From the Board Room

November Meeting Highlights

Here are some highlights from the regular November 9th Board meeting.

Garden Club Projects

The Medford Lakes Garden Club presented the Colony with a check for $3,000 in support of tree plantings at the Beach 1 parking lot. This is the final phase of a multi-year project at the site that included expansion, leveling, installing gravel surface, and creating a walking/bike path between Powhatan and Sagamore Trails.

The board also formally thanked the club for its donation of two picnic tables, which were placed in the Beach 3 Pavillion this summer.



Garden Club President Kathy Summerville, Treasurer Karen Lieberman, and Colony VP Property Shawn Collins

The Club also asked for – and was granted with thanks – the go-ahead to prepare a proposal to improve Jackson Park. Of concern is unsightly vegetation along Tabernacle Road and Aetna Way within the parks northeast corner. The plan is to replace invasive species there with more attractive and low-maintenance native plants. If approved, the project would be financed on a 50% matching basis.

These are only the most recent of the Club's many service projects that include maintaining planters and door decorations around Vaughan Hall.

Colony Lakes Committee Chair Jim Palmer agreed to work with the Club to help create a solution that checked all the boxes: regulatory concerns, functionality, and aesthetics. That part of the park is in a wetland and has been a long-term maintenance problem.

Brooks Field Update

The Brooks Hard Surface Restoration Committee reported excellent progress on construction at the field. Work is proceeding on schedule with the expectation that all courts will be open in the Spring.

- Weeks 1-2: Mobilization, site preparation, and demolition. (Complete and on schedule)
- Weeks 2-4 (early to late Nov): The existing pavement is milled and pulverized in place, followed by grading and subgrade preparation. (In progress and on schedule)
- Weeks 3-4 (mid to late Nov): Tennis net post and basketball goal anchors go in, and fence post installation begins.
- Weeks 5-6 (late Nov to early Dec): Electrical conduit is installed and fence posts continue.
- Weeks 6-8 (early to mid-Dec): The post-tensioned concrete slab is placed and finished, along with continued parking area improvements. This is a critical benchmark, because the concrete must cure for 30-days before any further work can be done on the surface. And the work is weather dependent.

In related news, the Colony expanded the Committee's work scope to include transforming the entire complex as a first-class recreational center. Additions potentially include a new play center at the north end, pavilion improvement, a picnic or cornhole area, a new tree line, improved and added parking, and/or new dugouts.

These projects were not in the original committee mission, but Chair Marcus Gaysek willingly accepted the assignment.

Lakes Update

The Lakes Restoration Committee reported that the installation of a new pump at Ballinger Lake is complete. The pump moves water from Ballinger to Sioux Lake as needed to keep water flowing in that part of the chain. The existing pump was failing, noisy, and energy inefficient.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT – "JUST A BUNCH OF GUYS"

It has been our practice to recognize individual volunteers in our monthly newsletter – those special people who realize that community service is about actually doing things. To them, it's not about complaining and expecting someone else to step up. In a community where the entire recreational infrastructure is overseen by volunteers, it is these people who make Medford Lakes a special place to live.

But this month's feature is about a group, not a person. Actually, "group" might be too strong for a description. When we asked long-time resident and volunteer George Wiker to describe the group's organizational model he shrugs and says, "We're just a bunch of guys."



New Beach Three Shed

So, there it is. This month's spotlight is about the bunch of guys who band together on weekends from time-to-time, volunteering their labor and talents to build things for the Colony.

Their work agenda and schedules are fluid, and it's hard to pinpoint how their projects come about and get done. They just do.

Consider the recent Jackson Park restoration. *Someone* had the idea that the underused park needed a major clean-up. And, by the way, a stage there would add to the Borough's *Friday in the Park* program and also serve as a seasonal entertainment venue. After getting the Colony's blessing (but no funding), they were off and running.

In about a month or so with volunteers showing up as their schedules allowed, the upper park area emerged in a state it hasn't been in for many years. And it included a portable stage. The new venue's kick-off in October included a Cornhole Tournament, a band, food and drink, and a community costume party.

The iconic Beach 1 Pavillion re-build of a few years back was the same kind of venture. With materials provided by the Colony this time, a bunch of guys gathered on Beach 1, and completely rebuilt the decayed and failing structure over many weekends. It emerged even better than before.

George tends to be a common denominator in these ad-hoc projects, but don't try to thank or recognize him for his efforts. He'll have none of it. He points to his phone where he keeps his contact list and hosts group chats. "I just put out an all-call and people show up," he explains. "It's not much more involved than that. Once things get started, momentum takes over."

If there is a core source of the community minded labor pool, it would be from the larger float groups like the Mad Paddlers, On the Rocks, or Scrub Pines. But it's more than that. It wouldn't be uncommon for someone to see a project underway, go home for tools, and join the crew.

And part of the support is thanks from folks passing by, a car horn blast, or people dropping off food, PJ's or Ott's gift cards, or a six-pack (of soda).

Most recently, *The Guys* took on a shed replacement at Beach 3. They heard that the Colony had a long-term plan to replace it's rotting and unsightly shed inventory with a standard template representative of the community's architecture. But "long-term" didn't sit well with the group, and they swung into action.

The Colony approved their design submission, the Women's Club provided material-funding, and the project got built with and all-volunteer labor force that included: Skip Rudderow, Jason Jenkins, Justin Sedarat, Bill Fields, Gary Mercy, Kent Hardwick, Dennis O'Neill, Ryan McLoughlin, Anthony Schultz, Bryan Mattingly, Chris Siciliano, Jake Kahn, Jerry Yowell, Matt Filer, Ed Kovalevich, Don Schroeder, Josh Elder, RJ Randall, Rob Hodgson, Lee Miller, Ron Surman, Gary Miller, Steve Gibbons, Kevin MacDonald, and George Wiker.

So: what's next for *The Guys*? Right now, they're looking at a rebuild of the Beach 4 Pavillion. After that, who knows