



Walpole Recreation Committee
Meeting Held on Wednesday, September 8th, 2021
via Zoom conference call - 6:00 p.m.

Recreation Committee Present

Regular Members

Present

- Joseph Grant, *Chair*
- Richard McCarthy, *Vice-Chair**
- Annelise Fair
- William Buckley
- Michael McGrath**

Not Present

*Exited meeting at 6:52 p.m.

**Exited meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Associate Members

Present

- Lorraine Dundon
- Doug Shea

Not Present

Brad Hickey
Jeff Hutnick

Staff Present

- Brendan Croak, *Recreation Director*

Call to Order

Chairperson Grant called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Minutes

Vice-Chair McCarthy and Mr. McGrath notified the Committee that they are unable to participate in the entire meeting. For this reason, a vote to approve the meeting minutes from the previous meeting took place.

- On a motion made by Vice-Chair McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Buckley, the Committee voted 5-0-0 to approve the meeting minutes from the May 25th, 2021 meeting.

New Business

Master Plan Steering Committee

Community & Economic Development Director, Patrick Deschenes, notified Director Croak that the Planning Board voted at their July 15th meeting to approve a 13-member Master Plan Steering Committee, composed of representatives from numerous Committees, Boards, and groups. A representative from the Recreation Committee is required.

- On a motion made by Vice-Chair McCarthy, seconded by Chair Grant, the Committee voted 5-0-0 to nominate Mr. Buckley as the Recreation Department's Master Plan Steering Committee representative.
- On a motion made by Chair Grant, seconded by Vice-Chair McCarthy, the Committee voted 5-0-0 to nominate Mr. McGrathy as the Recreation Department's Master Plan Steering Committee secondary representative, if needed.

Athletic Fields - Fee Review

Director Croak noted that over the course of the spring and summer seasons, there have been numerous non-profit groups that have inquired about utilizing athletic fields. The Department's current fee structure does not support a clear delineation for "Non-Profit" and "For-Profit Organizations", which has made it difficult to distinguish appropriate fees. Director Croak would like the Board to consider a change in *terminology* for the user fees to better align organizations with their appropriate field permit fee. The fees, however, would not change at this time. Some discussion took place, and it was determined that the Committee would vote and review the final language at the next meeting.

Director's Report

Department Update

- Pools

Director Croak updated the Committee with a summary of operations at the public pools this summer. Overall, Director Croak was pleased with daily attendance, seasonal tag sales, and swimming lesson registrations. He noted that, due to COVID, comparisons were based on the summer of 2019 for a more accurate comparison.

Director Croak also updated the Committee on the installation of three new controller boxes, which regulate chemical usage and distribution. The existing controllers were quite old, which resulted in the constant adjustment and manual regulation of chemicals. Director Croak and the aquatics staff saw an immediate improvement upon installation. Installation did not complete until later on in the summer season, and the staff looks forward to an entire season with the controllers in use.

- **Programs**

Summer programming was relatively successful, despite the reduction in programming. As previously mentioned at the May Recreation Committee meeting, most programs were either full, or close to filling up, prior to the start of the summer season.

Over the last fiscal year, program revenue was a bit higher than initially projected by Director Croak, and expenses were down about 50%. With a lack of programming taking place, due to a lack of available building space, less payroll and contracted services were taking place throughout the year.

- **Fields**

Director Croak was extremely busy with managing the influx in field reservation requests at the new athletic complex, and the fall season is just underway. Requests are anticipated to increase this spring, as the natural grass portion of the complex is scheduled to open.

- **Events**

Director Croak reminded the Committee that the Department's fall event, *Fall Harvest*, is scheduled for Saturday, October 2nd from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at Stone Field.

- **Capital Budget**

There are two Recreation items that have gone in front of the Capital Budget Committee for their review - \$50,000 for a Recreation Strategic Plan and an additional \$18,500 for chemical-regulation equipment at the pools. The requests will be voted on at Town Meeting on Saturday, October 23rd.

Old Business

- N/A

Public Comment

- Mr. Buckley, the 300th Anniversary Celebration Committee Chair, led some discussion of the current planning efforts and upcoming events that will take place.

Adjournment

- On a motion made by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mrs. Fair, the Committee voted 3-0-0 to adjourn at 7:08 p.m.