



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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Town of New London Recreation Commission Meeting 2/10/2009

Present:

Keith Pomkoski, Chair
Jason Stadler, Vice Chair
Chad Denning, Director
Laura James

Absent:

Gerald Coogan
Allison McClain

The meeting was called to order by Chad Denning at 7:00A.M.

The minutes of the January 13, 2009 meeting were approved as presented.

2009 Recreation Budget- Chad Denning reported that at this point the Recreation Department budget has been approved as presented. He said that the Budget Committee held a public meeting last evening to provide an opportunity for Town residents to review the budget and ask questions prior to the Warrant being printed in preparation for Town Meeting.

Winter Carnival with Colby-Sawyer- Chad Denning said that this event was a huge success, and thanked the Commission members for their efforts to make it a great evening. He said the event made \$3820 with 385 people participating, not including those people who “popped in” to the final bond fire. He noted that last year the event made \$1900 and had 300 people attending. He said that the admission fee last year was \$6.00 and was raised to \$10.00 this year. He said the admission fee will remain at \$10.00 for next year. He also reported that the restaurants did well and said that Ragged Mountain, a new participant, was very enthusiastic and is already looking forward to next year’s event.

He hoped that in the future the Intertown Record will cover this event with a follow-up feature story in addition to the pictures which they included for this year. Mrs. James said that she could help with this, since she regularly contributes features to the Intertown Record.

Mr. Denning offered the following constructive criticism for 2010: In order to avoid the lines at the entrance and at the food venues, he suggested that tickets be purchased for a specific entrance time. For example, the first group of 30 tickets sold would be for a 6:00 P.M. entrance, the second group of 30 tickets sold would be for 6:15P.M. entrance, the third group of 30 for a 6:30P.M. entrance and so forth, as necessary. Further, he would encourage people, once they have been admitted, to move to the various food venues, leap frogging ahead to those sites where there is not a line, and returning later to the ones that they missed.

He said that there was also some concern about the amount of snow on the paths, making it a little difficult for some to navigate. He would suggest that next year the path be snowblown, to clear the paths and make them easier to negotiate. He said that he had spoken to Mr. Lee regarding this, who believed that would be an easy task to complete prior to the event.

XC Ski Trails (Spring Ledge Farm)- Chad reported that these trails have been groomed by Jon Ohler and Michael Todd who each have snow mobiles with groomers attached. This has created a great trail which is being used a great deal by skiers.

Rheindeer Run- Mr. Stadler, who participated in this event and won in his age category, reported that there were 29 participants. Mr. Denning thought that there was not a great deal of marketing done for this event and thought that this could be improved for next year, especially since it is now associated with Winter Carnival Weekend.

Ski Joring- Mr. Denning reported that this was a huge hit. The only problem was that the event was to start at noon and it did not actually start until 1:00P.M. causing spectator to wait unnecessarily in the cold. He reported that some members of the New London fire department participated, with Jay Lyon being in the lead for a period of time.

Bob Andrews Memorial Ice Rink- Mr. Denning reported that he had flooded the rink last week to improve the ice surface. He thought that as the weather goes through its normal freeze-thaw cycle, as our days get a little warmer, the rink will be taking care of itself. He reported that the rink has gotten a good deal of use by people of all ages, and has become a positive asset to winter recreation in our Town. Mr. Denning said that there were occasions when those playing hockey were overtaking the rink, making it more difficult for younger recreational skaters. After a brief discussion, it was decided to place a sign which indicates that playing hockey is permitted on Tuesdays and Thursdays after 4:00P.M, and then on Monday, Wednesday and Friday after 6:00P.M. All other times the rink would be reserved for recreational skating. Mrs. James suggested that members of the Recreation Commission serve as Ambassadors and stop by the rink to speak with people who are skating to see how they are enjoying the facility and also encourage younger users to be mindful of all age groups who may be using the ring. Mr. Denning also said he would speak with Chief Seastrand of the New London Police and encourage them, as they pass by in their normal coverage, to check that the new regulation is being observed. Mr. Denning thought that there would probably be only about three more weeks of rink use, before the weather would take it's toll on the ice and the rink would need to be closed.

Mr. Pomkoski suggested that in the future, the Commission should consider creating an ice skating trail around the green to add an additional recreational alternative. The members thought this would be a good idea, but admitted that the upkeep could be a factor.

In thinking about Winter Carnival for next year, Mr. Denning suggested that perhaps a large ice snow sculpture could be built in the center of the green in which a slide could be constructed, providing a place for sledding. This could end up being the center piece for the Town in the winter. He said he spoke with Mr. Lee who said that the Town could dump a large quantity of snow onto the green to assist with this endeavor.

Eagle Scout Project/Winter Trails (Approved)- Mr. Denning announced that \$1200 has been given to the Scouts to complete this project. He said they are prepared to move forward in the Spring.

Enrichment Classes- Mr. Denning announced that the Mr. Schlosser will begin a new Yoga class during the day starting in March. He said he was disappointed that the new location photography class, offered by Jeffrey Black, had only one person sign up. The class was therefore cancelled but will be offered again in March. Mr. Denning said that intermural will also start again in March at 3:00P.M.

Easter Plans- Mrs. James inquired about using the Town green for the Easter Egg Hunt this year. Mr. Denning said that the advantage to continuing to use the elementary school is that it is a safe environment with ample parking. The disadvantage is that it does not feel "special". After some discussion, it was decided to try to have the Easter Egg Hunt on the Town green. Mr. Denning said he could have ribbons defining the space to insure safety. Mrs. James suggested that there could be a contest for the best decorated hats, bonnets or baseball caps. She said she would be happy to help with this. The event will take place on Saturday, April 11th at 10:00A.M. Mr. Denning said he will try to be creative with the contents of the eggs which the children will be searching for, recognizing that not all parents approve of candy. He said the he will get some Colby-Sawyer students to help with stuffing these eggs. He also suggested that we attempt to get a sponsor for this event and perhaps have a few gift certificates offered as prizes. It was further suggested that Mr. Pomkoski, in the spirit of the event, be dressed as the Easter Bunny. Mr. Pomkoski said if it were able to find one, he would indeed put it on.

Summer Brochure- Mr. Denning reported that this is already underway. He has asked the Outing Club and Kearsage Community Center if they wanted to have a page in the brochure. The fee for a page would be \$100. Mr. Pomkoski suggested that the New London Barn Playhouse be contacted as well. The three sponsors, Colby-Sawyer College, New London Agency and Village Sports, were each charged \$250 last year for a logo on the cover. Mr. Denning said he contacted the Outing Club and the Kearsage Community Center in the spirit of community collaboration, noting that the space would be available in the brochure this year. Mrs. James suggested that for all collaborative organizations we could put their logo in the

brochure for free and they could also be included in the directory along with their phone number and then offer them the option of having a page in the brochure for the fee of \$100. The Commission members agreed with this idea. Mr. Denning said that commercial advertising will cost \$250 per ad. Mr. Denning said that Jamie Messer is helping with this brochure.

Mr. Denning said that so far there are 15 applications for the life guard positions. He said that 10 of the life guards who have served in previous years will not be returning this year. He said that Nancy Hilton will be returning as Director of the Day Camp summer program. She is currently completing the parent orientation handbook, planning a parent orientation evening for this year, and setting up all the field trips. The camp goes from June 29th to August 7th. The fee will be \$115 per week, plus an activity fee of \$45 per child. This activity fee will cover the cost of a tee shirt, transportation and field trips. He also said that partial weeks will not be an option this year, since it proved to be too confusing last year and caused staffing and programmatic issues.

Mr. Denning said that the North Country Aquatic Club (NCAC) is dissolving its southern branch. He said that the Upper Valley Aquatic Center will be opening in Hartford, VT. and the NCAC is moving into that building. The NCAC is handing off their southern responsibilities to the Recreation Departments who have year around pools. We have been fortunate to link with the Hogan Center at Colby-Sawyer College where we will be able to offer year around swimming and other aquatic programs, including competitive teams, although not competitions will be held at Hogan Center. This new program will have no financial impact on the Recreation Department, since the fees will make it self supporting. Jamie Messer will be hired as a part-time recreation director and will oversee this swim program both at Hogan Center and Bucklin Beach. Although he will be a full time employee of the Town, he will not be eligible for benefits. His salary will be supported by the revolving fund into which the fees from this camp and other fees are deposited. Mr. Denning was asked about the rental of the Hogan Center pool. He said that the cost is \$35.00 per hour, which will be paid for by the fees collected from the participants of the program and from the revolving fund.

Rowing Club- This group has asked to partner with the Recreation Department. Mr. Denning said that this initiative has hit a few “bumps in the road” with regard to some concerns expressed by the abutters to Bucklin Beach. Their concerns mostly center around the concerns for adequate parking and noise generated by the program, particularly in the early morning and early evening hours. The Selectmen, who have given their permission for the process to move forward, will call a public hearing soon to provide an opportunity for residents to discuss this initiative in a public forum. Mrs. James suggested that a document be prepared which presents the advantages and disadvantages of this partnership to the Town. She suggested that one solution to the parking problem might be for the participants to park at the park and ride and car pool to the lake.

Tabled: A discussion concerning the Renaming the Department was tabled for a future meeting.

Other Business: Mr. Denning said he is investigating the possibility of having a Ballroom Dance Class, to be held at Whipple Hall, offered through the enrichment classes program.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Colby
Recording Secretary

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