



From the Board Room

February 2025



Here are highlights from the Colony Board’s February meeting. The Board meets regularly in Demby Annex on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 PM.

Camp Fees for 2025 – No Increase

V.P.-Recreation Ken Nelson presented the good news that the 2025 Summer Camp will be offered at 2024 rates. There will be no increase! He also announced that the popular Preschool Camp has expanded to three weeks from its former two-week format. Early registration amounts are as follows:

Camp Fees – Early Registration	
Camp (Grades 1-9) for 4 weeks	\$ 425
Preschool for 3 Weeks	\$ 315
Five-Year-Old Swim for 4 weeks	\$ 250
July Extended Hours for 4 weeks	\$ 550

Ken emphasized that the listed prices are for a registration by **March 31**. Costs increase with each successive month. A complete fee schedule can be found on the Colony’s website and in the Colony News. His advice: Register Early!

Nokomis Playground Exploratory Work Group

The Colony Board is in active discussions with representatives of several community organizations – including the school district – for the purpose of determining the feasibility of a jointly funded and planned playground project at Nokomis Elementary School. The Colony included \$50K in its 2025 Capital Improvement Budget for playgrounds. Realistically, a first-class solution at Nokomis will cost well in excess of that amount. A successful joint project would accelerate the completion date. There will be an organizing and exploratory meeting in February with hopefully good news as its outcome. Part of the project’s planning scope includes evaluating existing equipment and identifying pieces that should stay, be refurbished, or be removed.

Emergency Appropriation for Furnace Repairs

After many years of faithful service, the Vaughan Hall heating system went down in January requiring emergency repairs and a long-term fix. The Board appropriated \$5K for that purpose. Funding will come from the newly created Capital Improvement Fund rather than the General Operating Budget as it would have been in prior years. V.P.-Property Shawn Collins commented that funding from this source was a game changer. “Without it,” he said, “something like this would have blown right through my general repair budget. I don’t know what I would have done for the rest of the year.”

Revenue for the Capital Improvement Fund comes from a portion – \$55 – of annual member dues. In addition to being a key to long-term capital planning, it was created to meet unexpected needs like this.

Spillway Projects

Lakes Director Adam Burger submitted plans and received approval for spillway repairs at seven lakes. Lakes Chair Jim Palmer led this project design, which will eventually touch aging structures in the entire lake system. The appropriation not-to-exceed \$60K comes from the Lakes Restoration Fund. Revenue for the Lakes Restoration Fund comes from a portion - \$145 – of annual member dues.

Shared Services Agreement

The Colony approved a snow removal contract with the Medford Lakes Borough, just in time for the winter storm season. The arrangement takes advantage of the Borough’s heavy equipment and staffing depth. The agreement is representative of our special relationship with the Borough and its continuing support, while maintaining Colony independence. From our Borough Liaison, Councilman Dennis O’Neill, comes the usual comment, “We’re always happy to help.”

Meet The Incoming Colony President

We welcome our new Colony President, Will Saraceni, who accepted the leadership gavel from Steve Warren at the January board meeting. Will moves into the role with 12 years of Board experience, including time as Financial Secretary, Treasurer, and V.P.-Finance.

Will's decision to join Laker-life began in the way of many of us, a walk along the beaches and trails following a recommendation from a family member or friend. Will recalls that time in 1987, after completing his active-duty commitment to the U.S. Army. "We immediately fell in love with Medford Lakes," he says. "We walked into the old Todd Real Estate Office on Trading Post Way, and the rest is history."

A Trenton native, Will graduated from Rider University as an ROTC distinguished cadet in 1981 and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. He completed a 28-year Army career – Regular Army, National Guard, and Army Reserve – as both an armor and an infantry officer, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel. His last deployment was to Iraq in 2008-2009 in the 11th Military Police as a General Staff Officer. He returned to Medford Lakes following serious injury in that combat zone to a community parade down Stokes Road in his honor.

Among his many recognitions for service are: Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with three oakleaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal with three oakleaf clusters, Army Achievement Medal with two oakleaf clusters, National Defense Medal, Two Bronze Stars, Iraq Campaign Medal, and Distinguished Service Medals from both the Governors of Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

During his time with the National Guard and Reserve, Will enjoyed several civilian careers including District Sales Manager with the Formica Corporation, History Instructor at Rider and Rowan Universities, and the Human Resource Director for the New Jersey Department of Corrections.



Throughout that time, Medford Lakes remained his base of operations. Before settling at his current residence on Chippewa Trail, he lived in three other homes in the Lakes. It was from here that he and wife Nancie raised two children –

Victoria and Daniel – coached them through youth sports, and parented them through Nokomis, Neeta, and Shawnee. Both earned Bronze Shields, which remain on proud display at the Saraceni Cabin on Lower Aetna. It is from this location that Will serves in one of the most stressful assignments of his career: weather forecaster for the Canoe Carnival.

Service is a common theme in the Saraceni family. His daughter Victoria is a critical care nurse in San Francisco, where she lives with her husband Justin, who is stationed there as a Commander in the U.S. Coast Guard. Son Daniel is a retired Marine Corp Lieutenant Colonel, currently working as a liaison officer at Guantanamo Bay. Daniel's wife, Crystal (a Navy Commander), is a hospital administrator there.

Will is proud to say that the Saraceni Family has served the country in war and peace in an unbroken chain dating from 1863 and the Battle of Gettysburg.

Will's place in the Medford Lakes scene does not overshadow that of his wife Nancie. In fact, by many accounts, the opposite is true. She is a constant presence in the community, greeting new residents, making all who know her feel welcome, and acting as a driving force in the Garden Club and Sewing Circle. Will and Nancie are the proud grandparents of six – three boys and three girls.

Of his new posting as Medford Lakes Colony President, he says, "Having been selected is an honor and carries great weight. I commit to the membership that I will always put the best interests of the Colony first and foremost."

Please welcome Will to his new and challenging position, wish him well, and work cooperatively with him as we move forward together.