

Monteagle Sunday School Assembly  
Minutes of the Board of Trustees

July 11, 2020

The special meeting of the Board of Trustees of Monteagle Sunday School Assembly was called to order by presiding President Bill Cox on July 11, 2020 at 9:00 a. m. CDT.

A prayer was offered by Bill Davis.

**ATTENDANCE:** Paula Walker called the roll:

**Members Present:** Due to COVID 19 and TN Executive Order and in an effort to allow for full participation by all Board members with better sound quality, the meeting was with limited in person attendance with the remaining members attending held electronically.

Present: Susan Acker, Ron Buffington, Jay Cleveland, Bill Cox, Bill Davis, Linda Elder, Lanier Frank, Meghan Hudgins, Susie Lipscomb, Morgan Merrill, Amanda Moody, Laurie Peacock, Ed Provost, Jim Reed, Steve Rixham, Frannie Smith, Jimmy Stansell, Overton Thompson, Paula Walker, Betty Webster, and Anne Worthen.

A quorum of the Board was present.

**Others Present:** General Manager, Scott Parrish.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Minutes from the June 27, 2020 meeting were opened for comments and approved.

**President's Report:**

Bill Cox reviewed portions of the code of regulations as reminders. Bill reported that the Assembly has negotiated the acquisition of the VFW property for \$140,000 plus closing costs with a donation by the Rileys.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Jim Humphreys delivered the report in Jim Humphreys reporting it has been a challenging year with lower gate receipts against adjusted expectations, and lower rentals. We are on track for forgiveness of the PPP loan. Unrestricted revenue is down due to reduction in special events. Program funds will roll to the 2021 season unless required by the funds to return to endowment.

## **General Manager's Report:**

Scott confirmed the VFW closing is scheduled for 7/24. Car and dog passes are up against adjusted expectations. Sewanee has cancelled homecoming and family week, but 2 graduation weeks are planned for Sprint 2021 which may help offset fall rental losses. Scott reminded the board of the upcoming caucus and membership meetings.

## **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT:**

ARC: Katie Trahan presented the revised design standards for the Board's consideration. Overton noted it would be helpful to have more time to review and made a motion to table the revisions until the next meeting. The motion received a second and was approved.

Nominating: Steve Rixham thanked the members of the Nominating Committee and announced the slate: President – Overton Thompson; 1<sup>st</sup> VP – Amanda Moody; 2<sup>nd</sup> VP – Bill Davis; Treasurer – Jimmy Stansell; Secretary - Paula Walker.

MAEFC nominees are: Will Reynolds and Hilson Merrill.

At-Large Board member nominees are: Jay Cleveland, Dianne Lloyd, and Clinton Bailey.

Finance: Jim Humphries presented the committee's motion to approve the presented 2021 Unrestricted Budget based on a normal season with conservative reductions in gate tickets (-19%) and rentals (-23%) and foregoing the standard 10% distribution to CCF. The Board approved referral of the 2021 Unrestricted Budget to the membership for approval.

Jim then presented the committee's motion to approve the presented 2021 Restricted Budget. Jim noted that there is an increase in the Endowment distribution resulting from its good performance. The Board approved referral of the 2021 Restricted Budget to the membership for approval.

Next, Jim presented the committee's motion to forego distribution from the unrestricted funds to CCF for 2020. The motion was approved. Jim then presented the same motion to forego the CCF distribution for 2021 if necessary. The motion was approved.

Last Jim presented a motion to close the pool at the end of the summer period (Aug 2) in an effort to defer approximately \$7,400 in expenses. After discussion the motion was approved.

Tennis Committee: Margaret Rixham presented the Committee's motion to extend hours for pickleball play through 8/2 to 7:00 pm on weekdays and 7:30 Fri/Sat/Sun. During discussion the following items were noted:

- Extended hours helps with heat and COVID exposure;

- Bill Phillips spoke at Ron Buffington's request in opposition to the extended hours due to noise disruption; he asked that consideration be given to relocating courts to other locations.
- Brandt Lipscomb spoke about his love of pickleball, but noted that those who live in proximity to the courts cannot escape the noise which he finds stressful. He noted that rules on the hours of play are ignored. He wants the voice of the West Side to be heard.
- Ed Provost asked if the motion could be tabled while other court locations are assessed;
- Susie Lipscomb asked that her comments be included in their entirety as the pickleball activity is at the expense of the neighbors:

First let me say that I too enjoy Pickleball! While my two year cancer battle delayed my ability to join the pickleball enthusiasts, I agree that it provides lots of fun and fellowship and it is a great addition to the recreational component of the Assembly. I also am aware that at times, the demand exceeds the supply for court time, and I have offered to help find solutions to make this fun aspect of Assembly life more accessible. That said, we simply cannot deny that this fun activity is coming at the expense of some of our neighbors.

To be clear, I am not the only cottage owner who finds the noise disruptive. During the off season, Frannie Smith and I began an email stream with our neighbors to see how they feel about the pickleball presence on the West Side. The vast majority find the noise disruptive. Furthermore, the environmental impact it has brought to the immediate area is of great concern. The loss of the large trees on the northwest corner of the courts has led to significant erosion. The valley has also developed sink holes. While there is no proof, one cannot deny the possibility that the trees suffered from the repaving of the courts.

These concerns were brought to the Board, where we were referred to the Property committee. Due to COVID, 3 Property Committee meetings were cancelled. When Property finally did meet, we discussed pickleball twice. At the first meeting (5/22/2020) we were assured that there would be no further development into the greenspace to expand the number of courts by the gym. At the next Property meeting (5/29/2020) I brought up the subject of planting for sound mitigation and hours of play. The Property committee discussed it and felt that following the pool hours was reasonable, with a 9:00 AM start time and 5:30 PM finish with a break for quiet hour from 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM. Scott Parrish told us that those were the hours that Margaret Rixham (Tennis chair) had suggested. While Amanda Moody and Betsy Peebles felt that the decision should be forwarded to the Tennis Committee, I felt strongly that the Tennis/Pickleball committee only represents the interests of Pickleball players, not the interests of the neighbors. Of the Tennis/Pickleball committee's 13 members, only one lives in the immediate vicinity. When the minutes to that Property meeting were sent for approval, the Pickleball discussion was omitted. I corrected the minutes, as I would not approve minutes that did not reflect the actual meeting. There were seven present 3 members thought 5:30 was too early and 4 thought it was reasonable

I continue to feel strongly that the interests of the West Side neighbors (not just me) are not being represented by the Tennis Committee decision. Our thoughts and opinions have not been considered during any of the decisions regarding Pickleball in our immediate neighborhood.

We refer to Monteagle as a sanctuary. We do not allow construction noise during certain times and quiet hour is a long-standing tradition. The Assembly has long advertised itself as a place for rest and reflection. This should not be denied the cottage owners on the West Side who are unlucky enough to be in the vicinity of the pickleball courts. Just like the Pickleball players, the West Side neighbors are also bearing the burden of “not much to do”. Without programs, we are spending more time at our cottages trying to read, rest and entertain ourselves and others. We should not have to bear 9-10 hours of pickleball noise.

With regards to increased demand for court time, I hear you. There are numerous tennis courts that sit empty throughout the day and into the evening. We have been told that the reason the gym courts are so desirable is that families enjoy their proximity to the pool. This is irrelevant past pool hours. If later play is desired, it should occur on other courts. Pickleball clinics have been occurring very successfully on temporary courts set up on the East Courts. Why not explore this option for later play? All over the country, people are playing pickleball on dual-purpose tennis courts. This is an easy solution to meeting the demand.

Additional discussion followed:

- Reiteration of the benefits of later play in terms of minimizing heat exposure and COVID;
- Amanda Moody, from the Property Committee, notified the Board that the Committee is aware of the concerns shared by the West Side residents and has addressed including:
  - Trees were removed but they were dead trees and Property unanimously agreement on a reforestation plan that is underway with Jennifer Smith;
  - Noted sink holes had always existed in the ravine;
  - Together with the Tennis Committee, addressed rumors of building courts in the “ravine”;
- Amanda also requested information on the supporters of the “anonymous” West Side neighbors (Susie identified 7 members supporting a 5:30 end time; 3 supported a 6:30 compromise with 1 supporting 5:30 but not bothered by the noise.
  - Meagan Hudgins noted that she is a West Side leaseholder and was not aware to the letter and wasn’t asked. She indicated an understanding the views in the letter but believes pickleball is one of the noises of summer and compromise is possible.
- Others noted that all areas of the Assembly have noise issues;
- Question as to why the hours are a Board issue

Margaret Rixham amended the motion to allow for extended pickleball play until 6:30 for all days. In discussion it was noted that the 6:30 end time needs to be enforced. Motion passed with only one No vote.

New Business: Paula Walker asked that the General Manager address with Marketing the recent social media posts that did not align with the Assembly's mission. Scott indicate that they were aware of the posts, now removed, and will work with marketing.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 24 at 4:15 pm..

Meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Walker, Secretary