



**Walpole Recreation Committee
Meeting Held on September 19, 2018
Blackburn Hall - 7:00 p.m.
30 Stone Street - Walpole, MA 02081**

Recreation Committee Present

- *Regular Members* - Richard McCarthy, Joseph Grant, Michael McGrath, Annelise Fair, William Buckley
- *Associate Members* - Jeffrey Hutnick, Lorraine Dundon

Staff Present

- Recreation Director - Brendan Croak
- Assistant Recreation Director - Arielle Carney
- Parks Superintendent - Bob Leblanc

Call to Order

Chairman Grant called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Fields Update

Parks Superintendent Bob LeBlanc provided the committee with a fields update.

- a. Fall 2017 improvements
 - i. Renovations to the pitching mound, and excavation of soil on the diamonds at Bird Middle School.
 - ii. Poured new concrete dugout floors at softball field at Johnson Middle School.
 - iii. Installation of Dura-Edge infield mix to Morgan Field.
- b. Spring/Summer 2018 improvements
 - i. New player benches at Johnson Middle School softball field.
 - ii. Excavated and installed new stone dust infield at Johnson Middle School softball field.
 - iii. Replacement of backstop and installation of bench protection fencing at Jarvis Farm.

- iv. New irrigation of backflow at Upper Turco
- v. Mound protection covering purchased for Bird Middle School baseball diamonds.
- vi. Sunblock/windscreen installed on Morgan Field backstop.
- vii. Synthetic turf cover foundation installed for water slide at Jarvis Farm for Walpole Woods summer program.
 - 1. Minimizes damage to grass.
 - 2. Eliminated mud pit that is created after 6 weeks of summer use.
- viii. Purchased field tractor and core aeration machine through Capital Budget process.
 - 1. Gives Parks Department ability to perform own seeding, field aeration, etc. where they currently sub-contract those services to outside vendors.
- c. Chairman Grant asked Superintendent Leblanc for signage regarding permitting and field usage (similar to existing signs at Stone Field and Bird Middle School) to be put up at all field locations to inform user groups of the required permitting practices for organized youth leagues/teams/groups.
 - i. The Committee would like to a letter written to the current user groups that are using fields without the proper permits to inform them of the appropriate process of utilizing a field space in the Town of Walpole.

Route 1A Field Project

Chairman Grant led the discussion on the Route 1A Field Project update.

- a. The Committee reviewed the field renderings and provided feedback on the latest design.
 - i. Associate Member Jeff Hutnick had concerns about the level of maintenance that would be required with the addition of such a large space in town.
 - i. Mr. Hutnick asked Superintendent Leblanc how the lack of a large garage-style building would impact his ability to execute daily maintenance tasks if equipment cannot be kept on-site.
 - ii. On a motion made by Mr. McCarthy, seconded by Mr. McGrath, the Committee voted (5-0-0) to formally support the Route 1A Field Project.

Director's Report

- A. Previous Month(s) at the Recreation Department
 - a. Summer programming
 - i. National Night Out
 - 1. Recap from Assistant Director

- a. Included a partnership with the Fire Department, inflatable elements for kids, live music, fire trucks, relay races, and an outdoor movie.
 - b. Unexpected turnout for the first year, especially with the extreme heat.
 - 2. Next year's Department goals
 - a. Hope to expand upon activity elements, and incorporate more involvement from the Fire Department.
 - b. Food Trucks
 - c. More public involvement leading up to the event on the night of. For example, vote on which Movie to show, etc.
- ii. Sports Clinics/Camps
 - 1. RBI Baseball Camp

In-house registrations received lower than previous years, due to the staffing transition and the lack of coordination that took place during that time. There was some confusion as to which entity was handling registrations. Overall number of participants, regardless of registration origin, was comparable to previous years.
 - 2. Basketball Programs
 - a. Boys (Take Charge Athletics)

First year working with Boys Varsity coach, Mike Mastro. Mike is part of Take Charge Athletics. Numbers were almost identical as last year, and should continue to rise as we continue to annually offer the program. Low numbers largely attributed to outside competition.
 - b. Girls (Behn Basketball)

Numbers were slightly lower than last year, and much lower than where we'd like them to be. Due to the Girls Varsity coach having previous commitments with outside competition, we were unfortunately unable to have Take Charge Athletics handle both genders this year.
 - 3. Lacrosse Clinics
 - a. Boys Lacrosse

We teamed up with the Westwood Boys Varsity coach, Todd Zahurak. Mr. Zahurak has been involved in Walpole Youth Lacrosse for a number of years. The Recreation Department first offered this program in 2007, but have not offered it since 2011, due to low enrollment. This year, with the help of Walpole Youth Lacrosse, there were more than 20 participants registered.
 - b. Girls Lacrosse

Participation in this program with Girls Varsity coach, Mike Tosone was up 20% from last year, with 70 registrants.

4. Challenger Soccer Camp

All registrations took place on the Challenger Soccer camp's website. Still waiting on final numbers and 20% portion of the revenue received.

5. Field Hockey Clinic

Registration was down 17%. Budget was adjusted, based on last year's expenses. The cost of the program increased by \$5.

iii. Junior Police Academy

Registration was up 10% from last year. Popularity and excitement about this program will continue to grow, but there is only a finite amount of space available, due to field trips, transportation, etc. Potential to open up an additional week, but as previously discussed, there is concern about watering down the program, and loss of enrollment at other programs taking place in the department.

iv. Little Rec'ers, Walpole Woods, Pools

There was some discussion about the enrollment of these three programs. A handout with additional details and information was provided.

v. Smiling Eyes

Director Croak gave the committee an update on the Smiling Eyes Program.

1. Langley Foundation

a. Heavy involvement from the Langley Foundation which worked closely with the school counselor at Fisher School. They provided additional money for specific kids that covered any additional costs over the \$300 that Smiling Eyes covers.

b. Out of 12 kids, only four utilized their full funding from the Langley foundation.

c. Langley Foundation wants to work more closely with us moving forward so that more kids can be served with their funding.

d. 74 applications received for smiling eyes, which equates to \$22,000 in requests.

2. The Department discussed the desire to create an application window Smiling Eyes requests.

3. Work with the schools to make sure the counselors are aware of the deadline to help the families complete the process.

a. Gives us a better idea of total funding that we will need, can work better with Langley and Friends of St. Patrick to

achieve that finite funding number for the year and ensure that all requests can be granted.

B. Ongoing activities

a. Session Calendar Updates

- i. Registration deadlines are new this season.
- ii. Session 1 programming is currently underway.
- iii. Session 2 begins October 29th.

b. Weekday Soccer

- i. Registrations
 1. 2017 - 34
 2. 2018 - 49 (up 44%)
- ii. Added time slots in some of the age groups to accommodate more participants.

c. Program Highlights

- i. Dances/Activity Nights - Activity Night October 12 (Hypnotist)
 1. Only 18 dance memberships currently sold overall
 - a. Somewhat troubling given the decline in attendance over the past few years.
 2. No registrations yet for Hypnotist (just opened a day ago)
- ii. Multi-Sports (Inclusive programming with Knucklebones)
 1. Met with SEPAC group earlier in the year to talk about inclusive programming
 2. Current numbers are low despite positive feedback from survey that was sent out. Each need eight kids to run.
 - a. Grades K-2: 5
 - b. Grades 3-5: 2
- iii. Playgroup
 1. Added additional day on Friday.
 - a. Registration is too low to continue Fridays after this session (currently three kids).
 2. 44 kids registered over the course of the five days, compared to 50 registered in 2017.
- iv. Preschool Dance
 1. New program, and registration is at seven kids.
- v. Saturday Soccer
 1. Registration is up 12% at 290 kids registered
 2. Added time slots in some of the age groups to accommodate more participants.

New Business

A. Jarvis Harvest

- a. Assistant Director Carney gave an update on the status of this year's Jarvis Harvest.
- b. There was some discussion about the citizen's petition for swimming at Jarvis Farm on the weekends. Director Croak said that members of the the Department will appear in front of the Sewer and Water Commission which will give the department a better direction moving forward.

Old Business

None

Public Comment

None

Minutes

- A. On a motion made by Vice Chairman Buckley, seconded by Mr. McCarthy, the Committee voted (4-0-0) to approve the meeting minutes from the June 13 meeting.

Adjournment

- A. On a motion made by Mr. McCarthy, seconded by Vice Chairman Buckley, the Committee voted (4-0-0) to adjourn at 9:31 p.m.