



*Hugh Butler, President, Chautauqua Property Owners Association*

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**RE: Chautauqua Institution Trustees Meetings May 2-3, 2014**

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

Corporation Trustees and other CPOA members 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 (John Viehe, Jennifer Delancey, Greg Miller and Bob Jeffrey) represent us well and, along with other Trustees who are also property owners, promote a fair hearing of the concerns which impact quality of life on the grounds.

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.

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***Lake Quality Report***

Trustees reviewed a hefty document listing the causes and cures to various lake impairments. The \$1.5M the Institution will have spent to upgrade storm water management has been joined by funding for shoreline improvements and grounds maintenance procedures designed to provide “no mow zones” where vegetation retains nutrients which formerly were deposited in the lake fueling weed and algae growth.

No “silver bullet” will cure all lake ills nor will the process be completed to everyone’s satisfaction near term or even long term. The sewer-the-lake proposal currently being considered is designed to cure septic contributions to the problems outside of our district. CUD and the Institution are active participants in this process and will offer processing services as well as leadership and knowledge sharing so that other communities will join in the fight to keep Chautauqua Lake livable.

The Institution will once again contribute to the Chautauqua Lake Association which regularly cuts weeds along our shoreline helping to keep our beaches pleasant for

swimming. The County Health Department, in cooperation with Institution lifeguards and Operations leadership will close beaches if conditions warrant.

### *CUD Wastewater Treatment Plant Discussions in June and July*

Your Chautauqua Utility District commissioners and I have agreed to provide you with an opportunity at the pre-season potluck June 18 and at the general meeting July 12 for questions and materials distribution regarding the vote in August which could authorize funding for the plant upgrade.

Your property taxes and fees from the Institution and neighboring communities will increase on that portion which is paid to the CUD to fund this renovation which is needed to meet stringent EPA lake quality standards as well as to upgrade our aging plant. Please plan to attend one of these meetings and to read materials distributed by CPOA, the Institution and the CUD.

### *Marketing Aims to Increase Gate Pass Income*

Your property values are inextricably tied to the Institution's sustainable financial achievement whether it be through philanthropy, price increases or population. Trustees, who are mostly property owners as well, are attacking this challenge specifically and broadly. Price increases must moderate, however, for long term sustainable gate attractiveness, so fund raising and population increases are the clear direction to seek stable income sources commensurate with capital needs.

Trustees reviewed the 2008 ten year strategic plan which called for (among other things) annual increases of 3-5% of "people days" through the gate. Despite the 2008 financial downturn, this key indicator has remained flat though the "mix" of short term versus long term gate passes continues to be a concern.

You can help by providing short term visitors with accommodations which meet their expectations for price/quality. A valuable Chautauqua experience can make for long term Chautauquans who come through the gate, bring friends and family, and donate to the Fund and Foundation long term.

The Institution plans to continue to improve the quality of the experience through capital upgrades to roads and grounds, building upgrades and maintenance and hotel upgrades, all of which serve the interests of CPOA members and many others who enjoy a better experience year after year.

### *Chautauqua Fund Deserves Property Owner Support*

You may feel as if you are asked many times to donate to the Chautauqua Fund or other Foundation or related projects. Surveys indicate that less than half of owners identified with properties donate annually to the Chautauqua Fund in any amount. While this 45-

47% penetration favorably compares to similar close-held groups in partner organizations such as colleges and arts supporters, it surprised me that we weren't closer to 100%.

Large donors and grants organizations look to see if the most intimately connected audience is giving to the Institution in any amount to assure themselves that they are supporting a worthy cause. Speakers and performers understand that their audience is a connected community often reducing fees by a factor of 3 or even charging a tenth of their typical rate. Without community support both in gate pass revenue and in philanthropy, the Institution would be forced to reduce program or sharply raise prices.

Give early and often to the Fund to make your statement of support. Benefits to us directly include roadwork, gardens and grounds beautification, storm water and shoreline management and building upgrades, none of which are paid for from your taxes or annual maintenance allocations.

Giving is part of being here and should not be regarded as an add-on fee. It is voluntary and affordable by your own determination. Giving early to show your belief that the Institution's work is worthwhile and ought to be continued is a duty we owe to each other and to our inheritors. I and others monitor closely how the funds are used by the Institution, finding remarkably little waste or misbegotten effort, particularly in the recent decade characterized by better planning and execution of capital projects. Give because it's good for you as well as for me and others.

### *2014 Capital Improvement Projects*

Streets projects and repairs highlight springtime work on the grounds.

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).

The Grapevine email listserv as well as property owner email address lists are being used to make more immediate and urgent announcements.

A sizable commitment is made annually to Capital Expenditures designed to preserve buildings and grounds over time. This amount is reviewed periodically for adequacy, its goal being to make Chautauqua available to coming generations in serviceable form. New construction, such as the Amphitheater renovation, requires a companion endowment providing the revenue stream in perpetuity to maintain the structure.

### *Deliveries to Grounds*

Chautauqua's Operations staff asks property owners to be cognizant of the size of items being shipped to the grounds and the vehicles required to transport them. Large delivery trucks, especially those with drivers unfamiliar with these environs, are likely to have

trouble navigating Chautauqua's streets and can cause significant and potentially hazardous accessibility issues.

### *Architectural and Land Use New Regulations Educational Opportunities for Property Owners*

Members of the staff and the Architectural Review Board (ARB) will be holding sessions this coming summer season to assist property owners with understanding and navigating thru the new Architectural and Land Use regulations. As you may recall, The Board of Trustees adopted revised Architectural and Land Use regulations in August of 2013. These revised regulations involved significant public input as a way of developing regulations which addressed the desired needs of Chautauqua property owners while protecting and caring for our unique National Landmark Historic District. During the EVEN weeks of the summer assembly season, staff and the ARB will conduct 4 sessions, open to the public, which will assist property owners in understanding and using the regulations. If you are planning to do work on your cottage, or are contemplating purchasing a property on the grounds, or are simply interested in knowing more about the new regulations there will be announcements issued in the Chautauquan Daily, The Grapevine and CPOA web site announcements for specific times and locations.

- Bob Jeffrey, Chair, Architectural Review Board

### *Environmental Concerns Expressed at ARB*

As CPOA President, I attend many or most of ARB meetings, paying close attention to issues with broad interest. At the most recent meeting, I suggested to the Board that each developer and property owner be given CPOA materials concerning best practices for our community environment and that they be asked whether they intended to abide by them.

Specifically, CPOA has endorsed "dark sky" and no glare outdoor lighting. Our publication, "A Shining Example" will be provided to each property seeking approval from the Administrator or the ARB in hopes that we can improve our surroundings by simple advisory methods.

Similarly, ARB has asked developers of major renovations or new construction to specify how rainwater runoff will be trapped and released gradually into the soil and drainage systems, hoping to mitigate or eliminate runoff which damages the lake. We recommend against purchase and use of garbage disposals for similar reasons. Use of chemicals, particularly phosphates and nitrates in fertilizers is discouraged.



***Bottle Fill Fountain  
enabled by CPOA funds.  
Shared Space bottles  
available at Bookstore.***

### *Cable TV / Internet on the Grounds*

The Time Warner Cable (TWC) program for Chautauqua residents currently is in place and replaces the previous Chautauqua Summer Program which was discontinued. This program now allows you to select from the entire menu of offerings from TWC. You can go to the website at [www.twc.com](http://www.twc.com). At the upper right corner of the page click on “change” and put in 14722. The website now will show you all of the products from TWC - individual selections of TV, Internet and Phone, as well as various packages. Unfortunately you still cannot use the website as yet to order or change any services. This must be done by telephone at:

**1-877-892-2225**

You may need to inform the customer service person that this is a special program for residents of the Chautauqua Institution which allows us to select from the entire menu of TWC choices. The main feature of this program, as compared to their regular offerings, is that it allows seasonal residents of Chautauqua to turn their service on and off as often as necessary (TWC normally only allows 2 changes per year and each for a minimum of 30 days and a maximum of 6 months – this is changed for the Chautauqua Program). Pricing will be pro-rated for the days used in any billing cycle.

For further information please see the information that has been posted on the Chautauqua Grapevine. Updates about the TWC Chautauqua Program will be posted as they become available.

Bill Neches, CPOA VP

May 22, 2014

P.S. Bill's Outdoor Lighting Committee has been extraordinarily active off-season. You'll hear more of their accomplishments and challenges as the season unfolds. Members of this Committee are energetic, enthusiastic and generous. They deserve our thanks and best wishes as we support their very difficult long-term occupation. Surely, CPOA's mission is exemplified and uplifted by their ongoing work. Thank you. --- Hugh

### *Amphitheater Project*

Should fund raising complete in time, bids will be taken over the post-season period and some amount of "staging" of materials will occur in the spring so that work may begin immediately following the 2015 season.

CPOA expects to be included in discussions concerning outdoor lighting and property owner impact.

### *CPOA Season Calendar*

You should visit [www.cpoa.ws](http://www.cpoa.ws) to view the calendar of events and publications such as this and many others.

The popular Pre-Season Potluck at Hurlbut Church takes place Wednesday, June 18, beginning at 5:30 PM with social half hour. Details of what you may bring to the community dinner which follows will be announced on the Grapevine and elsewhere.

Remember to attend the Saturday General Meetings July 12 and August 11 at the Hall of Christ (not HOP as formerly) beginning at 9AM, preceded by membership registration.