

*Reasonable. Consistent. Sustainable.* These are the guiding principles I use to make decisions regarding our Association. Before I place a topic on the agenda, make a recommendation to the Board or vote on an action item, I ask myself...is it reasonable? Is it consistent? Is it sustainable? During our last Board meeting, I introduced this concept to the Board members and asked them to consider these principles in our decision-making process. Particularly the concept of *sustainability*. Decisions, policies, bylaws, processes, etc. must survive year after year, no matter who is connected to the Board. We need to get better at creating governance that lasts. That said, here is an update on our activities and progress as we prepare to wrap up the 2020 fiscal year.

**Financial Audit.** The Hayward firm of Anderson Hager and Moe (AHM) has been enlisted to conduct the audit requested at the 2020 annual meeting (official membership action). Rick Tello and I met with AHM and discussed the process moving forward. We are in the course of providing all of the appropriate information needed to review our 2019 fiscal year. The cost of the audit could range from \$5000 - \$8000 depending on the depth of the review.

Unfortunately, our Association does not use any formal accounting software for bookkeeping which can potentially drive higher costs. I have asked the Board to remedy this situation as we enter the next fiscal year. More about that in the next highlight.

**Technology.** Both of the Association-owned laptops have been upgraded to Windows 10. The primary laptop containing our financial and historical information, and housing the official property database, has been backed-up. We intend to back-up these computers on a monthly basis and store the drive in a remote location. In the Spring of 2021, we will be using existing fiber to add wireless Internet to the Wannigan. The primary use of the Internet connection will be for Association business and Board meeting use. However, a side benefit will be Wannigan Internet access for property owners and their guests. As we move into 2021, we will be using a cloud version of QuickBooks for our accounting software. Our current method of Excel spreadsheets, manual entries and adding up columns by hand is not sustainable and extremely time consuming. The Treasurer should be able to compile all of our financials with a simple login and Board members will have read-only access to view reports at will. Our current system does not provide the accountability an organization with our diverse operations and assets demands. In addition, a future benefit will be our ability to collect assessments and manage rental cleaning deposits through electronic means. Audits, past-due assessment collections and rental reporting will become easier to tackle.

**Budget.** I am in the process of creating the 2021 budget for the Association. The Board will be meeting in a retreat format (no action) in November to brainstorm the next budget via Zoom. This is a new process that will be completed each year to make sure all of our Board members have a stake in the budget. At the last Board meeting, Rick presented a comprehensive list of improvements and needed repairs to our assets. We have some new technology needs. COVID-19 continues to challenge our rental program. We continue to balance volunteer help with contract employees. Let's face it, 2020 has been an incredible challenge for PPOA and its

members and who knows what 2021 will bring? However, we want to be prepared, informed and fiscally responsible for whatever comes our way. I am excited for a lively budget retreat.

**Island Lake.** At the last meeting, several members of the Association spoke in opposition to a temporary no-wake ordinance due to the high water on Island Lake. I outlined the authority to create such an ordinance lies with the Town of Barnes and DNR, not with the PPOA Board. A draft resolution of support by the PPOA Board (as a property owner on Island Lake) was tabled by a unanimous vote. By tabling the resolution, the Board will no longer consider the issue unless one of the Board members requests the resolution be un-tabled. The Board's primary concern is preserving the integrity of the causeway out to the Island. As you may have seen, the culvert is several feet under water. Any future protective work will require a better understanding of current easements, ownership and past maintenance of the roadway. We will continue to research and monitor the situation.

**Board of Directors.** I am sorry to report that Bill Schilling has decided to resign from the Board. On behalf of the members, I want to thank Bill for his service and wish him luck in the future. That said, there are now two vacancies on the Board. Our bylaws allow the appointment of members to fill out terms through the next annual meeting. I am in the process of interviewing members who may have an interest in serving. Please contact me, or any Board member, if you are interested. Our Board now convenes year-round (in-person and via Zoom) with members having specific responsibilities within their portfolio. We are a "working" Board which means we all participate in the governance of the Association. For the sake of consistency and sustainability, we want to spread responsibilities to all Board members and create better redundancy within our operations. For more information, check out the *About* tab on our webpage. I encourage anyone with the desire to contribute positively, to get involved in Association governance.

In closing, I intend to provide this type of update on a regular basis. I will do my best in keeping your Board of Directors focused and accountable as we move into 2021. You can help by staying informed and working with your neighbors to make Potawatomi a great community to live, work and play.

- Rob

**P.S.** Remember, approved meeting minutes, upcoming meeting agendas and certain financial reports can be found on the website. It is a great way to stay up to date! Please share this information with your neighbors or direct them to our website.