Website and Computer – Chapter #33

A SLA website was discussed at the June 2006 meeting. Gene Matthews has had a "silverlakeview" site for 8 years. It had a SLA page on this site. The discussion continued on the pros and cons of the SLA having their own website. One con was keeping the site up to date. The SLA could link to Gene's original website's SLA page which already existed. It had no costs and it already had traffic to the site. The downside was that the site was big and varied and may have contained discussions which SLA would not support. Gene would like to be more closely linked with the SLA. He was willing to put the SLA information on his site that was given to him or by him taking notes at the meetings. He would also post a picture of the SLA Board on the website. Gene had a wind turbine page on the website that Ruth provided. Gene said he would not charge for his role but estimated $5-6/per month for web space and registering as an .ORG name. Jerry Kelly researched it and found that the SLA spent almost $2000 for printed matter vs. zero to post it. It was also noted that many elderly did not have PC's so print was necessary. If the SLA went solely to the site to communicate information, it would be doubtful people would pay dues. The website could be password accessible for only SLA members. An idea was to ask neighbors about it, and $5 of dues could go towards printed material. Ruth mentioned that the directories could be discontinued for nonmembers. Then a discussion took place with the board on how they could get information out cheaper. It would be wrong to ask directors to run out to the neighborhoods every time the SLA had information to share.

At the August 2006 meeting the conversation continued on providing a SLA website. Recommendation from Jerry Kelly was to add a page to Gene Matthews' "Silverlakeview" website and include: mission statement, budget and spending reports, minutes, updates of committees, and maybe Board members names. Gene Matthews, however, recommended the SLA have a stand-alone site so there would be no potential conflict of interest. The benefits of a stand-alone site were; cost ($23 for 6 months), Gene would not charge for his time, he would set up email accounts, and the host provider would allow 2 domain names. Concerns he had were; the design/logo for the site; who was going to be Gene's source for contact; did the SLA want links to the site; and should there be SLA contact information on the website. The motion to establish a stand-alone site through Gene was approved. A discussion continued on the inclusion and omission suggestions. Rich suggested a calendar of events and meetings. Lorraine mentioned lake-related pictures and doubted there would be enough interest to post committee reports. Rather than posting minutes post newsletters and consider that the more information out there, the more liability exposure increased. Doug Klein suggested to include the directors list from the directory, but group consensus voted against that. Other group consensus was to omit budget, names, post minutes minus treasurer's report, only post minutes if it had significant information, include the Presidents report, all agreed to go with the group's consensus.

Dick Swanson had a concern of a monetary contribution to Gene Matthews who operated the Silver Lake View and SLA Websites. Gene had not presented a formal request. The Matthews have moved permanently from the lake to Rochester. Gene said he would continue to operate the Silver Lake View Cams from his summer residence on the institute. Dick Swanson personally contacted Gene to try to determine an actual price that he would need to assist in the costs of operations. Gene would not commit to a definite price but provided Dick with some of his budget. The monthly cost was $75-$100/month and that was not expected to increase. Individuals and businesses committed to donate to the view site but to date he received no monies from them. Dick advised that the SLA could; do nothing, give some money as a goodwill gesture, or up the amount that the SLA gave.

Betty Nasca reported that the SLA was billed twice a year for a total of $59. 88 for the website name domain. A suggestion was perhaps an alternate arrangement with Gene with more interaction and a better web site. This would help Gene as well as SLA. Mary Kay Barton asked Joe Gozelski what it would cost for the town of Castile to create their new website. Joe answered it would be about $5,000. Sue Griffin asked where the recommendation for monies to Gene for the website originated. It was an original request from Ruth Lavin to contact Gene for a request of the costs. Because Gene did not have an amount request, Pat Urschel recommended to pay $250 now and $250 in 6 months. Dick then suggested that Gene forward certain bills to SLA. Mick Griffin then added that the SLA's contribution would only help to improve the value of the web sites.

Ruth said that Peter Lavin did all the finalizing for the SLA site and then would forward the information to Gene. Peter updated the site upon keeping in touch with the SLA committees and getting their information. It was then noted that Peter may resign due to the number of hours spent doing this task. Ruth and Peter Lavin continued to have problems with board directors that used Yahoo as their e-mail carrier. The Lavin's were not receiving responses that were needed to conduct business. Ruth requested that these directors change to other carriers like AOL or HOTMAIL.

Dick noted the loss of webmaster Gene Matthews at the May 2009 meeting. Dick had contacted a few people about the possibility of creating and maintaining a new SLA website. Currently a single page of the SLA website was up. All files were acquired but there was a need for someone to go in and recreate the site. Dick then said that Julie Ciferni & Michelle Hess would be working on the website. Then it was stated that the SLA Board wanted to tie together a few committees under the new Communications Committee which encompassed the website, directory and the newsletter.

It was announced at the October 2009 meeting that it was apparent that no person was currently in charge of the SLA website. The website domain was established. Gene needed to move the SLA website to the new domain. When this was accomplished, Julie Ciferni and Michelle Hess would go in and add information with the approval of the president. No dramatic changes in the website were anticipated.

A guest at the June 2010 SLA monthly meeting was Bill Ritchie. He discussed the web cams and Silver Lake View website. Gene Matthews no longer wanted to be involved. Gene had left Bill Ritchie (the new owner of Gene's cottage) with the option of removing the web cam equipment and shipping to Gene or keeping them going with donations from local businesses and the community. Bill Ritchie wanted to know if the SLA had an interest in keeping this project going. The SLA collectively supports this. Bill said he would continue to request donations and would return to the SLA for monetary support if needed. Bill Soules suggested contacting local TV stations. Bill Ritchie had done this (channel 4 Buffalo had some interest). Larry Bauer asked what would be the cost of the web site. Bill Ritchie responded it would be approximately $40/month for a Time Warner/Roadrunner account. Bob Frosino wanted to know who would do the upkeep and the maintenance of the site. Bill Ritchie would do this and wanted more current information to be added to the site. Jim Coles wanted to know what would be the cost per year without support. Bill Ritchie said it would be $800 to Gene for the equipment which would be a one-time expenditure, then $200 per year for the Time Warner account to run the site. The response was good to keep the site and Mack's gave $300. Michelle Hess suggested linking the SLA and Silver Lake View web sites together. Bill Soules asked what legal issues would there be for sponsoring another site.

Dick Swanson asked Michelle Hess to research website vendors to create a new website for SLA so that the SLA could update the website without outside sources. The primary benefit to having a website was communication. The ability to communicate to people and their ability to communicate to the SLA was important.

Escape Radius was working with Conesus Lake and was a good model for the SLA to emulate. Bill Soules motioned to move forward with Escape Radius with all costs in a firm contract. Mick Griffin wanted the Executive Committee to decide on the website issue before the next meeting. The committee would get a written contractual agreement detailing services to be provided and costs with the intent to move forward. SLA had an opportunity to buy the Silver Lake View cameras and all the equipment from Gene Matthews for $800. Bill Ritchie would be willing to maintain everything. The SLA would be responsible to pay for the Road Runner connection which costs $35/month or $420/year for the feed from the cameras on-line. It was then advised to purchase more insurance for that equipment. It would cost $13 a year with a $200 deductible and $1000 in coverage. Bill Soules motioned to buy the web camera equipment. The board approved that motion. Tom Kaufman said that the SLA should promote to the membership that the SLA owned the cameras and paid for its updates, etc. The SLA was not currently considering sponsorship ads to help support the website but possibly would as they moved forward with the project. Dick Swanson said that it would cost $700 to be paid to Chris Williams to initiate building a new site. It was asked if there would be the ability for Directors to preview the site and make comments. At the next meeting the SLA would have a preview of site on a big screen. It was asked for everyone to start gathering articles & photos and send them to Dick to be included on the website. A check for $800 was sent to Gene Matthews for the webcams and equipment.

Dick Swanson mentioned that the new web site was not yet up and running. The webcams were fine. The problem was that Gene Matthews's site (silverlakeview) had been taken down. The SLA purchased the webcams from Gene and they were being integrated into the new SLA site. It was noted that Mack's Boat Livery also had webcams on its site which put them in competition with the SLA site. Dick would discuss this issue with the new webmaster and try to have the SLA site up with the note that it was under construction. Frank Bright suggested linking Mack's webcams to our site. When Dick Swanson & Julie Ciferni showed the new website to the group, there was a very positive response.

It was expected to have www.silverlakeassociation.org website up and running with the webcams soon. A message on the front page let people know it was under construction but wanted to give people access to the cams. It was said to submit events to the calendar on the web site. Kelly Paganelli then asked if the directory and handbook be available via pdf on the website. Dick said eventually.

Bill Soules asked how were notices of alerts like algae blooms deleted to keep the website current. Dick said the notices would be sent out by email, not posted. Dick also would be assisting with the website when Tom Kaufman took over the Presidency. This would allow more time to spend on completing the website.

Michelle Hess had made updates on the web site and posted new information. Questions were brought up asking if the SLA should post meeting minutes after they were approved. Michelle said she had been working on posting information and arranging the information as to how the person submitting it wanted to see it. Tom Kaufman said Frank Malone owner of Mack's still wanted to add a camera at the South end of the lake. Quinn Bellamy (SL Marine) also offered to sponsor the website.

SLA Computer Purchase

Jim Coles sitting in place of absent Dick Swanson asked the board if the SLA Question should purchase a laptop for taking minutes and making presentations. Bill Soules noted that it would need MS Powerpoint program in addition to Word for Windows. The benefits of having a computer would include compatible program, speed of receiving minutes, and the ability to make visual presentations (i.e. at annual meeting). Tom Kaufman said the SLA would like to purchase a computer and projector (for annual meetings) for displaying minutes, etc. Tom motioned to purchase a computer and projector. The board agreed and passed the motion.

Tom updated the board on the Computer purchase. Best Buy had a 3 gig computer laptop with antivirus, Microsoft Office for the cost of $707. He motioned to approve the purchase. It would be used for recording the minutes by the Secretary. Included with the computer was a1 year Black Tie warranty. The manufacturer was Samsung and it had a 15.5" screen. Michelle moved to approve the purchase. Jim & Frank-2nd the motion and the board all voted aye. The computer purchase was approved.