



**Walpole Recreation Committee  
Meeting Held on Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
via Zoom conference call - 6:00 p.m.**

**Recreation Committee Present**

**Regular Members**

Present

- Joseph Grant, *Chair*
- Richard McCarthy, *Vice-Chair\**
- Jeff Hutnick

Not Present

Michael McGrath

**Associate Members**

Present

- Lorraine Dundon\*\*
- Brad Hickey
- Doug Shea

Not Present

Marie Jeanlouis

\*left the meeting at 6:45pm

\*\*left the meeting at 7:00pm

**Staff Present**

- Brendan Croak, *Recreation Director*

**Call to Order**

Chairperson Grant called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

**Minutes**

- On a motion made by Vice-Chair McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Hutnick, the Committee voted 3-0-0 to approve the March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022 meeting minutes.

## **Appointment**

Drew Lowey shared a presentation for a proposed skate park in Walpole. Some discussion occurred at the conclusion of the presentation. Various Committee members had some questions with regard to cost, noise, space, maintenance, and injury concerns. Mr. Lowey replied that a rough cost estimate for a 2,000 square foot space would be around \$200,000. Potential grants are available, and construction could occur in phases, if necessary. Additionally, Mr. Lowey noted that the ideal location would be best suited to the center of town.

Mr. Lowey was notified that there would be more discussion with other pertinent town departments and committees, if this was something that would be pursued further. Director Croak mentioned that a skate park was discussed during the recent *Facilities and Programming Study* that is in the process of being compiled by Weston & Sampson. Their recommendations and/or suggestions with regard to a skate park would be included, if necessary.

## **Director's Report**

- ***Saturday T-Ball*** Director Croak stated that Saturday T-Ball has a couple weeks left this season, with no major issues occurring. Director Croak stated that there was around a 67% drop in the first and second grade age group due to a newly created clinic by Walpole Little League. This equates to around a \$3,000 drop in revenue for that age group. Director Croak stated that the Department will assess and make up that bottom line elsewhere throughout the course of the year.
- ***Staffing*** Newly-hired Recreation Coordinator, Kim Guerino, began work on Monday, May 9th. Director Croak stated that the Department is excited to have her on board.

Seasonal staff hiring is underway, and most paperwork has been received. The Department will be scheduling some trainings for this staff to get them all on the same page with regard to internal expectations. Program-specific trainings will occur closer to the start of the summer. Director Croak stated that the department has a couple dozen staff returning, so there is a pretty decent foundation to work off of.

- ***Recreation Feasibility Study*** Director Croak and other various Department Heads recently walked around with Weston & Sampson, who was awarded the contract for the Recreation Feasibility Study. We visited each Recreation-specific property to identify areas of need and attention. The draft study was distributed to Town Administration. Director Croak will be sitting down to take a deeper dive and closer look at what their findings were. The findings will then give the Department a more clear and concise direction on how to proceed with the areas of most need. Director Croak stated that he imagines this will be an ongoing topic on the Committee agenda until the study is complete.
- ***Community Events*** Walpole Day is Saturday, June 11th. To date, the Department has received 66 applications, with another 10 or so who have verbally committed. This is a

severe drop in vendor participation from years past, where the Department saw closer to 120-150 vendors participating. Much of the feedback was that the June date was not conducive to the vendor schedules.

- **Pools** The planned opening date is Saturday, June 18th. DPW has started prepping the pools, and there are some issues that they've stumbled upon that need some attention.

The Department recently built an addition to the filter room shed for the Wading Pool/Splash Pad. New chlorinators were recently purchased. However, given the existing filter room layout and space restrictions, the new units did not allow for much room at all, which created the need for the addition. This will allow for better ventilation and a safer work environment as staff will not need to go up and down a steep set of stairs to perform maintenance tasks.

More pool information (prices, hours, fees, etc.) will be released in early June.

- **Summer Programming** Summer on Stone is completely full with the exception of a few spots left in Week 1. If the Department is able to add more spots, they will do so. There is the potential to increase by another 10 kids or so, but Director Croak will speak with the office staff to make that determination.

Ultimate Sports Camp numbers are low. The feedback that has been received is that the location is the biggest issue for parents, in addition to the high price, with it being a vendor-based program. We'll continue to market and hope that we can get a few more kids registered.

Director Croak stated that registration numbers are right around where they should be overall for the remaining programs, with not many surprises. Initial registration numbers are positive, as the Department continues to rebound after the initial lack of programming during the pandemic.

### **New Business**

- **Committee Reorganization** On a motion made by Chairperson Grant, seconded by Mr. Hutnick, the Committee voted 3-0-0 to name Mr. McCarthy the new Chairperson.

On a motion made by Chairperson McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Hutnick, the Committee voted 3-0-0 to name Mr. Grant the new Vice-Chairperson.

### **Old Business**

- **Update - Athletic Fields** Director Croak noted that the Spring Season wraps up in about a month. To date, the new field complex has been extremely busy, with very little

time available for rentals to take place. Summer Field Permits have been received and processing is currently taking place. The summer season starts up on June 13th. Director Croak hopes to release permits in the next few weeks.

Work has begun on the South Walpole Community Athletic Complex concession stand and playground at the complex. It's currently too early to say when completion is, but Director Croak is hopeful that they are ready for the fall season. The last phase of construction at the complex is the basketball court, which will take place once the concession stand and playground is complete.

Mr. Hickey questioned what the plan was for the maintenance of the restrooms and oversight of the concession stand itself. Director Croak stated that the Department and Town Administration would discuss further.

Director Croak noted that The Carolyn Woodward playground should be complete in the next few weeks.

- ***Update - 300th Anniversary Committee*** Director Croak stated that the Committee met last night, and that numerous discussions took place on merchandising and the specific events that the Committee will focus their efforts on. A survey was distributed and around 350 people responded, so it gave the Committee a good idea on the types of events to focus on. The Committee will be meeting at some in the next few weeks to finalize the major event calendar.

### **Public Comment**

- Director Croak notified the Committee of Anelise Fair's resignation from the Recreation Committee. Ms. Fair was sworn in back in 2007. Director Croak acknowledged her dedicated service and commitment to the Committee for just shy of 15 years.

### **Adjournment**

- On a motion made by Mr. Hickey\*, seconded by Mr. Hutnick, the Committee voted 3-0-0 to adjourn at 7:35pm.

\*Per Article VI, §B of the Recreation Committee Policies & Procedures - due to the absence of a quorum, Mr. Hickey was assigned voting power by Vice-Chair Grant.