



Escape to Relaxation

New London
Recreation Department

**New London
Recreation Commission Meeting
at the Town Offices
October 12th, 2010
5:45pm @ Town Offices**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chad Denning, Jerry Coogan, Allison MacLean, Keith Pomkoski, Jason Stadler

MEMBERS ABSENT: Laura James

The meeting began at 5:45pm.

Bike Rodeo/ Touch a Truck Event (Sat. Sept 26th @ 10am) RECAP

Mr. Denning reported that the event was successful for the second year in a row, but he wondered why they weren't getting higher numbers. Ms. Levine had told him that one reason could be because the event wasn't "front and center" and was tucked away behind the school. She suggested having the event on the town common. Mr. Lee didn't think it was a good idea to put all those trucks on the green, but perhaps they could put the trucks around the office building and use the church parking lot as well. Ms. MacLean said that if they change the location it could help, but thought it was also a busy time of year with too many other activities going on. Mr. Coogan commented that September 26th was a beautiful day out and felt maybe people were out doing other things. Mr. Denning said that they would like to try and do something different next year to try and attract more people.

A Pleasant Climb Trail Race (Sat. Oct 9th @ 10am) RECAP

Mr. Denning said that this was a huge success with 80 runners, which was the same as last year. There were 111 people signed up for the race but some didn't attend. Overall, they paid out \$1,200 and took in about \$1,800 making a profit of \$500. He didn't know if they'd ever see huge growth in the event, as it is eight miles and included a steep elevation. Someone couldn't really just show up for this kind of race. Mr. Denning reported that the numbers for western New Hampshire races of this nature are the same as what New London experienced. Newport has the best attendance because it has been around a long time and averages 150 runners.

Mr. Denning shared that next year, Pat's Peak will come on board for a race, which will be the second race of the season. He is hoping that the inclusion of this mountain will attract more people from southern New Hampshire to the New London race.

Halloween Haunted Woods (Sun. Oct 31 @ 3pm start)

Mr. Denning went over the flyer that had been created to advertise the event, and explained the activities scheduled for the day. He said that Colby-Sawyer College put together a good flyer. The Historical Society said they couldn't help with the event after all, because of lack of volunteers, which Mr. Denning didn't feel was a necessary need. He felt it was easier to have the

event at the old middle school, as they can hold it inside if the weather is inclement. Mr. Coogan noted all the activities the NLOC would be doing on the same day, which would give many options for people on October 31st.

Beach Takedown (Sat. September 19th @ 12noon) DONE!

Mr. Denning said that this went well with four people working.

Mr. Coogan asked about the topic of beach use that was brought up at a recent Board of Selectmen's meeting. Mr. Denning said that next year they will be doing a survey of who uses the beach (resident/non-resident).

2010 Fall Programming

Mr. Denning said that the climbing classes were all sold out. There were two preschool and two regular classes offered. He also indicated that the Recreation Department has picked up all the swimming lessons and that Jamie Messier is doing well with the program.

Shuttle Bus from Woodcrest: Programming ideas

Mr. Denning commented that he is at a loss on what to do during the fall/early winter months in order to make use of the bus. In the winter, they will offer Junior Winter Adventures that will show kids how to make igloos and learn Nordic skating. Between now and then, he has nothing going on.

Ms. MacLean said that the new principal is doing a lot of good things with the kids. Mr. Denning said he wants to get into the middle school and offer potential activities but has no connection at all. He has tried with the vice principal and guidance, but has not gotten far. Mr. Pomkoski said that he needs to come up with some programming for them and then offer it. He suggested rock climbing. Ms. MacLean said that the kids can move around this area pretty easily, so if something they are interested in is offered, they will be able to get there to do it. Mr. Pomkoski said once they get the kids into the program, they will then be able to get the feedback from them as to what they want to do for activities. Mr. Denning said that the high school already has this kind of programming so are not as interested, but that there seems to be a void in the middle school programming.

Budget for 2011: Where we are at and any concerns

Mr. Denning said that the Recreation Department has the highest increase in the budget, but their budget is the smallest, so it looks bigger than it actually is. It went up \$20,000 from last year. All wages and healthcare have been frozen. They've had to increase their part-time lifeguard staff for next year, at the request of the Board of Selectmen, and there is also \$8,000 in the budget for sailboats. He felt they were all justifiable costs but that the Budget Committee will be taking anything out that they can. Mr. Coogan suggested that the members of the Recreation Commission should attend the Board of Selectmen's meetings to show their support for the program. Mr. Denning said he would let them know when the Recreation portion of the budget would be discussed next.

NLOC steps taken

Mr. Coogan said he went to lunch with Craig Howe of NLOC and noted that there was a fundraising event on Saturday. He felt it would be good to attend, to be seen and have a dialogue and discussion. Mr. Denning and Ms. MacLean would not be able to attend. Mr. Coogan said he wasn't sure if Ms. Levine would be there, but that she has been before. Mr. Denning said that Mr. Howe is a great guy and has met him previously. He indicated that he keeps dropping in with

Chelsea every day to keep the relations open. He opined that the two organizations are the friendliest they have ever been since he started working for the town.

A Potential Friends of New London Recreation Department fundraising group....

Mr. Denning said that Mark Wilks came to see him recently and said that before Bob Andrews took the job as full-time Recreation Director, a group called Friends of New London Recreation Department would raise funds for recreation in New London. Mr. Denning did some research and found that this was true and that Mr. Andrews got rid of it when he took over. It wasn't something the Recreation Commission would be asked to do (fundraise), but he wondered what the rest of the commission thought about having such a thing brought back into the picture.

Mr. Denning felt that he didn't know a lot of people who have the money in town or have the roots who would ask for money, but that perhaps some of these past fundraisers did. Ms. MacLean asked if Mr. Denning was thinking of having a group establish a 501-3c status to gather money. She said that she has had some experience with these types of "friends" groups in the past and that is how they usually do it. She added that people prefer to donate to "friends" groups because it counts as a tax write-off. Mr. Denning said that this is how they are set up currently, as people get a tax write-off for what they donate. He added that they are considered a non-profit.

Mr. Pomkoski asked if they could find who was on the list. Mr. Denning said that he could. He said that if they had a goal each year to get some seed money that would be great. Ms. MacLean said that they would need someone to really lead the effort, as it takes a lot of time and management. She thought maybe there would be someone out there who wanted to pick it back up. Mr. Wilks had mentioned that his wife, Sherri, used to run the group.

Mr. Denning noted that the "Friends of Hartford, VT" have their own envelopes and leave them in funeral homes, and people leave money to them. He thought it would be a good idea to do this sort of thing in New London. It would be a viable option for people not knowing who or where to donate money in someone's name who had passed.

Winter Events: New Winter Carnival/ Snowball/ Winter Wild

Mr. Denning said that they are not going to do the same tiki torch campfire dining all the way to the college this year. The dinner will all be in the common under a huge tent with a band, seating and heaters inside. Campfires will surround the campus, and all the restaurants offering food will be outside at campfires. This part of the event will be Friday night. They will still have a progressive dinner but it will just not go all the way to Colby-Sawyer College.

Saturday Night they will have a Snow Ball dance under the tent. Cicely Markoff is working with him on this event. They hope to have a pre-fixe dinner available at Rockwell's. They will put the sides on the tent and will have a DJ and an open bar. The cost would be \$40/couple and it would begin at 8 or 9pm. Mr. Denning said that they will offer a package where people can opt for both the dinner and the dance, or they can do one or the other. People will have to pre-sign up for this event. He said they are also working on possible babysitting services from Colby-Sawyer College as well. The dance will not be formal, but just for people to come out and have fun. It is a fundraiser.

Mr. Denning said they have also thought about just having appetizers and desserts instead of the sit-down dinner at Rockwell's. These details are being worked out.

Mr. Coogan asked if they were still part of Thursday's Child at Rockwell's. Mr. Denning said that they were not due to the fact that they had the lowest turn-out when it was the New London Recreation Department's night.

Mr. Coogan asked if the income from this type of Winter Carnival event goes to the revolving fund. Mr. Denning said that it did. Mr. Coogan wondered if the Board of Selectmen talks about this fund. Mr. Denning said that they talk about it often and that it is holding a balance of a little under \$30,000 currently.

Mr. Denning added that the ski-Joring would be held during the day, also making use of the tents. The event is slated for the last weekend in January.

Mr. Denning noted that the Winter Wild program has legs; he just got a check from Sugar River Bank for \$500 for sponsorship. Last year they got \$2,800 in their first year and they could very well make even more this year. Dates for winter wild are online and there are already six people signed up for the entire series. Races will be held at Whaleback, Ragged Mountain, Pat's Peak, and Mount Sunapee.

Mr. Denning said that he held a horseshoe tournament this weekend at Mount Sunapee during their fall event, in turn for them letting New London Recreation use the mountain for Winter Wild.

Mr. Denning commented that Ms. Levine is on board with the whole Winter Carnival event plans. The option of using the tent is opening the event up to more people who may want to go but may not want to walk outside especially if it is freezing. He said they hope to draw more people by making these changes.

Old Business

Mr. Denning explained that they will be creating "Mount New London" on the green this year. They will use snow from the Colby-Sawyer College parking lots and will make a big toboggan run. He and Richard Lee will put it together.

Mr. Coogan asked about the Recreation Department's partnering with the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Denning said he is working with Rob Bryant and they are trying to get more things out to the public. Mr. Coogan said that there is time to do some good networking.

The meeting adjourned at 6:33pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London