

DRAFT

Town of New London
Recreation Commission Meeting
January 13, 2009

Present:

Chad Denning, Director
Gerry Coogan, Commission Member
Laura James, Commission Member

The meeting was called to order by Chad Denning. The following items were discussed:

Mr. Denning welcomed Ms. James to the meeting. Noting that she had not been to four consecutive meetings, he inquired as to her willingness to continue to serve as a member. Ms. James apologized for not being in attendance, but said she was still interested in serving. Mr. Denning said that due to her absences, the Commission had discussed filling her position with an interested candidate. Since Mr. Pomkoski, Chair of the Commission, was not at the meeting, Mr. Coogan volunteered to discuss this matter with him by phone. A brief discussion followed concerning future meeting times. It was decided to poll the other members to get their input, but in general meetings at the beginning or end of the work day were preferred.

2009 Recreation Budget: Mr. Denning announced that the budget process is moving forward and that no further cuts have been asked of the Recreation Department after the part-time salaried position (\$6,000) was eliminated from its original budget. He mentioned that there is a potential way to re-capture this money through an agreement with North Country Aquatics Club (NCAC) to offer a year around swim program through the Recreation Department. This will enable the Recreation Department to have a full time life guard as well as offer training programs out of Hogan Center. If this alliance occurs, this will allow the life guard to become perhaps an assistant director of the Recreation Department, or perhaps a year around part-time person for the Department. This person would likely be Jamie Messer. He would also be involved in the programs at Bucklin Beach in the summer. Mr. Denning noted that this program will generate more revenue for the Recreation Department, since the swim program currently generates about \$20,000-25,000 per year. This revenue will cover expenses and Mr. Messer's salary.

Winter Carnival with Colby-Sawyer College, Trail running series in the area...XC Ski trails (Spring Ledge Farm)... Speed Skating Oval. Winter Carnival Specifics: Mr. Denning said that plans for this program to be held on Friday, January 30 from 6:00-8:00PM are coming along very well. New London Wood Products will donate the cord of wood for the bonfires. The sponsoring restaurants include Peter Christians, Rockwell's, The Millstone, The Flying Goose Pub, The Inn at Pleasant Lake, Screwie Lewiez, and Pizza Chef. Mr. Denning noted that over 100 people have signed up so far, and are hoping to reach 400, up from 300 last year. Mr. Coogan asked about the number

of volunteers already enlisted. Mr. Denning said the Stephanie Wheeler of the New London Agency has recruited 15 people. Mr. Denning said that one of the new things they are doing this year is making this a “green” event. He said that they have purchase plastic bowls and sporks (combination spoon, knife and fork) that will be distributed at registration and collected as the participants leave in exchange for receiving a raffle ticket for one of the prizes which will be given away at the conclusion of the evening. Using these items, there will be zero waste, noting that the paper toweling which will be used to clean out the bowls will be thrown in the fire. He asked the Commission members for their help in getting great items for the raffle. He suggested perhaps a ski pass, or a round of golf, etc. He said the theme for the event was Dr. Suess and Snow. Ms. James volunteered to recruit people to help create snow sculptures, creating at least one on the Saturday before the event. Mr. Denning noted that this event has become almost like a winter carnival. He said that there will be a Reindeer 5K Run on Saturday morning at 10:00AM, and the Ski Juring (horses pulling people on skies) which starts at 12:00 noon at Colby-Sawyer, which is to be filmed by the Discovery Channel.

XC Ski Trails: These trails have been groomed and appear to be in good shape and well used. Mr. Coogan suggested that Debbie Cross of the Intertown Record should be notified of this resource and perhaps have an article written and about this trail as a way of getting the word out about this local great resource.

Speed Skating Oval: This has been put on the back burner due to lack of available funding.

Bob Andrews Memorial Ice Rink: This has become a great winter asset to the Town. Mr. Denning noted that a middle school class comes every Tuesday to use the rink. He also commented that the student hired to clear the rink has worked out very well.

Eagle Scout Project/ Winter Trails: Mr. Denning said that this project has been approved and will commence in the spring.

Enrichment Classes: Mr. Denning reported on the following classes: The water color class has 3 sessions, but unfortunately the course director will be leaving in March to enroll in a graduate program at UNH. The Yoga class, taught by Jessica Pine from Andover, currently has 6-8 people and meets on Wednesday. The number of Yoga classes will be increased next year.

2009 Budget and New Addition: Mr. Denning said that the 2009 budget has remained at the 2008 level due to the current budget challenges.

Tabled Item: Renaming the Department. Mr. Coogan thought that this topic should continue to be tabled, but that perhaps add the words “cultural and leisure services” below the name Recreation Department to see how this is received.

Before the meeting was adjourned, Mr. Coogan volunteered to call Mr. Pomkoski to update him on this meeting.

Mr. Denning adjourned the meeting at 8:30A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Colby,
Recording Secretary