

Maple Corner Community Center Board Meeting July 21, 2022

Present: President Dirk Van Susteren, Andrew Nemethy, Bill Powell, John Rosenblum, Rick Dryfoos, Jamie Moorby, Tim Maker, Nancy Toulis

The board met to deliberate further on the status of the oil-fired heating system at the center and potential replacement options for a unit that is now two decades old.

The board also worked on the fiscal budget for 2023 in preparation for the annual meeting and budget approval in the fall.

MCCC BUDGET

Treasurer Bill Powell and board member Jamie Moorby led the board through a draft budget proposal for fiscal year 2023. Many of the line items have been affected by COVID the last two years, and have led to substantial changes in income and outlay, making budget planning difficult.

A number of areas were highlighted. FY22 results for rentals showed about \$2,200 or 75 percent of expected income, but with expectations for more normal revenue that line item was set at \$3,000 as previously.

The fundraising goal was lowered to \$1,500, compared to \$3,200 in the prior year, reflecting a reduced expectation based on having raised less than \$300 in FY22.

The building expenses portion of the draft budget was set at \$6,500, which is quite conservative compared to actual FY22. The draft building budget was based on the board's expectation that there may be expenses for a heating system replacement or contingency plans that will require some funding. Tim Maker, who is volunteering his expertise in heating energy, said he hoped to have a plan for the MCCC future needs by the annual meeting.

The insurance policy was budgeted at \$50 more compared to FY22 (insurance is the third largest on-going expense).

One big uncertainty was the status of fuel oil heating costs, which are hard to estimate since Conti Fuels pre-buying program had not been set at the time of the meeting.

The board unanimously approved the draft Fiscal year 2023 budget, subject to refinements by the annual meeting.

MCCC HEATING SYSTEM

Energy expert and local resident Tim Maker delivered the good news to the board that an inspection of the oil-fired heating system at the center revealed the system is in

good shape and the critical heat exchange component is “like new.” Maker, who is volunteering his time to assist in long-term planning for the day when a replacement heating system will be needed at the MCCC, said that was the assessment of an inspection by Bill Chidney, a heating system repairman.

Maker added that Chidney said the existing unit is a top-of-the-line system, and that Chidney is willing to negotiate a contract to maintain and repair the unit if there are any issues. Maker praised Chidney as a “straight-shooter” and topnotch repairman. Rick Dryfoos called that news “fabulous” and Maker was praised for his legwork on the issue.

Because Conti fuel, the current oil supplier, has told the board it is getting out of the repair service, the board discussed and then voted unanimously to approve negotiation of a maintenance contract for the MCCC with Chidney.

As far as future plans for replacement, the board discussed with Maker various alternative systems, from wood pellet boilers and heat pumps, with the board agreeing it is important to continue planning and exploring replacement systems. Treasurer Bill Powell noted that the lower initial cost of a heat pump versus a wood-fired boiler has to be considered against what will be a “noticeable” increase in electrical power use.

Powell said it was a good thing “we’re set for now” but

urged the board to continue exploring potential replacements and put the item on the agenda every meeting, a view seconded by Jamie Moorby.

OTHER BUSINESS

MCCC manager Nancy Toulis asked the board for feedback on a couple of ideas involving use and rental of the MCCC, as well as how to balance community usage - providing space for free to local groups - versus the need to maintain income to support programs and the budget. In particular, she noted as an example that the MCCC lends out its supply of folding chairs to other local groups and organizations without a charge. No action was taken on the issue.

The board also discussed various fund raising events, including a Greek dinner and a German beer garden. John Rosenblum raised the interest of MCCC in joint fund raising events, and referenced events between the former Maple Corner Store owners where the event featured wines promoted by the event from the store. He also advised of their board's on-going struggle to hire an assistant manager. As a short-term consequence, he said the store will close Sundays to give their manager time off; Sundays are the best sales day, but this decision is difficult but necessary, he said. The board consensus was to encourage collaboration on fundraising with the community owned store.