

CLUBS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Meeting OF July 16, 2015

Recorded by Committee member Steve Lind

Present: Committee Members Wayne Littleton, Jack Ferry, Gary Miller, Audrey Wahl (acting chairperson), Steve Lind (acting secretary), and Ocean Pines property owner Herb Roe. Board liaison Bill Coldwell not present.

Motion to accept minutes from last minute made by Jack Ferry, all were in favor.

Audrey Wahl presented first agenda item, a report by Gary Miller on his meeting and discussion with Clubs Manager Jerry Lewis. Gary reports a congenial, cooperative meeting at which he shared committee concerns (that were raised at the last month's meeting) with Jerry. He stated that Jerry was already familiar - - and has addressed - - many of said issues. Gary has previously submitted a thorough report on said meeting to the committee via email, the text of which is below:

Clubs Advisory Committee Suggestions to YC Manager, Jerry Lewis 6/30/15

The committee members discussed the option of going directly to the YC manager, Jerry Lewis, with suggestions on items specific to his control and responsibility which do not need Board approval. The Committee will advise Jerry well in advance of our meeting dates in the hopes that he can attend. If Jerry is not able to attend a CAC meeting, and when appropriate, a separate meeting would be requested so that suggestions can be discussed with Jerry. The committee will send two members to these meetings. At the end of this meeting it was decided that Les and Gary will attempt to set up a meeting with Jerry to discuss the suggestions listed below.

Improving the service at particularly busy events, such as Friday night when popular bands are playing. One problem discussed is the long lines at the Tiki Bar and Cove Bar. This is currently being fueled by the lack of a "service" bar for the wait staff. Is the planned new service bar going to be installed? Do we know when? Possible solutions that were discussed include setting up satellite stations for beer and possibly wine. These can be as simple as a large cooler/tub/drum filled with ice and canned beer. At another location have same set up with several large bottles of different wine which would be poured into plastic cups. A more elaborate option is to set up a mini bar on wheels that can be moved to wherever it is needed. These can be cash only sites to minimize the wait in line for the customer and the need for a register for the server.

Jerry is setting up the grill, beer station and wine station (cash only) for this coming weekend. If it works well, will continue to do same at busy events. The original drawings for the planned service bar were not approved by the Fire Chief.

New plans were submitted and have been approved. Until that bar can be installed, the new Java Cafe will be used as a service bar with customers able to purchase drinks at that location.

2) Another issue is the long wait for a table for dinner at these extra busy events. Customers that are told there will be a 50-60 minute wait are not particularly happy, especially when they see empty tables that remain empty for long periods of time. A suggestion was made to bring back the "grill station" offering other options for food when customers do not want to wait. In the past the grill has seemed to work well and adding a beer and/or wine station next to it would allow the same cashier to handle both. Part of the committee discussion included the number of wait staff available. Is this part of the reason tables are empty while customers have an hour wait? Is the Boards cut in payroll for this years budget contributing to the staffing problem?

Staffing is a problem that is being addressed. Core kitchen help has been supplemented for the summer with less skilled cooks. Will address the issue

3) Cove menu: It was noted that several of the more popular food items have been removed from the menu. Two mentioned were the club sandwich and the salmon dinner. It was suggested that there be some "core" or "signature" items that remain on the basic menu full time with special items being changed out as the Chef decides.

Jerry will talk with Tim about having core items. A "sandwich board" is going up next week with weekly special sandwiches. The Club will be rotated during the week.

4) The pool bar menu should have some daily food and drink specials. The food HAS TO STAY CONSISTENT. The Cove does a GREAT job with its french fries, they are crisp and lightly salted and many customers order them for that reason. On Sunday, I ordered the chicken fingers which come with fries and they were soft and mushy. Although you usually get a good portion of the fries, fortunately this time it was very small, but the portions should be consistent as well. There is also a problem with chicken not being cooked through. On two different occasions recently a CAC member ordered a caesar salad with chicken and both times the chicken was undercooked. Another member had 2 different people complain to him that chicken dishes they ordered were not cooked through and there was at least one instance when a couple got sick after eating a chicken dish.

Jerry did not know about the chicken issue but will talk with the kitchen staff. The soggy fries are probably due to

the summer cooks not following the recipe. Any comments/complaints Jerry gets by e-mail he responds to and asks that the person introduce themselves to him next time they go to the Cove.

5) Pricing: The committee was in agreement that some food items, especially at HH, may be priced lower than needed. In general, it is important to have some "basic family" items at reasonable prices on the menu so that prices on items that cost the Cove more can be increased. When looking at HH, it seems that the discounted drink specials should be the draw to bring customers into the Cove. Offering a (one) food item at a reduced price MAY be reasonable because most customers will then stay and pay regular prices for other menu items. HH drink prices are OK and competitive with nearby competition, but discounted menu selections may be overkill and costly.

HH drink prices are profitable priced as they are. He will look into the food prices.

6) When there is a special on a particular drink (recently it was orange crushes), be sure to let the bartenders know so they are prepared to make the special and charge appropriately.

Tuesdays are "\$5 Crush" days. Above issue happened on the first day.

7) Computers: The bartenders are taking a long time to cash out customers and it seems to be because the computer system is not user friendly. Are there plans to improve the software?

Agrees that the computer system causes a backup at the bar with the amount of time it takes. He is looking into a variety of solutions.

8) Cove Decor: The Cafeteria. Although the entrance looks nice with the new palm trees, the dining room still has the look and feel of a cafeteria. The committee discussed inexpensive options to improve the look, including members volunteering to build room dividers that can be placed around the register/service station and other places to soften the feel and dampen the acoustics. Adding more framed artwork to the DR walls was also suggested. Maybe a conference with Jerry and/or Bob to discuss ideas would be appropriate.

Jerry has been searching the internet to find nautical themed decorations to help with the decor. Also going to talk with Brian who has some experience with room dividers(?).

9) Fly's and Fans: Is there a timetable for when the fans will be installed under patio? Are additional permits required and have they been requested? Can Public Works do the installation? The flies have arrived and are making eating outside undesirable. Dining inside can also be bothersome.

Industrial fans are being investigated. In the meantime Jerry is going to suggest inexpensive fans be installed for this season.

SECRETARIES NOTE: a question was asked at the meeting as to when the fans over the doors would be installed (to prevent flies from entering the dining room) and Gary will ask him this in their next conversation. Also, Gary informs us that the floor fans have been purchased.

10) The flower beds between the wall and boat docks are full of cigarette butts. Someone should be policing that area regularly.

Jerry has a staffer who is policing the area and cigarette butt receptacles have been ordered.

11) One of the goals of the CAC is to help figure out ways to reduce costs and increase profits. To that end we wonder if having the OP logo printed on plastic cups that wind up in the garbage is really worth the cost? What would the cost savings be if the OP logo was NOT printed on the cups?

Apparently the previous YCGM ordered several thousands of printed cups which are still being used up. When they are gone, plain cups will be used. end Gary's written report

The committee again voice approval of the policy of a committee emissary meeting with Gary in the days after our meeting to express concerns and suggestions. Gary will do that again this month.

After Gary concluded his report Ocean Pines property owner Herb Rohe expressed his disappointment resulting from several bad dining experiences at the cove. He stated that he would not eat there again unless things change. Gary reminded us the Jerry has expressed his concerns over the job performance of temporary kitchen help. Steve Lind stated that this is an illustration of the importance of keeping key staff working year round, so that we aren't totally staffed by inexperienced personnel during the critical summer months.

Audrey Wahl raised concerns that - - because of some of the 'bad food' stories this committee has been made aware of - - the board of health may someday issue a violation.

In response to Audrey's comments, Wayne Littleton stated that he had been employed by a health department, and made the following points: some of the food problems that we have discussed are serious enough to be a threat to our license; heat lamps are not a substitute for timely service. If food

sits under the lamps too long, it will be served at a lower than desirable temperature; he also made the general observation that the buck stops with the chef, and the chef must do a better job of oversight. Wayne also questioned as to why there is no server in the pool area which would facilitate and possibly increase alcohol sales, why there is not a better system for paging folks when their food orders are ready (rather than the bartender screaming out the names), and why don't we sell bottled water as opposed to providing free water and a cup (and sometimes lemon or lime slices). Gary will pass that question on to Jerry.

Committee members agreed that we unfortunately still have a lot of problems with service and food.

Audrey moved on to the next agenda item and presented print-outs from the May budget . . . committee members agreed that 'projections' were meaningless to us, and that all we need to know - - in order to perform our task - - is whether ideas, specials, events etc are profitable (or at least break even) or not. Steve Lind again reminded the committee of his objection to being told by Bob Thompson (at a committee meeting) that 'the books can't be shown to everyone who asks' when the committee simply inquired if trivia night, St Paddys Day, Valentines Day etc made or lost money. Audrey then made the suggestion that we need to be proactive and timely when it comes to club items that would have to be included in the budget process.

Audrey then moved to the agenda time requested by Steve Lind. The points and suggestions made by Steve Lind were:

- a) Plastic chairs - - this is the second season to the 'temporary' solution of the problem caused by the county restrictions that administration should have been well aware of before the building was even constructed. Said chairs are an eyesore, and make a negligible difference in the night's receipts. And stacking them by the tiki bar simply does not make business sense. Gary Miller stated that the YC is an amenity, and we can't make folks spend money or tell them they can't. Steve Lind responded that that was not what he was saying, . . . sure they can watch, sure they don't have to buy, but do we have to create an eyesore to accommodate them, especially when the bar customers - - who are spending a lot of money - - do not have adequate seating in either of the bar areas.
- b) Temporary/legal expansion of Tiki Bar by using HI Tops adjacent to Tiki Bar - - the people in the immediate vicinity of the bar are people who spend, that is just the way it is in bars. Those are the people who we should be providing comfortable seating for.
- c) Cost effectiveness of additional pay stations; wandering wait-staff; moveable beer & wine stations throughout the patio area - - It would have been a good idea . . . if the people in the white chairs (and at the fire pit) spent any money. The station was pulled after an hour and a half because of lack of patronage.

On the above points, Steve Lind went on to comment that we should accommodate the people who are doing the bulk of the spending by providing decent seating at the tiki bar; bring out the indoor/outdoor high-tops acquired thru the efforts on the clubs committee and place them in the area where the plastic chairs have been stored. Tables are to be self-service to stay in compliance with the county, and Audrey added that placard should be placed on the tables stating "bar customers only". Steve also suggested that we do not waste money on another fire pit (as has been rumored), the financial return is simply not worth the investment. Use that money to take down the wall that confines the inadequate inside bar, and add at least four more hi-tops to what would be an extension of the 'lounge' area. Also use the fire-pit money to set up a defined stage area inside, centrally located and facing the lounge area. The folks dining would be behind the speakers so the sound volume would be lower, and the bar crowd

would get the full effect of the entertainment. Steve added that a bar crowd can get the place thru the winter, but as of now the inside bar is totally inadequate and poorly planned.

Secretarys Note: the parks and rec department has a portable stage that can be installed in sections, and it would raise the entertainers two feet above floor level. It is probably in storage all winter, so it's available for use in the Cove.

Under 'Old Business", Steve Lind reintroduced a previously made suggestion, the goal of which is to help Jerry bring money in during the slow winter months:

Sell pre-loaded swipe cards at the YC reception desk to property owners only, sold once a year - - Labor Day to March 1st - - to put 'paid-in-advance' money in the coffers during the slow season, and cards would be redeemable from the Memorial Day weekend to the Labor Day weekend. Even if the cards are purchased to be used in the summer, the money goes on the books in the winter when we need it the most. It's almost like the customer is loaning the club money, to be paid back (via purchases) at a later time. And selling the pre-loaded cards at the lobby reception desk would bring folks in the door during the winter.

Gift VIP: \$115 card for \$100 13% Discount

Bronze VIP \$200 card for \$170 15% Discount

Silver VIP \$250 card for \$210 16% Discount

Gold VIP \$500 card for \$415 17% Discount

Steve points out that his amounts and discounts are meant only as an illustration, the GM and Board would need to figure that out. Cards could not be used in conjunction with other discounts or specials. If over the course the course of the entire promotion period we sell just 150 gift cards, 50 bronze cards, 25 silver cards, and 10 Gold cards we'll put \$32,900 on the YC winter book.

end Steve Linds presentation

Several committee members disagreed with Steve's suggestion that cards be valid only in the summer, and suggested that cards be valid year round. Steve replied that just the act of selling the cards would be adding to the winter coffers, to use them in the winter would just diminish the return on the idea. Steve stated that he has faith that Jerry will figure out ways to bring customers in for the winter, and that it should be up to him to decide how to best utilize the card idea.

After some further discussion, Jack Ferry read excerpts from committee minutes recorded in 2004, and we were all astounded that the points and questions being made then are the same being raised now. Jack segued that into a reason for his resignation, which he presented to Audrey.

Audrey moved to close the meeting, all agreed.