

Dear Members,

As February approaches and daylight is increasing I hope 2018 has started off well for you.

The annual meeting and elections have passed and I would like to thank Bob Searle for his time volunteering and an excellent job serving as president for the last 2 years. I would also like to thank Scott Cybulski and Dave D'Andrea for taking Board of Director positions.

The Annual Turf Conference was another huge success with lots of great speakers, attendees and support from our vendors. Conference Chairman Joe Fourre and his committee worked hard throughout the year to present to you a fine event.

As the new President I have three topics I would like to share with you. I spoke about these at the Turf Conference and thought it would be beneficial to share them again and make it available to those who missed it.

#### Membership and Meeting Attendance

Last year we had 90 members in our association of which approximately a third were vendors.

As President I'm in hopes of seeing that number grow to over 100. I also hope to see a higher attendance rate by superintendents and assistants at our monthly meetings.

Other than the S&R Tournament and Turf Conference our monthly meeting attendance has shrunk over the years.

I've been a member of this association since 1995. We share a lot in common and I've always viewed our association, members and meetings as a brotherhood, where I have met a lot of great people, and have become friends with many.

At the monthly meetings there has always been education provided, opportunities to network, time to view other facilities and play golf.

Also, each year, there has always been the opportunity to get involved with a committee or be on the board of directors.

If you have never joined, or have taken a few years off, I encourage you to consider joining this year along with your assistant or any staff member that shows interest or a desire to continue in this profession.

I understand everyone cannot make every meeting but maybe this year try to make a commitment of going to at least 3 or 4 of them

In regards to low attendance, is there something we can do to increase participation? Is there something we're missing or not offering? Or is it simply time?

I'm looking for your feedback by asking you today to reach out to me or any of the officers to express your thoughts or maybe new ideas relating to this subject.

If you would rather send an email, please go to our website [mainegcsa.org](http://mainegcsa.org), select the board and committees tab, click on the desired name to submit your ideas.

Thank you and I hope to hear from you, and see some new faces at the future meetings

#### Pesticide Ordinances

I'm sure most of you are aware of the restrictions and bans that are being explored in different towns and passed in some. South Portland passed one late 2016 and Portland just last month. Both towns are prohibiting all synthetic pesticides in 3 phases. First phase is town owned property, second, private property, and the third phase has various restriction language pertaining to golf courses and athletic fields. You can view the specifics of these ordinances on each town's website.

These bans obviously have a significant impact for us in the golf course and landscape management industry.

The activists primarily the group named Portland Protectors have promoted these bans with a lot of emotion, cherry picked stories and data, have a strong following, and are convincing the the town councils to go all organic.

Im sure most of you are, but I encourage you to try to stay ahead of the curve at your golf course with best management practices, Investigate and perhaps join a PMAC or Sustainability committee to see what's going on in your town in regard to future bans or restrictions.

We have tried to form a group from our association and landscape management companies to help attend those meetings with scientific facts, personal experiences, best management practices, written and oral testimony, but only have had sparse participation.

Jesse O'Brien has volunteered countless hours of his time at the local and state level on this issue and cannot continue to do it in this manner.

If he continues to be proactive, he needs your help. You may want to think about being proactive in your courses community, reaching out to him or myself and offer some input and be willing to help, because odds are, this issue may be coming to your town in the near future possibly affecting private property and your golf course.

#### Best Management Practices

BMP by 2020 initiative released by the gcsaa approx a year ago was developed to provide superintendents with critical written tools needed to maintain golf courses to the satisfaction of golfers and owners while complying with local, state, and federal regulations.

This template will document science based best management practices covering golf course management from planning and design, irrigation and water management, nutrient and pesticide management, cultural practices, IPM, pollinator protection, maintenance operation and energy. Currently there is a collaborative effort underway for the New England region being governed by the Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents with additional support from the University of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.

This new england effort will substantially cut costs for individual chapters.

Once the template is developed at the New England level it will be up to us as a chapter to add our state specific rules and regulatory requirements. After completion, approval, and publication each course will be able to complete an individual written plan for your facility through the GCSAA/Maine template.

The BMPS will be an important document for our profession in regards to the future of water regulations and conservation, energy, nutrient management, and pesticide related issues to name a few.

To view and learn more about BMPs please go to GCSAA.org and click on the Environment tab.

We will keep you informed as the plan progresses.

I want to wish you all the best of luck for the upcoming season and hope to see you at one of our future meetings.

Rick Lewis  
President MGCSA