



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

June 1, 2021  
5:30 PM via Zoom

**Due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically. The public has access to contemporaneously listen and participate in this meeting through the video conferencing platform Zoom.us.**

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Justin Garzia  
Jackie Christensen  
Lyndsay Harkins  
Gregory Partham

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Sheri Cote, Kim Pruett-Ilg, Chris Lorio

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator; Putnam Kidder, Beach Director

### **Waterfront**

Beach Director Putnam Kidder reported that due to the weather over the Memorial Day weekend, the beaches were not busy. This allowed for training, stocking up of supplies and getting organized. The floating docks will be put in the water tomorrow. There is a small staff of lifeguards with the hope that a few more will be joining toward the middle or end of June. There are three or four beach attendants.

**Resident ID's** – Mr. Kidder stated there needs to be consistency with this. He would like a response to give to people as this will be questioned. Justin Garzia stated he was not at the Board of Selectmen meeting when the decision was made to not have IDs checked. At the last Recreation Commission meeting it was clear that a decision was made to at least start the summer off with checking IDs.

Town Administrator Kim Hallquist responded that the Selectmen want things to go back to the way things were prior to the pandemic; she has concerns about staffing levels at the beaches and does not think we have the staff to check IDs at this point. If there is a lot of push back the Selectmen will revisit this, but they want things to go back to normal as much as possible. Ms. Hallquist noted that the ordinance that has been followed states you have to be a town resident to park at the beaches, people in surrounding towns have been able to use the beaches as ID's have never been checked, prior to last year when occupancy was limited. The Selectmen are no longer limiting numbers. Mr. Garzia stated the ordinance from 2009 reads "Residency requirements – beaches shall be for the exclusive use of New London residents and taxpayers and their guests". The ordinance had not been enforced until last year. Lyndsay Harkins stated we need to be clear on what our policy is and what the town's policy is. Chair Garzia also stated that last year they spent over \$2,000 on an ID machine as they felt the residents liked it and they wanted it to be ongoing because it was a policy that made sense. The Recreation Commission would like to at least have the right to check sporadically if staffing is available. The focus specifically should be on the weekends.

The Recreation Commission would be like to enforce the residency requirement and they would work with Mr. Kidder to make that happen. Ms. Hallquist noted that the issue of re-opening the town offices will be on the next Selectmen's agenda and she will raise this issue for further discussion.

Signage was discussed regarding COVID and it was decided that signage with very basic language regarding following state and local guidelines would be best.

Chair Garzia would like the hours posted for paddle board and kayak rental availability. In the past residents have expressed frustration because they were not sure when they could take out the equipment. There was discussion about whether the people that take out this equipment need to stay within sight of the lifeguards. Chair Garzia is not sure about this rule. The group discussed if it is the responsibility of the lifeguard to watch the designated swim area or the whole lake. What is our responsibility if someone falls off a paddle board somewhere? It should be stated that a life jacket is to be worn at all times. The Town has boats with motors in case lifeguards need to rescue swimmers, but the lifeguards need training on how to use them; you cannot give people equipment and not train them on how to use it. Greg Partham felt that an emergency in the middle of the lake should be something that the fire department would handle rather than lifeguards. Ms. Hallquist stated she was told that the beaches needed boats with motors because arrival of the fire department could take several minutes, and it is better to have equipment onsite. Jackie Christensen stated she always assumed if you were outside of the rope, it was at your own risk. Ms. Hallquist asked if a parent needed to be present to take out this equipment. Chair Garzia noted that a release form is signed before equipment can be taken out. The Recreation Commission asked Putnam Kidder to review these rules and policies and bring them back to the Commission. They need to be very clear. Lyndsay Harkins also wants to make sure it is only New London residents checking out this equipment.

### **Update on Outing Club**

The Director for the Outing Club camp has reached out to Mr. Kidder regarding the utilization of the beaches. She will work directly with him to find times that work for campers to use the beaches. Josh Anderson will be the Programs Director and will also be involved with the camp. The survey results for the Outing Club survey done by a Colby Sawyer student were shared a few weeks ago.

Lyndsay Harkins asked if the Outing Club has fulfilled all the obligations and requirements that the Recreation Commission proposed that they do. Chair Garzia stated yes, they have met and exceeded expectations. He noted they have not received any money from the town and have done this without any guaranteed money. Ms. Harkins wants to ensure we are supporting them financially where we can. Chair Garzia stated he has offered to help Pete Smith understand what he needs to do to request funds.

### **Recreation Department Facilities**

Chair Garzia stated he shared a list of their inventory with Bob Bowers of the Building and Facilities Committee. They need to figure out what is currently in storage and whether or not they want to retain all of it. The Building and Facilities Committee would like to know how much space they need and what sort of space they need for all that inventory. Chair Garzia stated aside from waterfront and ice rink related equipment how do they determine what to keep in storage and what to donate or give away. Ms. Hallquist replied that this is up to the Recreation Commission to decide. Lyndsay Harkins would like to maintain the storage we have and not do anything until at least October 2021. Once we determine how things are going with the Outing Club and the Recreation Director position, we can revisit this in the fall.

### **Process for Allocation of Recreation Activity Funds**

Chair Garzia asked what the process should be for groups that are requesting funds from the Recreation Activity fund. Should there be basic information we get from every group if they are asking for support from the Recreation Commission.

Ms. Hallquist commented that there is a Community Service Funding request form that is completed by groups seeking money from the town, that goes to the Budget committee and the Board of Selectmen. This is not the form organizations should use for the activity fee funding, but it could be used as a guide for the Recreation Commission to determine what it would like to see for information from organizations. Chair Garzia felt that would be helpful and asked Ms. Hallquist to send the form to the group.

**Next Meeting** – The next Recreation Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 6, 2021, at 5:30pm.

**IT WAS MOVED (Justin Garzia) AND SECONDED (Lyndsay Harkins) to adjourn. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson

Recording Secretary  
Town of New London