

Weekly Update

President Anne Temte

Tuesday October 13, 2009

Swenson House

This property was a very generous gift to the college in 2002 from Lowell Swenson, a Thief River Falls entrepreneur. However, since then, **the college has not been able to identify a self-sustaining purpose for the house**. It has been the home to the NCTC Foundation, the Center for Outreach and Innovation, college high-stakes testing services, and the Criminal Justice Program and martial arts classroom. It has been rented for private parties and to various agencies for meetings. The cost of maintenance and utilities is a responsibility of the college budget and costs somewhere between \$50,000 and \$70,000 annually. Large maintenance costs, such as roof replacement, are looming.

In FY 2009, a group of college employees worked together to analyze the potential for the house becoming profitable. Was there a business plan that could be adopted that would make the house cost neutral? What was the need and/or competition locally for services that could be provided within the house? Were local users willing to pay the real costs of operations in their desires to schedule the house? Quite frankly, without greater up-front investments for staff, marketing, and/or remodeling, we established that there was **a low feasibility of the Swenson House becoming cost-neutral**. And, we were not willing to become direct competitors with local businesses.

So, for FY 2010, **the Swenson House will be moth-balled after October**. We will suspend daily cleaning and maintenance and reduce utilities to the extent possible while protecting this asset. Both the NCTC Foundation and COI staff have relocated to the main TRF campus building. During this year, the college will consider its options for leasing or selling the property. All other suggestions for revenue-neutral use will be considered.