



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, September 1, 2022
Whipple Hall
5:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jackie Christensen (Chair)
Chris Lorio (Co-Chair)
Justin Garzia
Greg Parthum

OTHERS PRESENT:

Putnam Kidder, Town of New London Recreation Director

Meeting started at 5:33 PM

IT WAS MOVED by Chris Lorio AND SECONDED by Jackie Christensen to accept Minutes from Rec. Commission Meeting 8-3-22 THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY. Justin Garzia abstained from vote as he was not present at the last meeting.

Selectmen voted unanimously to support the change of the Recreation Director position from part-time back to full-time. Commission reviewed current Full-time Recreation Director job description and suggested some small edits that will be passed on to Town Administrator to finalize. Position will be posted externally as soon as possible. Commission discussed options of interview process and how to best collaborate with Town Administrator to facilitate the hiring process. Using a panel of people (Town Administrator for and Commission members) for interviews with later-stage candidates was discussed. The possibility of having citizens on panel was also mentioned. Current part-time Recreation Director Putnam Kidder intends to apply for the full-time position.

Director Report:

*Beaches Update: Positive Summer at the beaches. Given the shortage of staffing in the region the beaches had consistent and committed group of waterfront staff for the beaches this Summer. Lifeguard trainings over the course of the Summer were very successful and helped train the staff. Swim lessons were very successful as they were reintroduced after a long period off due to Covid. The hope is to expand lesson offerings next Summer. Sail boats and lessons at Bucklin did not occur again this Summer due to staffing issues and the need to offer the program in as safe a manner as possible. There is high interest in the community to bring the programs back and the Rec. Director and Commission will look into the option of bringing these programs back next Summer, even if it is in a limited way. For next season, investigate options of new timed locks/other options at beaches to help with consistent access to bathrooms and make them more secure. It was suggested that waterfront staff budget be increased for FY2024 to support retaining and attracting qualified staff and match increasing wages in the region.

***Fall Events:** Plan is to offer Flag Football on the Green for elementary school students Mondays 3-4:30 starting 9/12 and running six weeks. Options for using Whipple Hall are being explored as well for later in the Fall, yoga, dance classes, Karate program has reached out as well. It was suggested by Justin Garzia that NL Historical Society might be interested in utilizing WH for an event. As WH nears completion of audio-visual updates the space should be used as frequently as possible for Rec. Department events for all ages. Halloween Road Closure discussion, Chief Emily Cobb has proposed not closing Main Street for Halloween festivities this year. The decision is based on staffing the event and the complexity of closing a state road, among other reasons. The Rec. Commission felt that the decision to not close the road was one that warranted further discussion and that closing the road is an important safety step and one that makes the event appealing and a big draw for residents and the wider community for the holiday. The Rec. Director will follow up with Town Administrator and Chief Cobb about setting up a time to discuss the issue further with the Commission.

***Developing a yearlong event calendar to help put on and promote events and programming**

IT WAS MOVED by Justin Garzia AND SECONDED by Jackie Christensen to adjourn at 6:38 PM. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The next meeting is scheduled for 5:30 PM Thursday 10/6/22 at Whipple Hall

**Respectfully submitted,
Putnam Kidder
Recreation Director
Town of New London**