

# RECREATION COMMISSION

## Town of Sandown, NH

### Recreation Commission

**Meeting Date:** August 16, 2023

**Meeting Location:** Recreation Building

**Members Present:** Chairman George Blaisdell; Heidi Dyer; Christopher Longchamps, Benjamin Sharpe

**Members Absent:** Darren Hudgins, ex officio

**Also Present:** Becky Thompson, Recreation Director

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

### **Review of the 7/19/23 Minutes**

Mr. Sharpe made a motion to accept the 7/19/12 minutes as amended.

Correction to change Heidi Dwyer to Dyer throughout.

**Motion By:** Ms. Dyer

**Seconded By:** Mr. Longchamps

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

**Motion passes unanimously.**

Ms. Thompson will bring the minutes that still need to be approved to the next meeting.

### **Sandown Garden Club**

Fran Rosenau wanted to address the planting area in the front of the recreation building to make it look a little neater. She suggested putting in 6 shrubs. For watering, they could use water bags that slowly let water out, but someone would need to fill them weekly. Because the soil is filled with rocks, they would likely need to take out 6-8" of material and put in fresh soil. They can plant the shrubs but would need assistance taking the material out of the planting area. She recommended planting a drought tolerant shrub.

Ms. Dyer noted there was a grant through the NH Charitable Foundation that the Garden Club could apply to. The recreation commission couldn't apply themselves because they are a town department. She suggested doing a raised bed to keep kids out of the planting areas. They could make a pollinator garden. It could be a project for the homeschool club. There is potentially another grant (Community Express) that they could apply for through the NH Charitable Foundation.

The garden club members noted a pollinator garden would require a lot of maintenance. Ms. Dyer offered to help maintain it. Fran added that they were thinking of putting in something that required minimal maintenance and didn't require weekly weeding. They have 19 members, but that may change and not all members are actively involved in maintaining gardens. The Board discussed adding a retaining wall.

They could plan to do something for the Spring. Fran suggested putting a couple of benches for the kids to use and added there are beautification grants through the Garden Club that they could use to purchase the shrubs. Perennials could come from member gardens. The hardscape/stone would be a bigger expense. They would be fine with being the sponsor of the grant.

The Board discussed options for the front area of the parking lot that is totally overgrown and agreed it needed to be addressed.

### **Invoices**

- Camp refund: \$145
- First Student: \$474 to Canobie
- First Student: \$265 to Hilltop Fun Center
- Chunky's: \$1,430
- First Student: \$365 to Launch Trampoline Park
- First Student: \$630 to Stone Zoo
- First Student: \$271 to O'Neil Cinema
- BJs: \$612 for the lemonade stand
- Dan the Pirate Man: \$450

Ms. Thompson added that they raised \$1,600 for the food pantry, which was \$300 more than they raised last year. She added that the campers liked Dan the Pirate Man. He made them laugh, but she thought the cost was a bit high. The magician did a better job keeping the kids engaged. Wildlife Encounters was popular, but the counselors believed that the person who presented was very technical and spoke over the kids' heads a bit. Chunky's was expensive, but they had the theater to themselves, and each camper received a drink, pizza and ice cream.

They went to the Fisher Cats game and the kids really enjoyed it. Many said it was their favorite field trip. She hopes to do that again next year. They do camp days. Most of their games are at night, but the camp days have first pitch at 12:00. They only do two during the summer, so it was really crowded. Mr. Longchamps discussed the sleepover they do there with the scouts. Ms. Dyer suggested that Recreation could offer that for families next year.

Ms. Dyer noted that in the handbook, it states that there is supposed to be a \$10 late fee charged for membership and a \$20 late fee per week for late registrations and questioned if that is what Ms. Thompson has been charging. Ms. Thompson thought they only charged for the membership fee, but not the price of camp. The Board agreed they need to address that for next year and review the handbook in early 2024 to determine if they want to continue charging the additional fees.

Mr. Longchamps questioned why they charged the additional fees. Ms. Thompson noted it would be important if they needed additional staff to cover the additional campers. Mr. Longchamps thought if they had not hit their numbers yet for the week, then they shouldn't charge the additional fee. If the registration put them above the 90 camper threshold and required them to bring on additional staff members, then they should charge the fee to cover the additional expenses. Ms. Thompson added that there were only 15 families that signed up after June 1<sup>st</sup> but there were several existing families that registered for additional weeks after June 1.

Ms. Thompson sent out the summer camp survey. She would like to wait for more people to respond before closing the survey.

#### **Quarterly Review for the Revolving Account**

The Board would like to review the budget at the next meeting and see where the line items are. They may have some additional projects that they could complete if they are under budget. They will also review the summer camp budget and see where they landed.

Mr. Blaisdell noted they do need to cut back the brush around the fields. They could get a price from the person that mows to see if they could have that done this year.

Mr. Sharpe added that there are some projects at Miller Field that could be addressed as well. Ms. Thompson needs to reach out to the water tank company. There are broken floorboards in the shed. She will get a rough quote to fix the floor. Mr. Sharpe added that the snack shack door needs to be replaced.

Mr. Sharpe added that they are not doing fall baseball this year, so port-o-potties could be removed from Miller. Ms. Thompson will likely remove the beach ones mid-September. She will remove the Recreation building ones in late October after soccer.

#### **After School Program**

Ms. Thompson explained she does not have any staff to work the after-school program. If the Board agrees, she could hire outside of existing staff. She needs an 18-year-old and a high-schooler from 3:00-6:00pm, five days a week. The cost for the after-school program is \$25/day or \$80/week. They consistently had 8 kids per day, some days they had more, but could take up to 20. The Board reviewed the numbers from last year and the program could cover increasing the hourly wage. They agreed \$15/hour would be a fair hourly wage. Ms. Thompson will post the job descriptions to see if they get anyone interested.

Ms. Thompson noted lifeguards could potentially work until mid-September on weekends if they were interested. She does not always have lifeguards available to work.

Ms. Dyer questioned if they could put an additional sign for no fishing at the beach. There was someone that was fishing down there when she was there. He was casting outside of the swimming area but was standing on the beach. There should be no fishing at all from the beach.

#### **Discussion Regarding the Pavilion**

The Board wanted to investigate contacting the original architect that designed the building. Ms. Thompson couldn't find the old files. Mr. Sharpe said he would reach out to Bob Villella to see if he could get the architect's name. They need to get a drawing that someone could do a bid off. Mr. Longchamps thought it should look like an extension of the building, so they match. It would give more space to the facility with additional rental opportunity. Mr. Sharpe noted he had a vendor that could draw up a plan once the board has a rough idea of what they are looking for. The pavilion would fit 100 people and would be approximately 40-50'--similar size to the building with a slab floor.

#### **Upcoming Events**

- Ms. Thompson is waiting to hear from Zorvino's for a date for the senior luncheon. She is aiming for the beginning of November.
- Oktoberfest is asking them to run lawn games (sack races, etc.)
- Ms. Dyer suggested having a Christmas tree bonfire and start the discussion with the Fire Department and Conservation Commission to see what they needed to consider. Conservation has a brush pile at the town forest already. We could turn it into a fundraiser or partner with Conservation and do it for one of their snowshoe events.
- Pie Bingo: bring a pie as the entrance fee, and if you win, you leave with a pie. Ties into the Thanksgiving theme.

The next meetings will be September 6 and September 20. They will skip October 4th and then meet on October 18.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:00.**

**Submitted By:**

*Andrea Cairns*

Andrea Cairns  
Assistant to the Town Administrator