

PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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February/March 2010 Newsletter

Don't despair, Spring will arrive-- it always has. I know I'm ready for some warmer weather and I promise not to complain when it gets to be 95 degrees and 95 percent humidity. We had a good turn-out at the February meeting and had good discussion around several issues. We continue to attempt to schedule meetings at convenient times—you'll notice that we alternate between weekend days and week nights to try to accommodate diverse schedules. I would appreciate suggestions for other times that may work better—just send me an email. Here are a few items of current interest.

Bingo! As most probably are now aware, the POA--and the Town--were approached a few weeks back with a proposal to bring legal bingo to the island and to place the operation, at least initially, at the Isle Dauphine Club. The idea had some merit—the operator would provide needed repairs and upgrades to the facility, the POA would receive rental income, and the Town would receive a revenue stream which would be earmarked for funding ongoing shoreline restoration. In addition, the general level of economic activity would likely increase. The POA Board agreed to consider a short term lease of the building for this purpose pending the Town's passing an ordinance, etc. While the deal didn't come together at this time, the prospects of bringing bingo—or other gaming activity—to the island stirred up quite a bit of conversation—some pro, some con. I don't know whether the issue will resurface, but in case it does, I would like to hear your thoughts—Is it a good idea, bad idea, it depends, etc. Send me an email.

POA Property and Facilities Review. As I mentioned last time, the POA has begun another review of our assets with the goal of determining whether we can put our property and facilities to better use. This kind of review is done periodically and while past efforts have not produced any significant enhancements, the timing and opportunity at this point may be more auspicious. I understand that this is a controversial and potentially divisive topic, and because of that the Board will insist upon and ensure that it is carried out with complete transparency and full input and participation by the members. And keep in mind, it's very difficult to change the nature of the way we own and manage our property. Nothing can be done—nor should be done—without a vote of the membership.

Proposed Constitutional Amendment. Your ballot this year will include an opportunity to vote for—in addition to directors—a constitutional amendment. The amendment has been approved by the Board and will be fully explained in the ballot mailing. Here's some background. The constitution was amended in 2005 and a provision was adopted that sets a very high hurdle for actions affecting the POA property. A "super majority" of the membership must approve any long term or permanent sale, lease, or other encumbrance of the property. While we think unintended, utility easements are included in this provision. We are approached from time to time by the various utility entities regarding easements—most of which we need to grant so as not halt or slow progress. While not impossible to have a special vote of the membership for such a purpose it would be costly and unlikely that we would get the required number of participants. So we want to amend the constitution to allow easements to be granted by the Board without a vote of the membership.

Upcoming Election of Directors. Our election cycle will soon begin so I encourage all members to consider "throwing your hat in the ring" and offering your time and talent to help run the POA. As usual, we will elect three directors as the seats of Robin Linn and Bruce Thompson will expire, and we have one vacancy owing to Bill Harper's resignation. At this point I'm not sure whether these incumbents will seek to serve an additional term, but whether they do or not, we need to field a robust slate of candidates for these important positions. To place your name on the ballot you must submit a statement of 200 words or less—such statement containing information about yourself, your background, etc. -- along with information verifying your membership in the POA. The statement may be submitted made by email and must be received not later than 5:00 PM on March 26, 2010. If you have questions about the election process, or the job itself, I'll be happy to discuss it with you—and I'm sure other board members would also.

Communication. As I mentioned last time, we have established a website taskforce with the longer range goal of overhauling our site and building in capability to do more "real-time" functions such as reserving POA facilities, conducting opinion polls, etc. In the meantime, we're working to keep our existing site up to date and useful. We have a pressing need to expand our email list—we have about 2500 members and only about 1200 email addresses. I know there are some members who don't use email but I would think these days that is a small number. Emailing is not only a much faster way to communicate, but is significantly less expensive than postal mail. So please help us update the list—if you know of any members who are not getting emails, please ask them to contact us.

Isle Dauphine Clubhouse. We're still working to bring the facility back to good operating condition and to promote it for a variety of events. We are working to post fees on the website-- but in the meantime, if you have questions or want to book the facility, please call Sussi or Katherine at the office (251/861-2433). Remember, dues paying members receive a discount!

Dues. Thanks again to all of you who have paid your dues. While not a big amount, it makes a big difference in our budget. So if you haven't paid—please do so now, it's not too late.

Next Meeting. Our next meeting is on Thursday, March 18th, at 6:00PM, in the wheelhouse. Also, mark your calendar now for the annual membership meeting which will be held on May 8, 2010, at 11:00AM.

Bruce Jones

POA President