Summary Notes Board of Directors Meeting – 10/10/2015

Superintendent’s Update:

1. Construction of the enclosure for the new water-mixing tank is nearly complete.
2. Our large water holding tank will be inspected shortly at a cost of $1,800. The last inspection was back in 2004. The engineer will look for structural issues and review the cathodes to determine if they are still providing appropriate protection against corrosion.
3. Our electronic water monitoring system is not working properly. The Board authorized Nathan to hire an IT specialist to fix and potentially upgrade the software system. The Board thanks John Roll for his continued assistance and guidance with Park technology.
4. The water turbidity measurement machine needs to be replaced. The cost is $1,100 but it should last for a long time. When turbidity is high, the Park’s water source is switched from the reservoir to the wells.
5. Nathan and his crew will repair the tennis court wall that is adjacent to the road.
6. The fire hydrants functioned well during the rectory fire. Nathan and his crew will install additional hydrants during the next few years. He is working with Building and Grounds to budget, schedule and prioritize the locations.

Fire Committee:

The fire committee is continuing its work on guidelines for fire preparedness. The Board and the Committee remind cottagers to please make sure you have working smoke alarms in place and have a practiced fire escape plan. Minutes make all the difference in an emergency.

Tennis:

Brit Fisher provided the Board with a recap and discussion of 2015 tennis as well as ideas for the 2016 season. Consistent with what we have been hearing from cottagers, Brit described 2015 Twilight Tennis as a great success. The courts were opened early in the season and they were in top shape. The new Ladies Memorial Doubles Tournament was well played and very well attended. Fittingly, Robin Kaukonen was part of the winning doubles team. The Owl matches were held at Onteora this year, returning to the early tradition of rotating the matches between the two Parks. A strong contingent from Twilight attended.

Looking forward to 2016, Than has indicated that he will be returning as the tennis pro. Brit requested and the Board agreed to have the Park crew replace the two posts on the tennis deck that have lost their bark covering. Brit and his family will once again donate some furniture from the Emerson to the tennis house.

The Board expresses thanks for the amazing job Brit has done with tennis as well as the fantastic job Than has done as the pro. We are all fortunate to have Brit and Than as the leaders of Twilight Tennis.

Logging:

The loggers will start the cut after the Park closes next weekend. Our net logging revenues are expected to be about $26k. This is our third harvest under the logging program. There are two smaller cuts scheduled for 2018 and 2020. In 2028, the loggers will return to the original stand cut in 2012/2013.

The Board accelerated this and last years harvest in order to capitalize on the remaining economic value of ash trees. Last years logging had originally been scheduled for this year and this year’s cut had been scheduled for 2017. Fifteen to twenty percent of the trees in these two stands are ash. The smaller cuts in 2018 and 2020 are relatively light on ash content and it isn’t economically worthwhile to accelerate them.

The Board has added the back 40 acres (located west of Sunset road) to the logging program and they will be included in this cut. Twilight has about 275 acres dedicated to the NYS Department of Conservation forestry management program. As a point of reference, Onteora has 1260 dedicated acres.

Including this seasons logging, Twilight has received in excess of $90k in net revenues and benefitted from an aggregate $23k reduction in in property taxes since the start of the forest management program in 2012.

Ash Trees:

We will be using Jordan Voelker of Limber Trees to remove all the red x ash trees in Twilight as well as pink ribbon ash trees that are not on cottager leaseholds. Jordan’s bid was the most comprehensive and least expensive alternative. His familiarity with the Park is certainly an asset. Cutting will start late fall.

The Board reminds cottagers that we are not taking any action with regards to pink and blue ribbon trees on cottagers’ leaseholds. If you are interested in saving those trees you need to have them treated or ultimately you may need to remove them. There is about 1 or 2 weeks left this season to treat your trees, otherwise the next window is in the spring.

Finance:

Most revenue and expense categories are tracking consistent to the 2015 forecast that was presented to Cottagers at this year’s finance meeting. There are two items that will increase revenue in aggregate by about $14k, sale of the Decker Cottage (revenue in excess of the budget placeholder) and additional logging revenue from the inclusion of the back 40. There are a couple of smaller expense bumps related to the turbidity machine and the water tank inspection, both discussed above. The Board authorized year-end bonuses to Park staff to be paid this year in an attempt to match up our revenue bump with these discretionary expenditures.

Note, the ash tree cut will be financed out of the operating account but has not been included in the budget analysis. We expect expenditures will total about $85k to remove all red x trees in the Park as well as pink ribbon trees that are not on cottager leaseholds.

The Board agreed to reduce the rectory assessment to 25% of the normal assessment level while the rectory is being rebuilt. The rectory will return to the normal assessment level at the earlier of 3 years or when construction is completed.

Cell Tower:

The balloon test occurred on Saturday and the pictures and observations will be presented in a separate posting. Once that is posted, the Board will send an electronic survey to all cottagers requesting their input on a potential cell tower at Twilight.

Miscellaneous:

Not discussed at the Board meeting but worth noting, the Drop in Diner was a huge success. Over 100 Twilight Cottagers and their friends attended the dinner that was prepared and served by the past and present Board Presidents. Is this the start of a tradition?