



THREE LAKES COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Town Chair Jeff Bruss
Town Board
Three Lakes, WI

September 9, 2020

Dear Town Chair and Board:

Re: Support for Town Board Initiatives to Help Rebuild our Downtown Hotel Capacity

For several decades our town enjoyed having a place for people to stay in downtown Three Lakes. The Oneida Village Inn hosted thousands of guests spanning a number of decades. Then, suddenly in February of 2019, that welcoming place burned to the ground. Gone were the rooms for lodging, the restaurant, the bar and the community gatherings spaces. The fire left an immediate hole in our downtown, physically, emotionally and economically.

A year and one-half has now transpired. People have had to look elsewhere for a place to stay, be they tourists, people working here temporarily, just passing through or others who rented long-term. Now opportunities are very limited and some people just have to go to other towns for lodging. Now there is one less restaurant and one less bar downtown. Now, certain local non-profit organizations need to find other locations for their meetings.

Certainly, this loss of the OV has caused the sudden drop in room tax income and imposed a financial burden on others to fund the cost of the downtown sanitary district. Nearby businesses that depended on traffic throughout the year from those staying at the OV have been hurt financially. Other businesses that needed a temporary place for their out-of-town workers have had to deal with this loss, too. Less rooms for tourists to stay has an economic impact as well.

The Three Lakes Community Foundation is supportive of actions the town takes to foster economic development efforts in downtown Three Lakes. With this loss of the Oneida Village as well as the Three Lakes Diner, comes both the challenge and the opportunity to strengthen our downtown in ways that can be both attractive and economically beneficial to the entire community. Our town needs to be welcoming to business interests that consider Three Lakes as a place to invest and become valued partners in our town's future.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of our board,

Jim Morley
Board Chair

cc: Collette Sorgel, Three Lakes Chamber of Commerce