

The Waltham Recreation Board held their September meeting on September 20, 2017 at the Waltham Community and Cultural Center, 510 Moody St., Waltham MA.

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

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

Mr. Scanlon called the meeting to order at 5:35 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.

Chairman Scanlon welcomed everyone back from a great summer. He stated that due to some personnel matters the Board didn't have much time off. There were numerous special meetings, all were very positive.

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2017 Board meeting was made by Jerry Walker, seconded by John Graceffa and voted unanimously.

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 7, August 7, and September 12, 2017 special Board meetings was made by Jerry Walker, seconded by John Graceffa and voted unanimously.

A motion to approve the Executive Session minutes of the July and August meeting was made by Jerry Walker, seconded by Wayne Cook, all in favor.

Director Abruzzi stated that there were (2) sets of bills that should be reviewed and signed. He explained that the first set represents the bills paid from the last Board meeting, June 14, 2017 until the end of FY2017 and that the second set represents the bills that were paid from the beginning of FY2018 through today. The monthly bills were circulated and signed by all Board members.

In reviewing the Statement of Accounts, Director explained that all accounts are healthy. There hasn't been time to see any major expenses because the fiscal year has just begun. He stated that there is little change in the rink salary and wages with the rink season just beginning.

The second page is the Capital Budget. Director Abruzzi stated that the encumbered dates and amounts have not changed from the last Board meeting. He explained that Auditors is in the process of transitioning the accounts from FY2017 to FY2018. Director Abruzzi stated that there will be significant changes at next month's meeting. All accounts are in good standing.

The next item on the agenda was the introduction of Waltham Recreation full time staff. Director Abruzzi began by stating that at all the Board meetings he likes to recognize Recreation staff members. He stated that Board member, Jerry Walker had suggested that each staff member be invited to come before the Board to discuss their positions etc. Director Abruzzi informed the Board that he thought it would be a great idea to invite all the full time staff to attend tonight. He stated that after summer programming he felt it would be a wonderful time to recognize not only their hard work, but their passion for their jobs. He is so proud of each one of

them. Director Abruzzi began by introducing Assistant Director, Kim Scott, stating that as you all know, Assistant Director Scott started in July and has gone above and beyond any expectations. Next, he recognized Recreation Supervisor, Kara Greeley, stating that Ms. Greeley is the Director of our very successful Kaleidoscope program at Fitzgerald School, as well as many other pre k and youth programs. She is a tremendous asset to this Department. Recreation Supervisor, Adam Dallaire was introduced next. Director Abruzzi stated that Mr. Dallaire supervises youth/teen programs. He is also assisting with the scheduling at Veteran's Rink as well as the fields. Anything that is asked of him, he does. Director Abruzzi introduced Recreation Supervisor/Teen Program Coordinator, Kathy Gross. He stated that Ms. Gross was hired with a specific purpose. She was to create a teen program. Director Abruzzi stated that she had taken the program to new level and has also created programs for adults as well. He also recognized Yvon Cormier, the Waltham Community and Cultural Center maintenance person. Director Abruzzi stated that Mr. Cormier was the facility's only maintenance person and that he does a fantastic job. He continued by recognizing Mrs. Karen O'Brien and Mrs. Lisa DiBlasi the Department's administrators, stating that they are the front line for the Recreation Department and they both do a fantastic job.

Next on the agenda was the presentation of the 2017 Summer review video. Director Abruzzi stated that one of the things that was discussed as a group was trying to find a way to recap summer activities for everyone. He stated that a hard copy of the Summer Review with stats will still be available for budget purposes. It was decided that a video would be compiled with photos from the summer programs. The video was created by Recreation Supervisor, Kara Greeley. The video was presented and viewed. When the video concluded. There was an applause. Director Abruzzi stated he was very proud of the video. Board member, John Graceffa asked if the video could be on the Recreation web site. Director Abruzzi informed the Board that yes it can and will be. He also informed the Board that there was discussion regarding acquiring a power point tool for budget purposes. He feels that the video will be included to show what we actually do and the impact these programs have on the community. Board member, Wayne Cook inquired if the video could be put on the local access channel. Director Abruzzi responded by saying that it was definitely something that could be done.

On the agenda next for discussion was the matter of the Prospect Hill Park public access issue. Director Abruzzi directed the Board to a copy of an email communication that he received from City of Waltham Attorney, Frank Craig. He then passed around a photo that he took earlier in the day for the Board to review. The photo was taken at the top of Dale Street. It showed (4) consecutive piles of construction debris. The debris, on private property, is blocking access to the Park. Attorney Craig stated that the Recreation Board would have to send a request to have the City Law Department do an examination of the title history to determine the rights of the public to cross through the path. After some discussion, Board member, Wayne Cook made a motion for a letter to be written asking the City of Waltham Law Department to examine the title history for determination of public access. Seconded by, Stacy Tully, all in favor.

A discussion regarding financial support for Waltham Legion Baseball was next on the agenda. Director Abruzzi began by informing the Board that Legion Baseball has come back to Waltham this summer after being dormant for 10-11 years. He stated that he would like to support them in some way, whether it be equipment or monetary reimbursements. Board member, Wayne Cook

asked if the league could be added to the youth groups that we currently support. Director Abruzzi stated that was one of the options. He was going to investigate if adding them to the youth organization list was an option, due to the team being a U-19 age group. Board member, John Graceffa stated that he believed that they were in the early 1990's. Director Abruzzi continued by informing the Board that he had spoken with Mike Peterson and the roster consisted of mostly Waltham residents. After a brief discussion Board member, Wayne Cook made a motion to add Waltham Legion Baseball to the youth organization list that comes before the Board for financial support, seconded by John Graceffa, all in favor.

For the Directors report, Director Abruzzi began by informing the Board that the official opening of Gilmore Playground was on July 22, 2017. He stated that the opening was well attended and went great. Former Director, Sandra Tomasello was in attendance and she was presented with flowers. The plans for the Graverson and Elsie Turner project are just about complete. The goal is for the designs to go to our Engineering Department then to the Purchasing Department so the project can go out to bid late fall, early winter. The hope is construction can begin in the spring.

Director Abruzzi continued by informing the Board that a community input meeting was held Monday, July 10, 2017 at Hillcroft Playground for the community's input on design options. He reported that the meeting was very well attended and the community is very passionate about the project.

Director Abruzzi informed the Board of a meeting that will be held at the rink the following day to approve the final design of the refrigeration project at Veteran's Memorial Rink. He is excited to announce that the project will be going out to bid within the next few weeks. Although the rink season is going well it will be great to have a new system for next year. The goal is to send the project out to bid now, secure the funding and begin construction after the closing of the rink in the spring of 2018 for the season. Therefore, construction can be on going during the summer months when the rink is closed.

The Recreation Department rented (2) AED monitors. One was located at Connie Mack baseball field and the other was at Prospect Hill Park for the Summer Fun program. When asked about training for using the monitors, Director Abruzzi stated that he did do a training with Gary Vallerand at Connie Mack. He also stated that the monitors speak to you and are very easy to use, but it is the goal to have as many individuals trained as possible. The ultimate goal is to have the monitors at all facilities.

Director Abruzzi asked the Board to refer to a copy of a communication he received from Adriana Voci. He stated that Adriana had another successful summer with Adriana's Mobile Library. Director Abruzzi wanted to recognize her passion for this amazing program. He stated that he had been in contact with her over the summer and that one of her first questions was, "Can I do this again next summer?" She will continue the program next summer.

Director Abruzzi referred to the Fall Program Brochure stating that the brochure had come a long way and again he commended the staff for being able to offer so many incredible programs.

The Recreation Supervisor position has been posted and is open until filled. Assistant Director, Kim Scott posted the position within the Mass Park and Recreation bulletin to broaden the pool of candidates to choose from. Director Abruzzi explained the process of choosing a candidate for the position. He stated that once the applications are submitted, they would be reviewed and a committee will be chosen to interview prospective candidates.

In the Board folders was a flyer for the Place family bench and tree dedication. Director Abruzzi informed the Board that the dedication will be held the same day that former Recreation Director, Sandra Tomasello will be inducted into the Waltham High School Sports Hall of Fame.

Also in the Board folders was a copy of a letter Director Abruzzi wrote to the Waltham Police Department giving permission for them to tow vehicles that are illegally parked over night at playgrounds though out the City. The letter asks that the Recreation Department be contacted during business hours before any action is taken, so the individual who owns the vehicle can be contacted before it is towed.

Director Abruzzi referred to a copy of a letter from Tim Irving. It was an overview of the annual Raw Series event. As in years past the event held at Prospect Hill Park, the Bandit Run was a success. The group is always a pleasure to have. In the Board folders, there was a flyer of another great event hosted by the Prospect Hill Ski Team. It will be held at McDevitt Middle School, Sunday, October 1, 2017. Key speakers will be Olympians Doug Lewis and Chris Waddell.

Director Abruzzi informed the Board of an issue with the water in the Waltham Community and Cultural Center. The water was tested and there were high levels of lead in the water. He explained that we have signs on all the water bubblers throughout the building. Director Abruzzi informed the Board that the Department has purchased water coolers and have put them throughout the building for our program participants and visitors. He is in contact with the City of Waltham, Director of Engineering, Steve Cassaza and the City of Waltham Building Department Director, Bill Forte+ regarding the process for rectifying the issue.

In other business, Board member, Wayne Cook, addressed the issue regarding the possibility of Veteran's Memorial Field being the site for the new Waltham High School. He asked if it would be appropriate for the Recreation Board to appeal to the City. Mr. Cook's concern is that this facility has provided so much to the community. Director Abruzzi informed the Board that there have been numerous meetings conducted by the Mayor and the School Committee to find a location for the new High School. Director Abruzzi stated that he had previously attended a meeting where this possibility was discussed. Director Abruzzi wanted to emphasize publicly that this facility is not just a field, it is so much more than that, and it is an integral part of this community. Board member, John Graceffa, a member of the School Committee, as well responded to Mr. Cook's concerns, stating that a request was made by the Mayor for a motion to request (3) sites as possible locations for the new High School. Veteran's Field was not clearly stated in that request. He continued by stating that those (3) sites are currently being carefully considered. Mr. Graceffa stated that he does not feel that the Recreation Board should take any action at this time.

Board member, Gary Vallerand informed the Board that he, with the Stewards will be doing another clean up at Little Prospect at Prospect Hill Park, Saturday, September 29, 2017. He also highlighted an article naming Waltham 13th best community to live in.

Board member, Stacy Tully addressed the Board. She stated that now that she is the Director of Healthy Waltham, she has been contacted by the community asking if there can be healthier food options at the sheds. Director Abruzzi stated that we could discuss that with the youth groups during the meeting before their scheduled presentation to the Board. Mrs. Tully was in agreement.

Director Abruzzi informed the Board that he would be taking some time off. He stated that in his absence, Assistant Director, Kim Scott would be the contact for the Department.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Gary Vallerand, seconded by Stacey Tully and voted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa DiBlasi, Clerk