



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
NATIONAL COUNCIL

June 29, 2011

Gary Mertz
Boy Scouts of America
Mississippi Valley Council
2336 Oak Street
Quincy, IL 62301

Re: Properties Review

Gary,

Thank you for the opportunity to tour your facilities last week and to be of service to you and the Mississippi Valley Council. I know your time is very valuable and I appreciate your participation with me. On June 22, 2011 I toured Camp Saukenauk, Camp Eastman and your satellite office in Burlington. The next day I toured your Council office in Quincy.

OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

Your camps are generally in fair condition. Both of your camps had their gems and both had their great challenges. They both appear to have their own unique programs, site advantages and special terrain features. These two camps are about 35 miles apart.

Camp Saukenauk's facilities were in a good state of repair but the sanitary facilities were generally unacceptable and reflect very poorly on the BSA brand and are no doubt a substantial hindrance to your efforts to provide a quality camping experience. This camp offers summer camp for two weeks. Although 2010 saw a surplus net annual income at this camp, it has averaged (\$9,194) annual deficit in Total Camp Net Income for the past three years. Camp Eastman's facilities were in a pretty good state of repair but its sanitary facilities are also in an unacceptable state and likewise reflect poorly on the BSA brand. The swimming pool and the Nature Building present significant problems for this camp but the Lodge is a stand out facility of significant use potential. This camp offers three weeks of summer camp after Camp Saukenauk completes its summer camp operation. In 2010 there was a surplus net income at Camp Saukenauk; however it has averaged (\$9,499) annual

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deficit in Total Camp Net Income for the past three years. The deficits of these camps may not seem overly taxing on the council until you compare them to council operating budgets and costs of overall operations. I would expect they are an unbalanced per cent of your overall Council's expenses as compared to the total number of scouts served. You have averaged 151 Scouts per week at your summer camps. In other words, the ROI for your camping programs is very low.

The office in Burlington is a former council office. It is a former residence that was used as a scout office. It has some typical wear and tear on the facility consistent with a building of its age. Its present use is to provide a satellite Scout Shop service for the scouts in the Burlington area and some of the space is dedicated for office use for a few council District Executives. My initial impression is that it is very inefficient for office and retail use. In addition, its curb appeal to the public is poor and it does not say "cutting edge, exciting youth serving organization". To the contrary, adjectives such as run-down, financial problems, boring, poor, etc. come to mind. This facility has a negative reflection of the BSA brand.

Your main office in Quincy is consistent with that office in Burlington. It was once a residence that has been utilized as an office and Scout Shop space. Likewise this facility provides inefficient office space, poor meetings facilities and poor retail space. Its curb appeal to the public is poor, has poor visibility for the public and generally does not promote the movement as a dynamic, exciting and modern youth serving organization and reflects poorly on the BSA brand.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the relatively small geographic area and the number of existing camps in the State of Illinois, in my opinion, the Mississippi Valley Council has too many camp properties for a council of your size, your membership and your financial capacity. Furthermore, I suspect that the financial costs are unsustainable if significant membership growth is to be pursued by adding field professionals, improve training and provide better office support. In addition, your council has too many office properties and they both are in poor and unsatisfactory conditions. Too many properties results in over stressing your available maintenance resources which leads to inadequate maintenance programs resulting in poor facilities conditions and little to no replacement programs.

I have reviewed your Council's Strategic Plan for 2011—2015. In my opinion the Council's Strategic Plan does not address strategic property disposition, use and requirements. I suspect there is a reluctance to address the strategic property





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needs of the council. I suspect emotions are driving the tendency to continue using the same number of properties "as-is". This is a result of making decisions based on emotions and hope rather than facts and data. If the Mississippi Valley Council is to make substantial inroads in membership growth, cost effective operations and delivering a more exciting, quality outdoor program then difficult decisions regarding future property needs must be addressed regarding your camps as well as your offices.

I recommend a Task Force be formed to research the real property needs of your council based upon the administrative and program requirements of the Mississippi Valley Council. This Task Force should be a group that is chartered by your board to research the program requirements of the council and the most cost effective way to provide facilities to provide those programs. In addition, the Task Force should identify the office and retail needs of the council with specific instructions to provide a modern office site and facility for the Boy Scouts of America. The facility should be efficient, modern and attractive to members, potential members and volunteers.

I hope this helps you and the Mississippi Valley Council. I'm prepared to come back to your location at your convenience to discuss specifics, procedures and to suggest a road map of how to move forward on some or all of my suggestions. Please do not hesitate to call me should you need anything or if I can be of further service.

Best regards,

K. Luther Tankersley, J.D., PMP
Team Leader, Design & Development
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