

RECREATION COMMISSION

Town of Sandown, NH

Recreation Commission

Meeting Date: July 19, 2023

Meeting Location: Recreation Building

Members Present: Chairman George Blaisdell; Heidi Dyer; Christopher Longchamps

Members Absent: Darren Hudgins, ex officio; Benjamin Sharpe

Also Present: Becky Thompson, Recreation Director

Meeting was called to order by Mr. Blaisdell at 6:30pm

New Business:

Review of Invoices:

- The approval sheet for the Summer Recreation Counselor pay increase needed a signature from the Chairman
- Second quarter payroll taxes (April, May, June)
- First Student invoices for summer camp for \$299 and \$308
- Canobie Lake field trip: \$3,404
- O'Neil Cinemas field trip: \$297
- Bowling alley field trip: \$1,316
- Hilltop Fun Center field trip: \$656

Summer Camp Update

Ms. Thompson gave an update on summer camp. She noted that they were in the middle of Olympic week where campers are divided into teams and they compete against each other.

They had a huge influx of kids after the first batch of t-shirts were ordered and they underestimated the number of shirts needed so they did have to order more which cost \$700. They over ordered originally but didn't order enough small shirts for the first and second graders. She purchased white shirts and dyed them in her tub for campers to wear until the new ones came in.

Overall, she's had nothing but good feedback from parents and campers.

There was a bee problem in the fields behind the recreation building and in the shed but John Runcie took care of them.

Mr. Blaisdell noted there was a parent that was looking for the schedule for the following week of summer camp and posted on Facebook. Ms. Thompson did reach out to that parent and sent the schedule. She tries to send it out the Thursday before, but that week they were delayed.

The Board discussed moving the shed. Ms. Thompson noted the person that typically moves it for them was unresponsive. They are currently using the baseball shed, which is working fine. Mr. Blaisdell noted they need to figure out a solution for next year and suggested buying a trailer or getting small storage bins that they could leave at the school. Ms. Dyer questioned if there was another location (e.g., Library) to

have a permanent shed placed. The Board discussed the area by the stairs to Main Street. Mr. Longchamps suggested renting a pod for the summer, which would run roughly \$160 per month. The Board agreed that would be a good option.

Ms. Thompson noted the inflatables for the carnival that they do during the last week of camp will be about \$1,500.

Ms. Dyer questioned if they were short on staff for summer recreation since Ms. Thompson was spending so much of her week there. She reiterated that the Board had hoped she would step away from the day-to-day operations and focus more on other things. Ms. Thompson noted she is short on staff but also has new coordinators running camp so she's been working with them. She also handles a lot of the parent communication and believes it is important for the Director to be visible. She also attends the field trips. Mr. Blaisdell added they don't want other things to suffer because she is spending so much time with camp, the staff is trained and the coordinators have been part of the program for many years and should be trusted. They would like her to start planning Fall programming to get it into the pipeline.

Ms. Thompson noted that they've had many rentals; two in August and a few for September.

Ms. Dyer questioned how the MESH counselor was working out. Ms. Thompson noted she's been great. They have more kids that utilize her than they anticipated. Some campers were identified ahead of time as needing the extra help and others have been identified as camp has progressed. There are a lot of new young campers this year. The MESH counselor will prioritize the campers that need the most assistance but does float and campers know they can go to her if needed.

Fall Programming

Ms. Thompson questioned if the Board wanted to continue with the after-school program. She will get final numbers from the Finance Director to determine if the program is financially viable. Mr. Blaisdell noted if the program broke even, then he would be comfortable continuing it; especially if there is a community need. If they only have a few kids, then it may not be worth it. Ms. Dyer suggested spreading the word through camp. Ms. Thompson noted they had eight kids every day with some days up to 15. They get more during the winter. She would like to continue the program if she can find the staff. She believes it is a benefit to the community.

Ms. Thompson went through some events that she was planning:

- The Town Wide Yard Sale is scheduled for September 16, 2023. She confirmed that date didn't conflict with any other town yard sales.
- Oktoberfest is October 14, 2023 and the committee asked if recreation would want to be part of it by running some events for the kids.
- Monster Mash on October 28, 2023 but will double check the date with the Library.
- Turkey Hunt on November 18, 2023
- Tree lighting on December 1, 2023
- Senior Luncheon hasn't been planned yet. Last year they held it in November but the seniors preferred the holiday theme with a yankee swap. The Board suggested she find entertainment based on feedback they received. Ms. Thompson will look into that.

Ms. Thompson noted they will do more adult craft classes; they will add a coffee hour for seniors and the 60+ luncheons start in September. Ms. Dyer suggested a senior ice cream social in August. Mr. Blaisdell suggested a trip to Bedrock Gardens in Lee. Ms. Thompson will look into it.

Ms. Thompson noted for the town wide yard sale, she was not planning on having anything at the recreation center and she will have maps available (per feedback from last year).

Ms. Dyer questioned if they could do anything for teens in the fall. She suggested a field trip to Boda Borg. Ms. Thompson had concerns about chaperones for it since counselors are generally not available during the school year. Ms. Dyer suggested having parents go or do it as a family trip.

Ms. Thompson also suggested a family movie trip to O'Neil Cinemas; they can rent out the entire theater.

Mr. Longchamps suggested Bingo. Ms. Thompson would plan something for November.

Ms. Thompson noted that Old Home Day is August 19, 2023 and that she could not attend. If they wanted to have a table, then one of the board members would need to attend. The fireworks are being held at the recreation center. Mr. Blaisdell suggested their contribution be popcorn during the fireworks. They would also set up a table and update the bulletin boards with flyers for upcoming events. Ms. Thompson will make sure that is set up for them.

Ms. Thompson wanted to do the summer camp survey the week before camp ends. She suggested having a raffle for families that complete the survey, they can get entered to win a backpack filled with school supplies. Ms. Dyer suggested giving gift cards instead, so they don't have to worry about being age dependent. The Board agreed to do eight gift cards of \$25. The objective is to get feedback on how this summer went and get suggestions for next summer. She will pull questions from last summer's survey. Mr. Blaisdell added they have received feedback that parents would like the program to go later. Ms. Thompson noted they could investigate the option of doing an after-care program next year.

Ms. Thompson added that port-o-potties have been maintained and the new company has been doing a great job. There hasn't been any vandalism.

The potholes in the recreation center parking lot and Miller Field have been filled, but Ms. Thompson will check Miller Field to make sure the recent rain didn't wash it out before Fall baseball starts.

The Board discussed the status of the Gaga ball pit. There was no update.

Dates of upcoming events:

- Movie night on July 28th - *The Bad Guys*
- Recreation lemonade stand will be August 4th
- Last movie night August 25th – *The NeverEnding Story*

Ms. Dyer made a motion to adjourn.

Motion By: Ms. Dyer

Seconded By: Mr. Longchamps

In Favor: Ms. Dyer, Mr. Longchamps, Mr. Blaisdell

Motion passes unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:30.