



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**Town of New London  
Recreation Commission Meeting  
9/10/2009**

**Present:**

Laura James,  
Allison MacLean  
Keith Pomkoski, Chair  
Jason Stadler  
Chad Denning, Director

**Absent:** Gerald Coogan

The meeting was called to order by Chair Pomkoski at 4:20P.M.

Chair Pomkoski initiated the discussion by asking the Commissioners what they saw as the long range goals of the Recreation Department in New London and where they saw the Department in relation to the New London Outing Club. He said he personally thought that the outcome should be having one organization, with one executive director, who would have the background, knowledge and experience to lead recreational programs which would work for the community as a whole.

Ms. MacLean agreed that ultimately there should be one organization which would work for the entire community as a whole, but acknowledged that she did not know how that structure would take shape. She thought having more than one organization is challenging for the public to understand and that many residents did not understand the difference between the Outing Club and the Recreation Department. She said she is a strong believer in public recreation programs because they are open to all children and adults regardless of their financial abilities. She said the Outing Club is a club and although they provide wonderful programs it is a privilege to be part of that and it is not something that everyone can afford. She continued that there are differences between a non-profit organization and a Town sponsored department. Chair Pomkoski noted that while this is true, the Outing Club does offer some scholarships to those children who cannot afford to participate.

Mrs. James said that it was difficult for her at this time to formulate a long term goal and thought that this goal would eventually be evolutionary. She thought that as a short term goal, increasing the collaboration between the Outing Club and the Recreation Department was a terrific idea and she would be happy to see a movement in that direction. She saw a real opportunity, with the new Outing Club director to begin to work together.

Mr. Stadler said that he thought the long term goal should be to unify the two entities, outside of the public sector. He thought this would give the programs more flexibility and added that this unification would prove beneficial to the community as a whole. He noted that the Outing Club has been around for many years and has a strong following. He also commended Mr. Denning on the terrific job he has done as Recreation Director since coming to New London and sited the growth of the Recreation Department programming and participation under his leadership.

Mr. Denning noted that we are not a Parks and Recreation Department but rather a Recreation Department. He said that the Recreation Department actually does not own that many facilities, but the Outing Club does. He said the Recreation Department is about program planning and implementation. The Outing Club has the facilities but not many programs. Maybe this is part of the marriage down the road, part of the evolutionary; the Outing Club can focus on the parks and the Recreation Department will focus on the programming.

After some discussion there was agreement among the Recreation Commissioners that movement towards working together with the Outing Club would be in the best interest of the residents of New London and should be cultivated.

Mrs. James asked if the Recreation Department had a relationship with the Kearsarge Community Center. Mr. Denning responded that he had met with Anne Ballin about 6 months ago but this had not gone any further. He said that the Community Center was focused on cultural arts as a priority. Mr. Denning thought that this could also be an evolutionary long term goal working towards increasing collaboration.

With regard to the Outing Club, Mr. Stadler asked if anyone knew what their membership numbers were. Mrs. James said she would be glad to find out what their numbers are.

After more discussion the following action points were agreed to:

- Ms. MacLean will draft a letter from the Recreation Commission to the Outing Club in an effort to re-establish a relationship. Mrs. James will work with her on this communication.
- Mr. Denning will request time, on a monthly basis, on the agenda of the Board of Selectmen to bring them up to date on the activities of the Recreation Department. It would be helpful if Commissioners would attend this meeting to assist with the presentation and respond to questions.
- Mr. Denning will write a letter, to be signed by the Recreation Commissioners, inviting the Board of Selectmen to come to the Bike Rodeo and Touch a Truck Event on September 26<sup>th</sup> from 10:00A.M.-12:00Noon.
- Mr. Denning will prepare a list of Recreation Department programs which will include participation data.
- Chair Pomkoski will approach Hannaford regarding the October 10<sup>th</sup> event.
- Mrs. James will call Bub Morgan, Executive Director of the Outing Club, to initiate contact on behalf of opening the lines of communication.

Mr. Stadler added that it would be a good idea to get the peers of the Commission members to come to meetings of the Selectmen and possibly Community Action Committee meetings to

demonstrate support and interest in the Recreation Department and its programs. He added that he has recently read an article, which he had e-mailed to Mr. Denning, that highlighted the fact that there is a decrease in team sports participation and an increase in single and individual sports participation, noting that these are exactly the types of programs that are offered by the Recreation Department.

Mr. Denning reported that Dr. Frew, the Superintendent of SAU 65 has been very supportive of the Recreation Department and its programs. He noted that in response to a question by Dr. Frew regarding the Bike Rodeo & Touch a Truck event, all children in SAU 65 were eligible to participate in this event. Dr. Frew thought this was AWESOME!

Mr. Denning asked for participation by the Commissioners in the upcoming events, particularly the Bike Rodeo on Saturday October 31st and a Pleasant Climb Trail Race on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Pomkoski commented on Mr. Denning's recent performance evaluation by concluding that there were many things that were positive. He said that Mr. Denning had taken the recreation Department farther than it has been, and that on the whole he was doing a great job.

The meeting concluded with a brief review of the agreed to actions to be taken by the Commissioners.

The next meeting was set for Thursday October 7 at 4:15P.M. Thereafter, the Commission will meet on the second Thursday of the month, starting with November 12th.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:40P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen K. Colby  
Recording Secretary