



From the Board Room

May 2026 Meeting Highlights



Brooks Field Update

The Board received a report from the Brooks Field Hard Surface Restoration Committee. That group is moving forward with a project schedule that calls for receiving quotations at the end of June and awarding a contract at the July 13 regular Board meeting. If the schedule holds and bids are within a feasible budget framework, construction would begin in Fall 2026 with a targeted opening date of Spring 2027.

This project has a planning history that extends over seven years. While the Board has held informational sessions with the membership and distributed explanatory material in the past, the committee plans additional outreach as the project approaches reality.

In 2023, the membership voted to dedicate a portion of member dues (\$55 annually) to a newly-created Debt Service Fund, which will be used to pay off the required construction loan for this project. In addition to this ongoing funding stream, MLAA has been setting money aside to assist with a significant down payment that will reduce the initial borrowing.

Because of this pre-planning, no member assessment or additional dues increase will be necessary. The Brooks courts have been consistently plagued with deteriorating conditions regardless of repair efforts. This project implements a long-term solution.

Capital Improvement Program Report

The Property Committee updated the Board on its progress toward completing an aggressive 2026 program. Photos of several completed projects will be sent to the membership in a digital newsletter supplement. Here are some highlights.

- New equipment and benches at Beach 3
- Stoning Beach 3 parking areas
- Area 2 (beach) erosion mitigation
- Beach 3 Pavilion Roof Replacement
- Fencing Replacement at Hopkins Field and Nokomis Playground.

The Property Committee also updated the Board on several projects in progress, which include: Vaughan/Beach 1 parking lot tree planting; Demby

basement waterproofing and storage conversion; and Beach 1 floating dock renovation. Projects for 2026 in the planning stage include: replacement of Beach 4 pavilion; Craft Pavilion exterior maintenance; Brooks/Craft parking lot expansion and stoning; and Hopkins/Nokomis Volleyball Court.

Camp and Beach Prep

VP-Recreation Ken Nelson reported that the Camp is almost fully staffed, but reminded the Board that the “Extended Hours” program is **canceled** for 2026.

The Board also reviewed beach hours and rules. There will be no changes from last year, and the membership will be reminded of them in an upcoming newsletter.

The Board also discussed the problem of unclaimed items left on the beaches over the summer, particularly on Beach 3. Forgotten towels, which litter the beach and fences throughout the season, are a notable concern. These items cannot be reasonably saved in a “lost-and-found setting because they mildew. Yet we have allowed them to accumulate in past summers.

This season, there will be a reasonable period where Colonists can claim lost articles, but there will be a routine disposal procedure.

Lake Committee Report

The Lakes Committee updated the Board on its Spring activities, which include hydro-raking Lakes Wauwaukashe and Natchez Canal (with several other areas planned). Beach shorelines were cleaned and prepared for the summer.

The Committee is also facilitating required inspections at Wagush Levee and dams at Ballinger, Sioux, and Wauwaukashe Lakes. Engineers were contracted for the work.

Medford Lakes Day

The Board received a report from the Medford Lakes Women’s Club on its recent joint venture with the Borough – the 2026 version of Medford Lakes Day. All agreed that it was the most successful presentation to date.

Volunteer Spotlight – Medford Lakes Women’s Club

This month’s spotlight is not on an individual, but on the group of volunteers that has been driving our rich social life for over 80 years – *The Medford Lakes Women’s Club*.

The *Women’s Auxiliary* formed in 1942 with charter language that was a reflection of that decade: “To provide the fair sex with opportunities for enjoyment and service, mental improvement, and year-round sociability.” It was expected to work in “close cooperation” with the then male-dominated Colony Club leadership, which was separate and distinct. Twenty women were in the original complement, but by 1950, the group had grown to 175.

Auxiliary membership was open to all women 21 years and older. But by 1950, growth was such that a *Junior Section* for “young matrons” between 18 and 35 was formed. (Apparently the dividing line between *senior* and *junior* was age 36 at the time.)

Early social activities included dinner parties, fashion shows, holiday dances, dancing classes, book and card clubs, teas, musicales, badminton tournaments, and antique shows.

The auxiliaries also held fund-raising drives that gave to polio and cancer research, local children’s hospitals, and the Red Cross. And they distributed baskets to needy families. During WWII, Colony women were a constant presence at the Fort Dix USO. The early clubs also supported Colony facilities with gifts like silverware, China settings, and kitchen equipment for Oaks Hall (then a Colony meeting place).

After about 70 years, however, both organizations began to feel the strain of attracting committed volunteers, and their memberships declined significantly. In 2012, the groups made the decision to merge and became the *Medford Lakes Women’s Club*. Unfortunately, the new club lost many of its senior members in the merger, but it successfully re-grouped.

Although suffering a setback by COVID, the 2026 Club is back, and it is as strong as ever. It is important that we understand and appreciate that many events that make our Colony special don’t “just happen.” They happen because of our Women’s Club and the countless hours their members devote to serving us.

On the first Saturday of most months, there is a **Story Time** in Demby Annex for Kindergartners and under,

which includes a book reading and a craft. Part of Easter joy for our children comes from club-run activities like the **Easter Bunny Breakfast** and separate **Egg Hunts** for age groups through 8th grade at multiple sites around the Colony.

The Club partners with Medford Lakes Borough to sponsor **Medford Lakes Day** on the first Sunday each

May, a celebration that includes games, vendors, and food for Colonists of all ages. The **Amazing Pace** is the highlight of the Fall social season where teams of four can be seen biking around town stopping at various addresses competing in games, trivia, and physical challenges (with a party after).

The **Holiday House Tour and Craft Fair** is a chance to visit some of the

most decorated houses in town. The journey is made complete with a stop at the Fair in Vaughan Hall. In addition to these long-standing traditions, the Club has embraced new and creative ways to bring neighbors together through a series of social “pop-ups” designed for fun and connection. Events like **Bingo Nights** and **Winery Nights** offer relaxed social settings for adults to unwind and enjoy the community in unique ways.

The Club also finds joy in creating spontaneous, meaningful opportunities for families. Initiatives such as **children’s toy swaps** help promote sustainability while connecting neighbors, and “**Zoomies for Kids**” offers a chance to burn energy and socialize during school breaks through organized play activities. These newer additions reflect the Club’s ability to evolve with the community while continuing to foster the same spirit of togetherness that has defined it for generations.

The Club also supports community organizations, including the Colony, with targeted grants. For example (and notably), most of our playgrounds were made possible by their financial support. Recent major projects include renovations at Nokomis School and Wilson Playground. And annually, the club offers a MLWC scholarship for a graduating senior from the community.

Some early club literature included mission statement language with a goal of “...making Medford Lakes the kind of community that no one wants to leave.” We **thank the Medford Lakes Women’s Club** for their dedication, and for making that happen.

