



Sandown Recreation Commission & Parks and Recreation Department

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Recreation Commission Members:

George Blaisdell, Chairman 2019
John Donahue, 2021

Jessica Scarlett, 2021

Darren Hudgins, ex officio 2019
Veronica Utman, 2020

The Recreation Commission, in accordance with 'RSA Chapter 35-B: Public Recreation and Parks', oversees the Parks and Recreation Department which maintains town owned recreational facilities and offers recreational activities for all ages. Maintained facilities encompass approximately 20 acres including baseball and softball fields; a public beach; outdoor basketball court; 2 playgrounds and a year-round recreation building that sits on approximately 8 acres and includes a 3-acre multi-purpose playing field and playground.

The Parks & Recreation Department had a busy 2018 with continued growth in its programs. Several new offerings throughout the year included cooking classes for pre-school children and elementary level students; playgroup for parents of the 'under 5' crowd; a First Aid and CPR course; and more. Continuing programs included a spring afterschool program offered to children in elementary school as well as vacation week activities during school breaks. A Certified Babysitter Course took place over the April school vacation break. The Summer Recreation Program, now approaching 25 years of continued operation, grew at a very rapid pace this past year. Participation increased by more than 21 percent and revenue by 14.5 percent helping to offset nearly the entire cost of the program. Participants in the program ran the annual Car Wash and Lemonade Stand and were able to raise more than \$1,000.00 for the Community Food Pantry with the help of many supporters.

In joint ventures with the recreation departments of Plaistow and Atkinson, participants enjoyed a Saint Patrick's Day celebration filled with Irish music; a special performance in September with "The Singing Trooper" who performed for seniors at Sandown Town Hall; and a Halloween performance with a Master Story Teller. The 3-towns joined together to ring in the New Year with a community afternoon event at the Performing Arts Center. Hundreds of people attended a performance by AudioBody with its exciting circus arts and music. A community trip to Newport, Rhode Island in November to view the mansions, decorated for Christmas, was sold out. Continuing classes that focus on physical wellness included Yoga; Senior Exercise; and Ballroom Dance lessons, all remaining popular and in demand. More than 100 seniors enjoyed a holiday meal and musical entertainment at Zorvino's Vineyard here in Sandown.

The Recreation Department has oversight of the town beach known as Seeley Beach. The department takes responsibility for monitoring water at the public beach for e-coli (fecal) bacteria and does so in partnership with the State of NH Dept. of Environmental Services "Healthy Beaches" program. As in years past, the tests have come back with some of the lowest safe levels of surrounding lakes and ponds for e-coli, even during the hottest months when it can be most prevalent. Thank you to all who use the beach for respecting the "No Feeding of Water Fowl" rule. Ducks and geese in the water and on the sand can and will very quickly make this serious bacterium rise. By not feeding them, water fowl are discouraged from staying in the area. Water fowl will deposit fecal matter into the water and onto the sand at up to 2 pounds per day for one Canada Goose. We are all grateful when everyone works together to keep the beach a clean and healthy place for residents. Residents support of keeping the pond treated for Mil-foil is another way to ensure the healthy life of this important water asset. Please remember if you are using watercraft, paddleboard,

kayak; etc. to always wash it off BEFORE putting it in the pond to prevent the spread of this dangerous invasive weed that can choke out a pond, turning it into a swamp in a short period of time. Do this anytime you use a lake or pond anywhere as one body of water most often feeds into another and another. What happens upstream in other bodies of water and towns will affect Phillips Pond and what happens in Phillips Pond will flow into the Exeter River and continue spreading and damaging our ecosystem.

The demand for the use of all facilities has continued to increase with 2018 seeing more use of all facilities than ever before. When not in use by the Recreation Dept. for classes and activities, groups like the Sandown Baseball/Softball Association; TYSL; Garden Club; Boy Scouts; Cub Scouts; Girl Scouts; Sixty Plus; Sandown Public Library; Old Home Days Committee and private rentals have made use of the space at the facility. Revenue turned back to the Town from program fees and rentals exceeded \$58,000.00 in 2018. Please visit the town website at: www.sandown.us and navigate to the Parks & Recreation page for all program information.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra O'Neill Brown
Parks & Recreation Director