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. The first payment has recently been made out of the Cornelia Warren Capital Improvement balance as the demolition has just about been completed. Director Abruzzi also made note that the Hillcroft Capital Improvement Project balance is winding down as the final pay applications are being prepared by the consultant and contractor. All accounts are in good standing.

The first of the youth groups to present was Waltham Girls Softball. President, Tricia Dagostino and Treasurer, David Carvelli presented a summary of the past season as well as an overview of their financials. Mrs. Dagostino stated that the U14 team won the City Championship, this past spring, and there were three U12 teams, this fall. The All Day tournament was held at Elsie Turner and the two fields at Veterans Athletic Complex. The League appreciated the back gate of Veterans Complex being opened so that families could walk between both facilities.

Moving forward, energy will be focused into development of younger age groups, as bilingual flyers have been distributed through the schools as well as an increase of traffic on the Leagues website. ASA, the league insurance, had expanded the required coverage, now covering the League from September 1 through August 31. Coaches received concussion protocol training as well as first aid/CPR.

Trivia Night, held at the beginning of April, was the Leagues big fundraiser of the year. This event was very successful. Mrs. Dagostino stated that feedback from players and families regarding the new upgrades at Elsie Turner have been extremely positive. A volunteer created helmet and bat holders within the new dugouts, helping create organization when on the bench. Championship teams and T Ball received trophies and the rest of the league received "Swag" at the end of the year. Director Abruzzi thanked the League for their patience during the field renovations.

The next presentation of the evening was Waltham Youth Lacrosse, represented by President, David Becker. Mr. Becker noted highlights from this past season to include Friday Kindergarten programs as well as one to two teams from each age divisions. The League also had a few select teams. Watertown Lacrosse League folded and Waltham Lacrosse absorbed 35 of those players as well as a

few coaches. Additional effort will be made next season to recruit more Watertown players. The winter skills clinics will be held at Kennedy Middle School.

Ten Waltham youth received scholarships to participate, this year. Coaches' children also have their tuition waived. There was no nonresident rate, as the State wide league is trying to grow the sport. The program was held at the turf field at Waltham High School. MBYL required Safe Sport, National Background Checks and Concussion Protocol. The Board thanked Mr. Becker for his time.

Waltham Track Club was the last group to present, represented by President, Joe Tranchita. Mr. Tranchita thanked the Board for their continued support throughout the years. The membership has continued to grow and has maintained stable over the last few years. At this time, Mr. Tranchita was not comfortable accepting financial support from the Recreation Board as they are financially stable. With over 500 athletes and active parents, the League continues to flourish. Mr. Tranchita would like to continue to meet with the Board yearly to review their season and maintain a healthy relationship, in the event they may need future assistance. Mr. Tranchita thanked the Board for their continued support.

Next on the agenda was a request for the Needham Memorial Day Soccer Tournament, to be held on May 22 – May 25, 2020. Director Abruzzi noted the request letter from Executive Director Mark Miskin. Director Abruzzi stated this positive partnership has been ongoing for over ten years. This tournament has paid a facility use fee as well as made a donation to the Waltham Soccer League, each year. A motion to approve the request for the Needham Memorial Day Soccer Tournament was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by Tricia Curtin. All were in favor.

Next on the agenda was a request for the 2020 Bay State Games Summer Tournament. The request for seven dates in June and July was found in the Boards folder. This annual event has been held at Veterans Athletic Complex. A motion to approve the 2020 Bay State Games Summer Tournament was made by Gary Vallerand and seconded by Tricia Curtin. All were in favor.

Facility Dedications – November Review Period was next on the agenda. The Board had established a Dedication Subcommittee to review completed applications. The applications approved by the Subcommittee would then be presented to the Recreation Board during their November, February and May Meetings. At this time, a few applications were submitted but not completed. The Dedication Subcommittee would like to present one completed dedication request for consideration. Once approved the application would be presented to the Mayor and City Council, after the February Board Meeting. The applicant would be responsible for the cost of the plaque. A motion to approve the application for Peter Collura for a bench dedication at Hillcroft Playground was made by Tom Creonte and seconded by John Graceffa. All were in favor.

Director's Report:

Hillcroft Playground Update – This beautiful park had a few items on a punch list to be completed as well as filing for a certificate of compliance with the Conservation Commission. The final payments to the contractor and consultant are being coordinated.

Bobby Connors Update- The construction at this location is just about completed. The seal coating, irrigation, and testing of utilities will be completed in the spring of 2020. Green Acres Landscaping has done a wonderful job.

Middle School Baseball Program – As a follow up from last month's meeting on the Recreation Board's support for the middle school baseball program, Director Abruzzi has spoken with School Department Athletic Director Steve LaForest. At this time the School Department will not be seeking funding for this program. The Recreation Department will continue to offer fields and provide baseballs to the Waltham Youth Baseball League to support this level of baseball.

6th Annual Western Greenway 5K – In the Board's folders is a summary of the Western Greenway 5K held on October 27th. Just under 175 individuals attended this extremely rainy event. The Recreation Department paid for the portable bathrooms as well as the t-shirts. Park Ranger, Adam Green attended to assist with this event.

Winter Brochure – Winter Online Registration was scheduled to begin on Monday, November 18, 2019. The brochure, enclosed in the Board's Folder, details the many special events as well as weekly offerings. These brochures were printed in English and Spanish. The Winter Free Family event is scheduled for Saturday, December 21, 2019.

Cornelia Warren Park – Cataldo Landscaping has recently completed the underground field drainage and wiring. The field lighting was in the process of being installed. The contractor plans on working through the winter months for as long as possible.

Infield Renovations/Seal Coating – Recreation staff are currently working on pricing and bid documents to renovate the infields at Jake Dennis and Warrendale Playground. Simultaneously, bids and funding is being requested for the continuous maintenance needed for the seal coating for tennis, basketball and spray park facilities.

Veterans Skating Rink – The Consolidated Public Works Department worked in the off season to clear land at the far end of the parking lot. This new area allows for additional parking at the Skating Rink. This improvement reduces the need for individuals to cross the very busy Totten Pond Road. Public Skating will begin November 15, 2019. The Board commended the Veterans Rink staff on their dedication to the appearance and maintenance of the facility.

New Amusement at Prospect Hill – The Himalayan was recently installed at Prospect Hill Park. This new attraction, great for older kids through adults, will be ready for the general public in the spring of 2020.

Chill Zone – New opportunities have been made available at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center. The installation of two skee-ball games as well as a new driving simulator game are now available for use during open hours.

Halloween in the Park - On October 26, 2019 close to 900 individuals attended this free seasonal event held at Prospect Hill Park. Lawn games, board games, crafts, a nature maze with Park Ranger Adam Green, mini golf as well as the many attractions were free throughout the afternoon. The event concluded with a Halloween movie shown in the Recreation Building. Snack items were available for a small fee. Special thanks to Recreation Supervisor, Kathy Gross for her hard work on this event.

Other Business

14 Church St – The Board inquired on the programs at 14 Church St. Director Abruzzi discussed how the program has been successful to date, but the heating system recently malfunctioned and needs to be replaced. The Building Department is working to secure funding to fix the heat. It's anticipated to be closed until early 2020. The high school program has been moved temporarily to 510 Moody Street while we wait for the repairs to be completed.

Discussion was held among the Board on the need to begin the process of renovations to the Veterans Athletic Complex. The turf has exceeded its life expectancy and a planned out phasing of renovation will be needed to minimize the disruption to the facility.

The vehicle access gate to Prospect Hill Park closed for the season on October 31, 2019. It will reopen in the spring of 2020.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Tom Creonte and seconded by Stacey Tully all were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kimberly A. Scott
Assistant Director