

CHAPTER SEVEN

RECREATION PROGRAMS PLAN

The Scandia Park and Recreation Committee wants to be responsive to the interests and needs of its residents for recreational opportunities. In meeting this response, the Committee must continually research current recreational trends and strive to develop clear, consistent communication with its residents. In addition, the Committee must develop a working relationship with other agencies and organizations that provide recreational opportunities for residents (e.g. Washington County, neighboring communities, Gammelgården Museum, Washington County Historical Society, scout groups, athletic associations, Community Education Departments, 4-H, Campfire Boys & Girls, YMCA and more).

HISTORY

Residents and members of the Park and Recreation Committee proposed to the Town Board the addition of two small recreation programs during the summer of 2003. The Cleat Kids Program and the SPARK Programs were approved and coordinated by local residents. Each year these programs gained support and participation and expanded to better serve the children of New Scandia.

EXISTING TOWNSHIP RECREATION PROGRAMS

By 2005, New Scandia Township had offered a variety of recreation programs and seasonal events, which typically take place in and around the New Scandia Community Center and grounds. Availability of these programs each year is dependent on funding, volunteers and community interest. Youth recreational programs include the following:

Cleat Kids is a multi-sport class for youth, ages four through seven years old.

The S.P.A.R.K. program (Scandia Park and Recreation Kids) is a general recreation program, which includes crafts, sports, games and events. It has paid recreation leaders who meet pre-registered children in grades K-3 at the Leonard Wojtowicz building for about three hours a day for six to eight weeks throughout the summer months.

The BLAST program also has paid recreation leaders who meet pre-registered children in grades 4-6 at the Leonard Wojtowicz building for crafts, field trips, adventures, games and sports for about three hours a day for six to eight weeks throughout the summer months.

Instructional Sports have also been offered such as archery, flag football, lacrosse, tennis, skateboard and street hockey. These programs all financially support themselves through participation fees and change annually depending on trends, interest and the season.

Community-wide special events have also been offered in and around the community in the past:

Taco Daze is a community festival coordinated by volunteer residents and local businesses. Held near the Village Center and Community Center during the second weekend in September, Taco Daze includes a parade, taco feast, youth activities and entertainment.

Beginning in 2004, Scandia Cloverleaf Bike Ride was held in conjunction with Taco Daze. Individuals and families met at the Hay Lake School Museum site and chose between four routes ranging in length from three to 30 miles throughout New Scandia Township's back roads.

The first Community Skating Party was held in January 2005 at the Leonard Wojtowicz Skating Facility. Over 200 people attended various activities including ice-skating, kick-sled, hayrides, dogsled and snowshoe demonstrations.

The first Dodgeball Tournament was held in September 2005 at the Scandia Community Center Tennis Courts with over 100 participants.



Skateboard camp



LaCrosse Camp



Hayride- Community Skating Party

VISIONING SESSION: RECREATIONAL PROGRAM ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

The following issues, opportunities and recommendations were developed over a series of meetings and workshops with the Park and Recreation Committee that included a Visioning Session with members of the School District and Town Board in December of 2004:

ISSUES:

1. Determine the needs of special user groups.
2. Identify team/adult recreational programs.
3. Identify recreational needs of senior population.
4. Identify recreational needs of preschool and youth population.
5. Identify recreational needs of teen population.

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. Provide recreational programs appropriate across all age levels.
2. Provide recreational programs appropriate across all ability levels.
3. Partner with other communities for facility maintenance and use.
4. Increase active recreation at Scandia Elementary School area.
5. Limit dependence on automobile for recreation.
6. Initiate non-smoking policy.
7. Promote the needs of special user groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Develop partnerships with local & regional recreation providers.
2. Establish a citizen subcommittee that will assist the Park and Recreation Committee with identifying gaps in recreation opportunities, new initiatives, program interests, volunteerism, etc.
3. Consider the addition of a Township staff position to plan, implement and promote local recreational programs.

RECREATIONAL PROGRAM GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The following goals and strategies express the community's vision for recreation programs in New Scandia Township. The goals are broad, general statements that the Township will strive to attain. The strategies are specific, action-oriented statements that provide the framework for a wide range of recreation programs decisions that the Township will make through the year 2025. The Township should periodically review and update the goals and strategies expressed in this plan.

The recreation program goals and strategies are as follows:

Goal 1: To provide a balance of recreational and educational opportunities to meet the diverse needs of the community, including all age groups, ability levels and interests in a flexible manner that is responsive to the changing needs and circumstances of the community.

1. The Township will continue to provide direct recreational services while at the same time, encourage and enable programs provided by other agencies and groups.
2. Hire a Recreation Program Coordinator to work closely with the Town Board, office staff and maintenance staff, as necessary.
3. To continue to recruit and utilize seasonal, part-time employees and volunteers in order to assist in implementing the Township's recreation programs.

Goal 2: To cooperate and develop partnerships with public and private entities to provide recreation opportunities and utilize, to the fullest extent possible, the recreation facilities located within New Scandia Township. To accomplish this goal, the Township establishes the following strategies:

1. Identify all governmental, non-profit, private, volunteer groups and associations that provide recreation services to Township residents.
2. Identify and maintain a contact person for each.
3. Work with the Area School Districts to maximize the community use of school facilities.

Goal 4: Develop an effective planning approach to creating and implementing recreational and educational programs that maximize community involvement and utilize existing facilities. To accomplish this goal, the Township establishes the following strategies:

1. Establish a citizen subcommittee to provide feedback, new ideas, trends and interests.
2. Place a suggestion box in the Scandia Community Center for residents/users to provide feedback on how to improve the recreation programs and facilities.
3. Distribute program participant evaluations to continually monitor user satisfaction and to solicit new program ideas.
4. Consider having a Township employee handle the scheduling and maintenance coordination for all recreation facilities within New Scandia Township.
5. Publish information for facility operation and recreation programs through flyers, posters, township website, pre-recorded voice mail to keep the public informed.
6. Promote the use of volunteers to share their interests, talents and expertise by leading recreational and educational programs.

Goal 4: To develop recreation program budget priorities that ensure generation of revenues that narrow the gap between expenditures and revenue. To accomplish this goal, the Township establishes the following strategies:

1. To carefully establish fees that cover all direct costs of the program unless otherwise budgeted for or are approved by the Town Board.
2. To seek revenue generating events and programs to assist in providing a balanced budget.
3. Promote the use of volunteers to share their interests, talents and expertise by leading recreational and educational programs.
4. To actively pursue grants whenever possible to assist with program expenditures.
5. To actively pursue partnerships which will maximize the use of local resources (i.e. National Scenic Waterways, State Park Naturalists etc.).

In conclusion, the sponsorship of recreation and education programs by the Township has the potential to create a positive connection between government and citizens. They can assist the Township in creating a sense of community and ownership, they can be a vehicle for citizens to volunteer their time and/or talent thus saving the Township money and they can educate people on being good stewards of our environment. The benefits of recreational programs are a key part of creating support for governmental services, which can reach far beyond parks.