

**RE: Chautauqua Institution Trustees Meetings November 1-2, 2013**

Following are my notes from the recent sessions held in Bellinger Hall with most of the Trustees and senior staff in attendance.

Our CPOA Corporation Trustees also attended these sessions and lent their thoughts to these notes, for which I am grateful.

As CPOA President, I enjoy observer status at these meetings. The four Trustees who were selected by the CPOA board and then elected by property owners represent us well and, along with other Trustees who are also property owners, promote a fair hearing of matters which impact the quality of life on the grounds. They are: John Viehe, Jennifer Delancey, Greg Miller and Bob Jeffrey.

Items of interest to property owners are the only ones I report here, though I was privileged to hear about program elements and other interesting matters.

Please feel free to contact me at any time via [cpoarepresentative@gmail.com](mailto:cpoarepresentative@gmail.com)

*Architectural Review Board Changes*

Bob Jeffrey took the helm as Chair of the ARB, instituting a room layout which allowed audience members to see and hear proceedings more clearly, a welcome approach. Former Chair, Donna Zellers is a citizen member of the Board as is long-time member, Ted First. Joining the ARB are trustees David Rosen and Christine Brueschke.

The new regulations are effective December 1, 2013, so Bob made it clear to the audience and the property developers that they had choices to make as to which regulations they would prefer to follow.

*Capital Improvements, Budgets and Roadwork*

Each Trustees meeting is preceded by committee meetings which do the hard and detailed work of considering policy matters in depth and the budgets which fund the strategic matters of the Institution. The Asset Policy Committee annually considers ticket and parking fees in the context of the whole budget for the coming year.

“The Gap” is closing, says Committee Chair Ron Kilpatrick, referring to the decade-long budget battle to fund capital improvements and to maintain the Institution’s 100+ buildings. Through resolute expense management, improved philanthropy even while keeping the yearly gate price increases at half the historic rate, the Institution’s financial performance has steadily improved and is approaching sustainability. Each new building

project, including the hoped-for Amphitheater rehabilitation, must be funded completely in cash before work commences and must provide an endowment in support of future maintenance costs.

The Institution's operating performance was very good in 2013 and makes it possible to satisfy nearly 100% of this year's capital projects needs. A tight expense regime will make it possible, under conservative assumptions, to hold gate price increases down. The buildings and grounds you see around you will be available in good condition for your grandchildren and beyond.

Roadwork will proceed as funds become available from the property transfers fees. The "On the Grounds" tab (<http://www.ciweb.org/on-the-grounds/>) is updated periodically to display project status and other items of interest to property owners, including a link to the CPOA website at [www.cpoa.ws](http://www.cpoa.ws).

### *CPOA Website Improvements*

Thanks to CPOA Board member, Helen Habenicht and outgoing Webmaster, Greg Miller, you will see a fresh look and feel to the [www.cpoa.ws](http://www.cpoa.ws) website. Please visit the site and give us feedback --- which you may now do very easily by filling out the contact us form at the bottom of the home page.

Helen was also able to negotiate reduced rates for our web hosting and has broadened our ability to maintain data and documents on the site.

### *"On The Grounds" Provides Property Owners with Valuable Information*

You should follow the Institution's announcements at [www.ciweb.org/on-the-grounds](http://www.ciweb.org/on-the-grounds) which you may find by clicking "About Us" at the top of every page.

My report today would be more extensive were it not for the diligence of the Marketing Department's Communications Director, Matt Ewalt, and staff. In past years, CPOA trustees and officers have mailed and posted information on our website ([www.cpoa.ws](http://www.cpoa.ws)) not found so conveniently anywhere else.

My thanks go to the Institution for opening this resource to all Chautauquans. CPOA continues to encourage timely and complete coverage of matters pertaining to life on the grounds for property owners and our guests.

----- *These items of interest occurred subsequent to the Board meeting* -----

### *CUD Wastewater Treatment Plant Engineering Design Funds Committed*

As reported previously, the \$408,000 spending authorization for design of the upgraded plant facility was to be withheld until the commissioners determined that no clear alternative emerged from either the study we did or the one brought to us by out-going County Executive Greg Edwards.

The CUD commissioned a study of its own as to price and feasibility of sending raw sewage to the Westfield plant but such a project was found to be too expensive by a factor of three or more. Therefore, while continuing to explore regional approaches (see DC Trip Report following), the decision was made to let the contract for engineering design as approved by the voters in August.

This detailed design will provide the data necessary to take a vote in August 2014 to bond for the plant upgrade and proceed as planned. Lake quality continues to be a central concern of all property owners around Chautauqua Lake and CUD is a leader in addressing the need to reduce pollutant such as phosphorus and nitrates.

### *DC Trip November 4-6 Brings CPOA to Washington*

A group of 21 Chautauquans, guided by former Congressman, Bill Clinger, toured our nation's Capitol, beginning Monday, November 4, 2013. Bill graciously told us the history of the US Capitol outside and in. The group took lunch in the basement of the building and afterwards proceeded underground to the building where Southern Tier New York Congressman Tom Reed's offices reside.

In a discussion with aide Drew Wayne, the Chautauquans asked about Mr. Reed's statements to Greg Edwards about possible funding in support of a "sewer the lake" project, also favored by executive-elect, Vince Horrigan. The congressman supports a bill which would make EPA fines and penalties available to some projects, Drew told us, but that bill has yet to emerge from committee.

Drew also discussed outdoor lighting with CPOA Vice President and Outdoor Lighting Chair, Bill Neches. National Grid has failed to respond to the CUD request Bill helped author in July, leaving our LED Gateway Project in abeyance. Drew said he would cooperate in every way with CPOA and CUD to move this project along and also to assist with any grant applications.

Following the DC Trip, Bill sent email again to our National Grid representative reminding her that we needed a response and referring to the recent Congressional visits. Two weeks later, a message arrived apologizing for the delay and promising a constructive response.

Meeting with an aide to New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand followed immediately on the opposite side of the Capitol and that discussion went well. CPOA members were respectfully received in each of the offices we visited including the office of the Senate Small Business Committee whose staff director, Jane Campbell, is well known to

Chautauquans. Following an office tour which included their impressive hearing room, one of Jane's aides took a group of us to the Senate Gallery where we could overlook the beginnings of the evening events and the arrival of senators.

Following a tour on Tuesday of the Newseum, guided at first by Director Paul Sparrow, the group enjoyed a lovely Mediterranean-style lunch at Zaytinya, then several members rushed to taxis to meet with New York Senator Charles Schumer. Mr. Schumer and his aides pledged support for both the lighting and wastewater projects. Many members of the group finished their day at the International Spy Museum who offered us special priced tickets for admission thanks to their partnership with the Institution during Spy Week.

Wednesday began for some of us with a tour of the Pentagon, arranged for us by Tom Reed's aides. Our final group activity was a marvelous tour of the new NPR building where we ran into Susan Stamberg emerging from the elevator as we arrived. Susan remembered Chautauqua fondly.

I will no longer be CPOA President in October 2014, but will nevertheless volunteer to lead a similar tour of Washington in order to follow up and maintain our valuable contacts with staff members and congressional leaders who may be able to help us achieve our quality of life goals on the grounds. If you wish to be part of such a group, we'll look at dates somewhere around Halloween and you can join in on the work and the fun.

Thanks to everyone who participated and to the many Chautauquans who helped make our program work out so well and to our friends and hosts who opened their homes to us and made us feel so welcome.