



**New London
Recreation Commission Meeting
at the Town Offices
February 8th, 2011
4:45PM @ Town Offices**

Members Present: Chad Denning (Recreation Director), Laura James, Jerry Coogan, Allison McClean

The meeting started at 4:55pm.

1. 2011 & 2012 Rec Budget, so far we are in the clear....

Mr. Coogan said that the last Budget meeting was 2 ½ hours long. There were tie votes for the increased lifeguards and the boats, so the money is still in the budget. He felt the meetings were poorly run and managed. There is another public meeting on February 14th. He has received a call from Bob Meck of the Budget Committee who said he has received calls from residents about the increased lifeguard hours. Mr. Coogan said he felt the increased lifeguard hours served as an insurance policy for the town. Since they have acknowledged that the hours of 5-8pm are busy times of the day at the beach, he felt that they could be sued if someone drown or was hurt at the beach during those hours. He said the town's attorney recommended keeping the hours extended as a lawsuit would cost much more than the \$5,000 they are asking for to pay for the increased hours.

Mr. Meck suggested to Mr. Coogan that the lifeguards start working at the beach later in the day than the traditional 9am. Mr. Denning explained that this is not a good situation as the lifeguards who are there teaching lessons cannot also oversee swimmers. An incident in Concord occurred in recent years where a child drown because lifeguards were teaching lessons and were not aware of the child in distress.

Mr. Denning said that February 14th was the last meeting and he has asked Heidi Thoma to attend the meeting. She is their sailing instructor and can vouch for the condition of the boats. Ms. Levine has warned that if they do not get new boats, they will be forced to get rid of the program. The meeting is at 7pm at Whipple Town Hall.

Denning said that Mark Kaplan cast his votes at the Budget Meeting via telephone, and so the votes were tied. Had he been absent, the money would

have been removed from their budgets for the new boats and the extended lifeguard hours. Mr. Kaplan will be present at the next meeting.

Mrs. James thanked Mr. Denning and Mr. Coogan for their efforts and for the comments they made at the Budget Meeting.

2. Winter Wild Uphill Series (Success!) NH Chronicle

Mr. Denning said it has been a huge success. He didn't know if they would be able to handle the numbers with regards to timing them all, but it seemed to work. The up-hill finish line at Ragged Mountain helped the participants slow down at the end to be better able to time them. 118 people attended the most recent event at Ragged Mountain. He is paying the timing company \$700/race.

Mr. Denning said that Bretton Woods has contacted him to participate in the event, but he wasn't sure if it would be appropriate in this series. Perhaps they could create a new series using that mountain along with Attitash and Wildcat.

They were pleased about the piece on Chronicle and that they were able to get New London's name out there. So far they have taken in \$7,000 for Winter Wild, and they have spent \$3,000 with two races to go. The money goes into the revolving account.

3. Winter Carnival and Ski Joring, thoughts, improvements, changes.. (Another Success!)

Mr. Denning said it was the best winter carnival yet. The weather was good and there were a lot of people participating. He noted that a three-minute video had been created of the event and thought it was very well done. The commission was thankful for Ms. Levine's including information about the winter carnival in a recent newsletter.

Mr. Coogan said that Rob Bryant from the Chamber of Commerce wrote a grant to get \$2,000 for the Winter Carnival. They thought it appropriate to send him a thank-you note for this. Mr. Denning said that Dorothy Burn, the benefactor, has been a big supporter of his from the time he spent working in Hanover, and she sees the greater picture with regards to recreation.

The only change to Winter Carnival he has heard is to have the block party the same night as the dinner, but just later. Ms. McClean said that perhaps it could be another separate event another time, and perhaps turn it into a cultural event showcasing bands or music. Mr. Denning agreed and said that they should have it at a different time of year. Also, they might not have a live band next year, as it would be cheaper to have speakers with background music. He added that they could also get rid of one of the tents. There was talk of tying in farmer's markets in with the block party idea.

4. Bob Andrews Memorial Ice Rink

Mr. Denning said after two months, he has lost steam maintaining the ice. Some people shovel off half of it, not knowing that it leaves and the other end to turn to ice. He plans to keep maintaining the ice through February vacation, but will probably stop maintaining it after that. Mrs. James said that perhaps they could find someone to help maintain the ice. Ms. McClean said a paid person would be best because it would make them more apt to keep coming. A volunteer person may not put the work as a priority. Mrs. James said she would send a note to Matt Laramie who could possibly help. She had several other names to contact. Mr. Denning said he would be willing to pay someone \$10/hour to do it. John Kiernan has come out a couple times to help him, as his business has benefited from having the rink. Mr. Denning thought there would be between 5-15 hours/week to maintain the ice and after-school and at night would be the times the work would need to be done.

6. Winter XC Ski Trails @ Spring Ledge Farm

Mr. Denning said that John Ohler and W. Michael Todd have a groomer and have been grooming the trails and laying track. The ladies who walk the trails in the summer have called to comment on how well groomed the trails are. He was very grateful for their work. The Commission thought a thank-you note would be in order for these gentlemen.

7. NLOC and where we stand.

The PTO is putting on the winter activities. The Recreation Department is spear-heading the ski/snowboard day. The PTO went to cash in on their scholarship requests to the New London Outing Club, who said they wouldn't pay because it was a Recreation Program, but that Chad is a parent of a child in the program who is putting in his time to help out. They then said they would only pay 50% of the scholarship when they had originally said they would pay 100%. This is the Bob Andrews Memorial Scholarship fund. The money has been put in there for scholarships for kids to go to outings, not just Outing Club activities. A board member is making this decision, which he felt was a poor one. They were asked to help run the winter activities program and he has a problem with them using the Bob Andrew's Fund at their discretion like that. The PTO does not have the money to make up this difference.

Mr. Coogan asked the details of the fund. Mr. Denning said that it was put in place, no questions asked, so families could let their children participate in the ski program. A final decision has not been made as of yet, but feels there will be a big stink made if they do not pay the scholarships.

Mr. Denning commented that the ladies helping him coordinating the program were instrumental in making it happen. He has met many families by doing this.

8. 2011 Budget and new additions

Lifeguards and boats are the only things.

9. Skate Park and status

This has been put on hold. No one wants to talk about it. Mrs. James said it would be on the ballot for the school meeting and will be voted upon to see if the school can lease the land out. Mr. Denning said that the school has to go to vote, but other leasing from the district to the town has not needed a vote.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London