



**New London
Recreation Commission Meeting
at Whipple Town Hall
January 7, 2013
7pm @ Town Offices**

Members present: Jason Stadler (Chair), Laura Lorio, Alison MacLean, Laura James
Others present: Janet Kidder and Tina Helm (Selectmen), Amy Rankins (Assessing Coordinator/Benefits Administrator), Malaika Sidmore and Linda MacKenzie (New London Residents)

Chair Stadler opened the meeting at 7:00pm.

Job Description & Related Details

The first task was to come up with the job description for the Interim Recreation Director. Chair Stadler thought the new hire should have some computer knowledge and have a presence within the building to cover the basic administrative duties of the Recreation Director.

Using the job description created by Mr. Denning prior to his departure, the Commission began by reviewing the position bullet points and discussed which parts would be appropriate for the interim position. The common thread throughout the discussion was that the person should maintain and implement current practices rather than to develop new programming.

Chair Stadler wasn't sure how to engage in the salary discussion. He knew they contracted the people to maintain the ice rink at \$15/hour. Ms. MacLean said they had discussed using the rest of Mr. Denning's salary, less the benefits. Ms. Kidder said it would need to be more than \$15/hour; perhaps \$20/hour. Ms. MacLean said there is a NH Parks and Recs website that can offer information about what average salaries are for this type of position. Ms. Rankins offered that Mr. Denning was getting \$26.93/hour, not including benefits.

Chair Stadler said the new hire would be 25-30 hours per week. Ms. Lorio asked if they needed to decide the exact number of hours before they start interviewing. Ms. Kidder said they would only need to decide on a range of hours. Mrs. James said they should have a set schedule for the person coming in, while still allowing for flexibility. Ms.

MacLean thought they should have some core office hours set so people know when someone will be available for sign-ups and questions.

Ms. Lorio asked about the timeframe for the position. She thought they should decide how long the position would last so they could anticipate coverage for summer programs. Ms. MacLean thought they should advertise it as being a minimum of six months in length. Ms. Rankins said they might want some overlap of the interim person and the new person for training purposes.

Ms. Kidder said that during the six month period they would need to make a recommendation on whether they would like the interim person to continue and make them full-time. They also need to decide if they want to keep the same budget that Mr. Denning made up or if it needs to be changed. Ms. MacLean said that there is an opportunity in the budget to keep this interim person on as needed during the summertime, as they will need help over the summer.

Interview Schedule

Chair Stadler said they would like to try to begin interviewing that week or the next. Ms. Rankins said that Ms. Hallquist indicated the 10th and the 17th were the dates the Board of Selectmen could help with interviews. It was noted that there were seven candidates interested in the interim position.

On Thursday the 10th and Thursday the 17th, they would begin interviewing, beginning at 5:00pm. Ms. Rankins said she would be contacting the applicants to schedule their interview times. Ms. Kidder said all the Selectmen would be participating in the interviewing and noted that Commission members were invited to participate as well.

Ice Skating Rink

Ms. Lorio said a couple people have asked her about the cracks in the ice. Mr. Kiernan checked the ice on December 23rd and thought it was OK to let people skate on it. Christmas Eve saw a lot of activity resulting in large cracks and chunks in the ice. She was told that the cracks wouldn't go away until the ice thaws. Ms. MacLean said that is the nature of an outdoor ice rink; it is difficult to keep a smooth surface when dealing with Mother Nature. Ms. MacKenzie suggested posting a note at the rink letting people know that due to weather conditions, there were cracks on the ice. Chair Stadler said that they have wanted to put a sign up that says "Skate at Own Risk." Ms. MacLean suggested Ms. Hallquist review any signs they wish to put up to keep the Town safe from a legal standpoint.

Dinner with Jack Frost

Chair Stadler said that this event was slated to take place in a few weeks. There was a lot to manage to get it done. He suggested skipping the event for this year. Ms. Lorio didn't think they could pull it off in time. Ms. MacLean agreed and thought they should put it off for this year and take it up again next year. Mrs. James asked Mrs. MacKenzie

(from The Inn at Pleasant Lake) what her view was about not doing it this year. Ms. MacKenzie said that her only concern was that there was information about the event on a website that would need to be removed. She thought it was a nice event and noted that it had changed a little every year. She felt the town was lacking in big events like this that could market the restaurants. It was suggested that they push the date out further but after some discussion it was determined that pushing it out further would make them have to compete with school vacation and other events in the area, such as the Newport Winter Carnival.

Ms. MacLean said that a priority for the new hire should be that they bring marketable ideas to the Recreation Department that could be used to benefit the community, such as the Jack Frost Dinner.

Programming

Chair Stadler said that Ms. Lorio worked with Linda Jackman to update the website to reflect changes in the programming.

Ms. Lorio said she spoke with Ms. Delphine Hill who is the person who gives the French lessons. She would like to continue her classes through the Recreation Department but would like to collect and submit all the money herself. If she went through the Outing Club, the prices would increase. She also hasn't heard back from the Outing Club and the students she has been teaching wish to continue. Ms. Kidder suggested talking to Ms. Hallquist to ask about this as well as how other teachers/instructors are contracted.

Ms. Lorio said the newspaper had advertised the Yoga classes that are no longer offered. Some calls may come in because of this.

Ms. Lorio said with regards to the preschool ballet class, she felt people wanted to continue with it. Interns from Colby-Sawyer ran the program. Ms. Kidder suggested asking the interim director applicants if they would be willing to work with interns from Colby-Sawyer and/or if they had any intern resources themselves.

Mrs. James wondered if more information was given to Ms. Lacombe from Colby-Sawyer about the swimming program and how long it was going to be that they'd have to maintain the program. Ms. Lorio said that she spoke with Ms. Lacombe and told her that when they hired an interim director, the Town would take the program back.

Ms. MacLean suggested tabling this discussion regarding contracted help until after they had contacted Ms. Hallquist. Everyone agreed.

Advertising in the Kearsarge Shopper

Chair Stadler said that until they get a true plan of what is going forward, it would be best to hold off on advertising. People can still check the website for information.

Waterfront Staff

Hires would begin in February so it would be a priority for the interim director. Mrs. James said that another priority would be the summer camp.

Approval of Minutes from December, 2012

The draft minutes had not been circulated to the members so they could not be approved as yet.

Other Business

Ms. Lorio said that Mr. Denning needs volunteers for Winter Wild. He is running the program on the Town's behalf. Chair Stadler encouraged as many people as possible to sign up to help with the registration of the events.

Ms. Sidmore shared that she has heard from an older gentleman that they should not hire a Recreation Director. She also heard from another 50+ gentleman that the Recreation Department should provide something for him and not just young families with kids. She wondered if all the organizations would be coming together with the 1941 building and wondered if they could work together to serve everyone. Chair Stadler said that this is a chance for them to analyze what they have now and what recreation in New London could be. He found a lot of passion and interest in the Recreation issue, which he didn't think was there. This was exciting to him. He knew that Mr. Denning had tried many times to push intergenerational activities in the community and it was recognized that they have many age groups to serve. Ms. MacLean said they need to take this into account and appreciate the comments on this idea of providing recreational activities for all ages.

Ms. Kidder wondered if there would be any anticipated changes to the budget. Chair Stadler said he saw no reason to amend the budget. Ms. Kidder said the only change between last year and this year was an increase in lifeguard pay due to the fact that last year's budget was totally used up because no rain days were used. Chair Stadler said that they would review the budget to see if there were any red flags and would relay any information to the Selectmen on Thursday the 10th.

The meeting adjourned at 8:13pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London