

THE COTTRELL PIER ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 514
Jamestown, R. I.

March 2020

Dear Fellow CPA Members,

The 2020 season is getting closer ... and with it I hope come sunnier times in all ways. As I write this, we appear to be only in the early stages of the coronavirus outbreak in the U.S., with all signs pointing to us needing to hunker down for some period of time. I hope you are all able to do so and to stay well with your loved ones.

That dour note notwithstanding, I'm excited to have taken on the role of president last fall, and at no better time given the great health (both facilities-wise and financial) of the association. I'd like to thank Kim, the board and everyone who has contributed in all ways over the past few seasons to get us here. In particular, I'd like to thank Howard Balloch and his merry facilities crew for the sweat and engineering prowess that have landed us with a new pier and rebuilt finger pier which should last us for many years to come. Just beware if Howard ever comes calling with a "2-hour job."

Our membership continues to be robust, with active use of the beach and pier throughout the summer season and a waiting list which, while moving slowly, is manageable. It's great to see the generational balance throughout the season and it is my commitment to ensure that our association remains welcoming to younger members even as it remains respectful of our heritage and norms which have been keeping all members engaged for generations.

We were saddened to lose two vital members of Green's since the beginning of last season – Chris Allegra and Anny Cain – and their presence will be missed in future seasons.

Our financial health is also strong, thanks in no small part to the contributions that many of you make – above and beyond dues – to the Marion Prehn Emergency Reserve Fund. We are embarking on some long-term capital planning to ensure that we have a good line of sight to other major projects related to our facilities which will inevitably require constant attention and care.

As we enter the 2020 season, I think we should expect much to remain the same ... and a few things to change. In particular, we continue to struggle with trespassing and (separately) the risk of over-crowding on popular summer days. Additionally, we want to better understand beach use dynamics by members and guests to inform future membership decisions. As such, we are going to take a temporary step this year of assigning member numbers and asking people to sign in when they use the facilities.

I am fully aware that this may be a controversial decision for those who love the informal feel of Green's, but the reality is we're growing to a point where we need to make some moves – and gather some data – to better solidify the future health of the association for all of us. The

mechanics of the sign-in are still to be sorted out but will likely be no more sophisticated than a clipboard, a pencil, and an expectation that everyone will take it upon themselves to sign both themselves and guests in upon each first daily use. Member numbers are printed on the top left of your membership renewal sheet, as well as the front of your membership pamphlet, and lifeguards will have a list on hand for anyone who forgets theirs.

As mentioned above, part of the reason for this action is to gather more data on the actual use of the beach. We have, over time, taken a very careful approach to over-policing guest usage ... but now need to better understand that usage if we are to keep membership policies (rules, caps, etc.) sustainable. I'd like to encourage everyone to refresh themselves on CPA's membership categories and guest policy. At the risk of pointing out the obvious, you are only considered a member if you receive this letter. And to be clear: this is currently seen as a short-term information collection mechanism. We are inclined to retire the member numbers after the 2020 season.

In other news ... many of you have heard about the recent sale of Jamestown Boat Yard to Safe Harbor Marinas and proposed expansion. I've had a number of inquiries to understand CPA's position on the expansion, which I appreciate and encourage. I have tried to stay deeply involved and would be happy to chat about what I understand to any member who is interested. At this point, the board has taken the decision not to intervene on behalf of the membership (and to be clear: we have some members who are for the expansion and some who are against it), but as with any civic issue I would encourage everyone to pay attention to what's happening a quarter mile to our south.

One direct result of the town debate on the expansion is a proposed traffic and safety study to occur over the coming months, focusing particularly on the summer high season. That study is almost certain to include all of Racquet Road and along with it, the CPA parking area. There is no doubt that we have a parking issue at points during the summer. Hopefully we can work together as a membership to resolve that issue rather than have new rules imposed on us by the town. Many of the measures we can take should not be too disruptive and should make the facilities more enjoyable for all ... for example: If you are driving a large SUV, please do not park on the north side of the lot as it makes it hard for everyone to maneuver on exit. Try as best you can to minimize the number of parked cars per household, and if you can walk to the beach, please do. If you must park on the road, please be sure to stay to the East side and tuck in as closely as you can to the railing. These are just a few ideas and I'm sure many of you have others.

Finally, I'm excited to announce that this season we will finally be entering the digital age! In early June, we will be launching Cottrell Pier Association's website: a place to get access to all the information you need about Green's including important announcements, lifeguard shift schedules, historical information and photos. Please note that this will be a password-protected private site for members only. We plan the website to go live on June 1 and you will be able to access it via the address www.cottrellpierassoc.com. We will also be monitoring an

email address for the association – cottrellpier@gmail.com – which you should feel free to email at any time with questions or requests.

Another thing I am committed to – in large part because of requests I have had from members – is to create more transparency into who we are and how we operate. As such, one of the things we will be doing as part of the website launch is giving members access to our membership list. I recognize that many of you value your privacy and would prefer your contact information not to be available to other members. Please note that on your annual membership renewal sheet, you can opt in or out of having your email and phone number accessible on the site by marking the appropriate area accordingly.

And with that: back to regular business. For those who can join us, the annual beach clean-up will be on Saturday, May 23 at 9:00 a.m. Pier commissioning is scheduled for Saturday, June 7. The Annual Meeting will take place at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, August 9 and the Annual Picnic will begin at 5:00 p.m. on the same day. Anny Cain and Mia Fitzgerald have chaired the picnic for the past few years and we are eager for others to dive in and help out. Cat Dunning has raised her hand to serve as co-chair this year so please let us know if you would be willing to work with her to organize this year's picnic.

Please feel free to contact me or any other board member with any questions or concerns. We remain committed to making this an association for the membership ... and most of all, enjoyable for all.

Sincerely,



Geoff Tuff
President, Cottrell Pier Association

P.S. I hope you like the “old school” stationery we went with for this year's letter; I dug up this 50's-era letterhead from our historical files, from a time when my great-grandfather served as board president!