



**DRAFT MINUTES for the
New London
Recreation Commission Meeting
At the Town Offices
September 7, 2010
4:30pm**

Members Present: Jerry Coogan (Chair), Laura James, Keith Pomkoski, Jason Stadler, Allison McLean Chad Denning (Recreation Director)

Also Present: Wendell Phillips

The meeting began at 4:30pm, and Mr. Coogan began by thanking Wendell Phillips for volunteering his time on the Bucklin Beach project. Mr. Phillips said that he is now 83 and has some time on his hands. He has some other projects in the works, but the economy has caused his business to slow.

Mr. Denning showed the plans that Mr. Phillips came up with. He noted that he also showed the plans at a recent CIP meeting. The only estimate they have received as yet is for \$200,000 and that the estimate was high. Mr. Phillips said that Mark Wilks, who lives on 103A and has done a lot of work for him in the past, could give a better estimate. It was asked how large the space would be in the new beach house. Mr. Phillips said that the downstairs would be 700 square feet, and the upstairs would be the same, but a little less to accommodate the stairs.

Mr. Denning said that at the CIP meeting, there was a comment from Bill Helm that \$200/square foot for storage was a lot. Others on the CIP committee agreed with Mr. Helm at the meeting. Mr. Coogan said that they should be able to get down to \$120/square foot. Mr. Denning said that the CIP committee took the \$25,000 away and felt that the project wasn't ready to go and they didn't want to give them the money even though they will plan to do the project in the near future.

Mr. Denning said that his target goal was around \$130,000. They have \$106,000 in their funds currently. If they could get their CIP money for 2012, that would help them to meet their goal. Mr. Coogan asked if there were any questions about why they were choosing to update Bucklin over Elkins. Mr. Denning said that he informed them at the meeting why they wanted to make this upgrade to Bucklin and there were no further questions about it.

Mr. Phillips said that he had included electric locks so they would lock on their own at a pre-determined time.

Mr. Denning said he wanted comments to stop from residents who were complaining about non-residents using the town beaches until a proper study has been performed. Ms. McLean said that a lot of the people using the beaches are people from the school district who don't have their own beach facilities. Regarding the Bucklin beach upgrade more information is needed regarding the state septic system approval.

Mr. Denning noted that Richard Lee (Public Works Director) is putting together a four-bay garage at the sewer department. He has agreed to put the fourth bay on the garage for recreation department storage. The building at Bucklin is operational currently but will need to be addressed in the near future. Mr. Coogan

asked if Mr. Phillips could give a recommendation to the town about the age of the building and the fact that it is tired and needs updating.

Mr. Denning said that if they heated the upstairs of the Bucklin building, they could use it as a classroom for sailing instruction and other classes. The only new things on the bottom level would include toilet partitions, sinks, new hot water to the downstairs, and the addition of a 5x5 bathroom that could be open 24/7.

Mr. Denning said that the Board of Selectmen would like the beaches open until 8pm next year for the purpose of having the bathrooms accessible and for having lifeguards available during the early evening busy times. Mr. Denning said that when the lifeguards leave at 5pm the beaches are still packed with people. He said the guards who are not doing lessons in the morning would come in at noon instead of 9am, when there aren't many people at the beach except for those there for lessons. From 12pm - 8pm the beach would be open every day, including weekends, and then there are people there would be guards watching over the beach. The beaches would still be open before the guards arrive.

Ms. McLean wondered if it was legal to have lifeguards there doing lessons and not have them be responsible for others swimming. Were there legal ramifications? Mr. Denning said that he had to do some research on it. Ms. McLean said that she was in favor of keeping the beach open longer with lifeguards but didn't want to put themselves in any undue risk if they didn't need to. Mr. Denning said he would need to increase the line item for the guards for next year to accommodate for the returning guards who would receive raises. Mr. Pomkoski said that they should just keep the guards on at the regular opening time of 9am, and increase the line item to prevent any possible problems with liability.

Ms. James asked if there was any additional liability for having the beaches open later when the mosquitoes come out. Ms. McLean didn't think there were any precedents for this but thought it was a good question. A lot of towns were struggling with this issue.

Mr. Denning asked if those on the commission wanted to stay with the current plans for the updated beach house or back down a little and go to the CIP with a renovated beach house with no storage, or to go with the plan for next year and be ready to answer any questions that may come up. Mr. Pomkoski wondered if \$130/square foot was even feasible if they decided to heat the upstairs. Mr. Phillips said that \$200/square foot is what you pay for a high end, house. He said if they heat the upstairs to use it for classes, they would need a lift to make it wheelchair accessible, which would be in the range of about \$8,000. He felt it should be feasible at \$130/square foot. Mr. Denning felt that if they did some legwork and got some assistance from people they know, and got a hold of people who would like to pitch in and help with this sort of project, they could make it a community project and get it done with less money. He said that a local builder was going to come back to them with an estimate as well as the gentleman that Mr. Phillips had in mind.

Mr. Phillips said he had read the article in the paper about the need for some volunteer architectural assistance for the Bucklin Beach house, and emailed Ms. Levine about helping come up with a design. The commission thanked him for doing this and giving them so much of his time. Mr. Phillips suggested heating the space with gas units that just need to bring a line in for. Ms. McLean said that they could heat with solar, as there are some solar businesses that are looking for some promotional placements.

Mr. Coogan said that they would like to update the Board of Selectmen in October with regards to this building and the fact that they can get a better price, grants for funding, and involving the community. He felt that they needed to market the project.

2011 Budget (18 month budget)

Mr. Denning said the prepared budget would be completed by the end of the week. Mr. Pomkoski asked if he anticipated any surprises by the end of the year. Mr. Denning said he did not. He was going to have to increase the line item for the lifeguards, who were returning and would be getting raises, and also for the extended hours. Mr. Denning said that they spend a lot on the ads for the Shopper. Mr. Coogan asked if they felt that it paid off. Mr. Denning said that they didn't think they'd get people signing up for the

programs if they didn't use the Shopper. Mr. Coogan asked about the new boats that they had talked about previously. Mr. Denning said that he could put it in the budget. Mrs. James said that if they had a need for the boats, they should put it in. Ms. McLean said that they should at least put it in. It would promote the idea that it was needed. Mr. Denning said that the Budget Committee helped them last year to put an ad in the Shopper for donations of used boats, and they got no responses. He said that the sailing program is very popular, and added that Jessie Smerald was going to take a teaching sailing class to be even better at giving instruction to residents who wish to learn. He noted that it cost about \$3,000 - \$4,000 for a new boat. Mr. Pomkoski suggested that the three banks in town should each donate a boat with their logo on the side of it. Everyone thought that was a unique and thoughtful idea.

Bike Rodeo/Touch-a-Truck Event

Mr. Denning said that all the vehicles will be there again this year and that Whaleback is bringing skate rinks to allow for a skate rodeo. There will be 3-4 ramps with a demo, and a bike rodeo. Outspokin' will be there to do bike adjustments. DHART is scheduled to land in the soccer field again. Mr. Denning said he would send a flyer to everyone to help advertise. The event would be held on Saturday, September 25th at 10am. He said that he would appreciate as much help as possible at the event. Mrs. James said she would help with registration. He noted that he would notify the Outing Club letting them know about this event, as they would be using their field.

A Pleasant Climb Trail Race (Sat. Oct. 9 at 10am)

Mr. Denning noted that there would be over 100 people coming this year. The following day would be a horse shoe tournament at Mount Sunapee in conjunction with their pig roast.

Haunted Halloween Woods (Sun. Oct 31- starts at 2pm).

Sandra from the Historical Society has been working with Mr. Denning to organize this event. They are thinking of having a pig roast at 2pm, cooked by Bubba's of Newbury. Simon Brooks will spend some time storytelling with the kids. At about 4:30pm, the little kids would get a chance to go through the corn maze at Springlege Farm. The reason for the change is that the event gets old and they feel they need to change it up a bit. The event would be free for little kids, but donations would be accepted. The Colby-Sawyer College Players (drama club) have 50 students signed up to work this event. The Historical Society is excited, as this will bring younger families to their facilities. Mr. Denning said that this will be the last weekend for the maze, so if there is any destruction of it, it won't be that big a deal. Mr. Brooks will volunteer his time to read some Halloween stories to the kids. Mr. Denning said that there would be a costume parade after the storytelling. Colonial Pharmacy will do a candy drive for them again. At 6pm the older kids will be allowed to go through the maze and the fee will be \$5 per kid, or donations accepted. The age recommended would be 12 and up, as it will be scarier than the early maze walk. After some discussion, the Recreation Commission agreed that they should just have the event be "by donation only" as they generally make out better that way. Ms. McLean said they could make some clever signage about giving a donation to keep the event going for future years. Mr. Denning asked about having a community potluck instead of a pig roast. The group loved that idea and felt it would encourage family participation. Mr. Pomkoski suggested having the storytelling first and then the potluck afterwards. Mr. Stadler said that they have to be careful about allergies now, which might be a problem with a potluck. He wondered if there was a way to incorporate the story walk. Mr. Denning said that it was too far away.

Beach Takedown (Sun. September 12 @ 10am)

Mr. Denning said that he has hired lifeguards to take the beach down. Bucklin will be first. They'll take the docks out of the water, as well as the lines, and sailboats.

Fall Programming

Mr. Denning said that an ad will come out in the Shopper the following day with the upcoming recreation programs. There are Intramurals, new swimming classes and options, and a learn-to-swim class for pre-school kids. There will be four different languages, including Chinese, French, Spanish and German. He noted that homeschooled kids generally take these classes. There is pre-school climbing, regular climbing, and they are trying to get some middle school program going through the church using the recreation department's vehicle. Karate is continuing and "Old School PE" for adults will happen again. Mr. Denning

said that Jamie Messier has been huge for the swim program. The NCAC has dissolved so New London has taken over all the swimming programs. Instead of the NCAC, it is now UVAC swim club.

Mr. Denning added that Merilee Verdi has been active in getting more programs started for the recreation department. The Junior Summer Adventures was her idea, and she is coming up with more ideas.

Winter Programming Ideas

Mr. Denning said he was looking for some cool, new, fun activities. They plan to put a sledding hill on the common. They will also have the ice rink again. The hill would be unsupervised with a sign noting this fact. Ms. McLean asked if they have run this through any risk factors. Mr. Denning said that they ran it by Ms. Levine and it was passed as OK. Mr. Stadler said that he felt it was the same as the ice rink, where they don't require a helmet. Ms. McLean said that they just need to make sure they are careful with the signage. Mr. Denning felt the hill needed to be engineered properly so that the run outs were away from the roads. They will have to design it for a tube, which would be the fastest.

Mr. Denning was interested in more suggestions. He hopes to have a broomball league play on the ice this year. Ms. McLean asked when programming was to be in place. Mr. Denning felt that it would start right after November. Ms. McLean thought that any suggestions should be to Mr. Denning before the next meeting.

Mr. Denning said that he needed input on the Dinner with Jack Frost, as he wanted to mix it up a bit. The last two years were so cold and lots of people who purchased tickets did not come. He wondered what they could do to make the event new and fresh. He thought that they should have a circus tent and then have the vendors outside the tent. People could come inside to eat. Due to the price of the large tent, it was suggested to get a smaller tent and to provide hay bales for people to sit and eat on. Mr. Denning said that if they advertise that there would be indoor seating this year, it might entice more people to sign up and to come even if it is really cold.

Utilizing the Recreation Van out of Summer

Mr. Denning said he wants to utilize the van in the coming seasons and hopes to use it with Bill Ross and his program. He said that he feels like he is under the microscope about the van and wants to make sure it is used throughout the year.

Summer League

They ended up only having a softball league this year, and the trophies at the end were hand-made clay bowls, engraved with the team's names. The bowls were made by Jamie Messier. Carter Malpass, who ran the league, said it was the hardest thing he has ever done.

Old Business

Mrs. James felt they needed to get shells (jackets) to wear over their tee-shirts for those events that they participate in. Mr. Denning said that they have some sweatshirts available. He asked what people would want to wear. The majority agreed that a golf shirt and a windbreaker were what would work best. They agreed to email their sizes to him.

Mr. Pomkoski asked about having Mr. Denning provide a presentation about his own activities and have it at the library or somewhere in town where people could come and meet him. He said that there were a lot of interesting people who have done some amazing things and they could share their accomplishments and activities. Ms. McLean thought that such a presentation could serve as a promotional thing and they could have speakers come in to talk about winter activities and then the recreation department could offer such activities in the town. Mr. Pomkoski felt it was important for Mr. Denning to present his own accomplishments.

Mr. Stadler felt that a lot of people know Mr. Denning's name but not his face. He thought it would be good to do a slideshow and forum. Mr. Pomkoski said that it would help people know who he is and make him familiar. Mr. Denning said that this could be a way to make himself more approachable.

Ms. Levine (Town Administrator) came to the end of the meeting. Mr. Coogan described to her their recent efforts with the Bucklin Beach project and said that they'd like to come forward next year with it again. He explained about other grant programs and for solar heating as well. Ms. Levine felt that was great and said that it was hard for Mr. Denning to come in alone to make the presentation to the CIP Committee. They had talked about it being storage heavy and the price did not go over very well at all. They are having a problem with the non-resident use and it was getting mixed in with this project. They didn't want to upgrade the beach for non-residents. If the new beach house is not for just storage, but for overall use, that would help. Ms. Levine said that Mr. Phillips and Mr. Bianchi talked to two different sides of the DES, and that there was a question about being able to go up a level.

With no other business to come forward, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London