

THE PRAIRIE CLUB
BOARD of DIRECTORS' MEETING
September 20, 2017

Call to Order

President Doug Elrick called the board meeting to order at 6:32 pm. All members listed below were present unless designated by an asterisk (*). All members listed below with (p) participated via teleconference.

Officers: President – Doug Elrick (2018)
 1st Vice President – John Manthey (2018)
 2nd Vice President – Patricia Craig (2018)
 Hazelhurst Camp Chair/Vice President – Larry Bergman (2018)
 Spring Grove Camp Chair/Vice President – Erin Kiehm (2018)
 Treasurer – Bill Breach (2018)
 Recording Secretary – MP McKenzie (2018)

Directors:

Beth Miller (p) (2017)	Jim “Mac” McCarthy (2018)	Hope Little (2019)
Bob Foote (p) (2017)	Patty Ciesla (*) (2018)	Richard B. Spurgin (p) (2019)
Sue Krusack (2017)	Brian Reed (2018)	Charles Calkins (2019)
Mike Halfpenny (*) (2017)	Dan Gapen (2018)	Jean Simmons (p) (2019)

Chairs:

Buena Vista - Paula Flanagan (p) and Beverly McBrien (*)
Family Cottage - Carla Klausler (*)
Farmhouse - Deb McGrath (*) & Barb Wittersheim (*)
Membership - Barb Burton Halfpenny (*)
Nominating – Leo Krusack (*)
Conservation – Leo Krusack (*) and Bernie Dahl (*)
Activities - Hope Little (p)
Spring Grove Lodge – Mickey Hanson and Judy Illingworth
Finance - Rich Spurgin (p)

Members: None

Executive Director: Jacquie Dziak

A quorum was established.

Minutes Approval:

Erin Kiehm moved to approve the 7/19/17 board minutes; Patty Craig seconded, all in favor, the motion passed.

Treasurer's Report – Bill Breach:

Quickly, there's nothing new since last month. We're even more ahead of budget, up to \$18,000 over. We're expecting \$117,000 by end of year for the three Hazelhurst rental properties; \$124,000 including Spring Grove lodge rentals. This is the biggest rental year we've ever had. Donations are basically the same, assessments are still coming in but we're about where we expected to be. Spring Grove is ahead on income because they have 25 sites, one more than budgeted. There are no major changes since last month.

For payroll, the office salaries appear over budget due to some miscellaneous misplaced expenses; we'll fix that. Real estate taxes are lower than budgeted, and phone and internet are under budget. Rentals are up and donations are up, due to the large bequest. Our net income is \$121,000 versus \$107,000 budgeted. At the end of August, we had \$213,000 cash on hand. That's a lot of cash but we also have big expenses and big projects, and maintenance. Jacquie paid the Hazelhurst tax bill – the \$120,000 in accounts receivable is largely real estate taxes billed out by the club and paid by Hazelhurst siteholders.

Old Business

Standing Committees - No reports

New Business

Board meeting dates for 2018:

March 14; May 16; July 18; Sept. 19; Oct. 17; Dec. 12

This reflects a correction to the September date which was previously listed incorrectly as September 18.

All groups and committees should have submitted their 2018 budgets so they can be approved at the October board meeting where we'll vote on them. Bill Breach has received most of them already. The board should expect to receive copies in advance so they can review prior to the meeting.

Annual meeting – Hope Little and Leo Krusack

Will be held June 9, 2018 at Hazelhurst Camp, same as last year:

10 to 11 am will be the new member meet and greet

11 to noon will be registration

Noon will be lunch

After lunch will be the cottage tour

In a nod to conservation, the committee will encourage people to bring their own plates and utensils.

The budget will remain at \$2,000 – we expect a similar number of people to show. Last year 113 came although only about 60 rsvp'd.

Hazelhurst off grounds passes – Sue Krusack

A concern was raised that people may use off grounds passes for reasons other than their intended purpose. The pass was intended for long time club members who have been unable to buy a cottage on site and chose to buy nearby instead. We have a limited number of cottages and there are years when none are for sale.

Unscrupulous real estate agents have been using beach access via Prairie Club membership as a selling tool. There is currently a large turnover in homes in the area. Older folks are retiring and selling their homes to new ones. 25 acres of vineyards are being sold and may be developed. The concern is that new applicants who know nothing about the club are wanting to become members to use the private beach, invite their friends, and use our lifeguard as a babysitting service. With the advent of Air BnB type rentals, there has been an increase in vandalism, irresponsible behavior and outright disrespect along many of the beaches and beach communities. This is a wider problem than our club but one we all have to address.

To clarify the rules: general members may use the camp once per month during peak season of June, July and August. Otherwise, you must apply for an off grounds seasonal pass. We issue approximately 20 passes per season. This year's cost was \$640 per pass. The seasonal pass is good for any member and their immediate family and guests. When renting a cottage, the renting member and their guests have access under the siteholder's lease and don't require an off grounds pass.

A recommendation was made to limit the number of passes and issue them only to members in good standing for at least 2 years.

And Doug Elrick has proactively approached some of the real estate companies to caution them against false advertising and request their cooperation in educating their staff.

Following a detailed discussion, it became apparent that bylaws stipulate that siteholders from each camp make their own rules, not the board. So it was recommended that Hazelhurst Camp Council and siteholders consider their best solutions and create a rule or rules which the board can then approve.

Hazelhurst Camp Report – Larry Bergman

The beach bathroom opened on July 21st – the doors open at 8 am and lock at 10 pm.

Future projects:

- Red Barn stage, floors and doors - \$15,000 was set aside 2 years ago for the project but we haven't gotten around to it yet.
- New 30' by 70' pavilion by the farmhouse
- Resurfacing basketball court and installing pickle ball
- Replace benches at Sunset Point
- New playground equipment at Junior Club House
- Implement tree plan which calls for 160 native trees, which the nursery recommends planting in April

These recommended projects are in the due diligence phase. The pavilion will take at least 2 years.

The other issue this season is beach erosion. At this time the beach has eroded back to the stair railings, leaving a bluff ranging between 3' to 7' and any wave action now reaches this bluff, leaving little place to sit except in the grass. And very difficult for any sailing activities. We'll have to see what happens over the winter. Continued beach erosion could negatively impact rentals next summer.

Spring Grove Report – Erin Kiehm

Summerfest was held the 2nd weekend in August with 110 people. Then there was a golf outing 2 weeks ago with 40 people. There's another new siteholder replacing one who didn't work out.

The caretaker search continues. About 10 resumes have been received and are being reviewed. Meanwhile, member volunteers are doing the caretaker chores, with a special thanks to Mickey Hansen and Jim "Mac" McCarthy. The camp has asked Jacquie to let the VFW and Lions Clubs know about the search, hopefully to get the word out to good people. There's no pay, but it does come with a free cottage.

Reports from Camp & Activity Committees –

(Written reports for the following Committees have been submitted. Unless requested, no discussion required.)

Hazelhurst Camp – Larry Bergman – No Report

Spring Grove Camp – Erin Kiehm – No Report

Membership – Barb Burton – No Applicants to present

Nominating – Leo Krusack – No Report

Activities/Walkers – Hope Little – No Report

Annual Meeting – Hope Little – No Report

Buena Vista – Paula Flanagan and Beverly McBrien - No Report

Conservation – Leo Krusack and Bernie Dahl - No Report
Family Cottage – Carla Klausler - No Report
Farmhouse – Deb McGrath & Barb Wittersheim - No Report
Spring Grove Lodge – Mickey Hanson and Judy Illingsworth – No Report

Comments from Board Members:

Our bylaws specify procedures to remove directors for cause but there's no language regarding officers. It may be that what's silent in our bylaws are covered by Illinois' nonprofit statutes. The only time state statutes can be over-ridden is if they are covered in bylaws or articles of incorporation.

The recent bylaws changes brought the perception that we surprised our membership. Can we include something on our website, some sort of work plan so people aren't surprised, to create greater transparency between board and membership? It would be offered as a starting point for clear discussion.

Right now we include the minutes on the website but they aren't posted until approved at the following meeting, which could be several months so it no longer feels current by the time they're posted. But we can't post unapproved minutes.

Perhaps we need a Presidential letter stating what our topics for the following year are, identifying the known issues that we anticipate taking on. We could include a President's corner in the bulletin that would mention upcoming topics and update current ones. Then members could come to a board meeting or talk to a board member to bring their views in.

Comments from General Membership - None

Adjournment

Sue Krusack moved to adjourn, Larry Bergman seconded, all in favor, the motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Next meeting: Wednesday, October 18th at the VFW in Villa Park, IL at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
MP McKenzie