

BPW-NC: Where We Meet and How Much We Pay

January 2015

Here are the background facts regarding why our dinner meeting prices are what they are:

- When we first approached Amy in early 2014 about moving to Summer Thyme's, the agreement was that the club would pay \$16 per person for "a simple meal of soup, salad, bread, iced tea/water and a dessert bite."
 - Note that \$16 is **NOT the cost of the meal**. It's \$13.70 for the meal, \$1.10 tip (calculated at only 8% by Amy to help us out) and \$1.20 tax, for a total of \$16.
- The agreed-upon "Soup, salad and bread" comprised the menu for only the first one or two meetings in early 2014. Since then, every meal has been a hot entrée plus one or more sides, **with no change in price**. Amy also agreed to add a hot coffee and tea set-up to accommodate our member requests. Some of the desserts, such as panna cotta, have been the same as those Amy sells in the bakery for \$3-4 per serving.
 - Amy has now raised her price to us for January, and there is the strong possibility of another increase before the end of 2015.
 - Amy now charges \$400 room rent, but waives it for us as a non-profit club.
- The new 2015 BPW-NC dinner meeting charge of \$21 per person is *less* than the \$22 that members paid **for more than seven years** at other venues (Jim E's Club 141, The Holbrooke and 151 Union Square). Two of those venues are no longer options. When we checked in mid-2014, The Holbrooke quoted us about \$23 PLUS tax and tip (total about \$28 per person).
 - We actually have been very lucky that for seven years, we were able to maintain the same price, despite rising hotel/restaurant costs for food, labor and building overhead.
- We recognize that \$21 monthly can be a stretch for some members. The board has to consider many factors in deciding what to charge members for the meeting. This time around, those factors include:
 - Everyone always has the option of purchasing Program Only for \$5, which includes hot coffee or tea (and you can often find a dessert available from a member who doesn't eat hers).
 - When we used to charge \$22, we had the highest average attendance the club has ever seen, averaging 30-35 members and guests at many meetings. Now, we're asking for \$1 less.
 - Inflation has driven up costs over the years, and this is a business fact that simply has to be acknowledged and accommodated.
 - We are unable to find another suitable meeting venue available at a comparable price. Christopher's can approach the price, but in the BPW-NC Member Survey a few months ago, Summer Thyme's was the overwhelming choice compared to Christopher's.

Thank you for your understanding. If you have questions or further concerns, please call Susan Rogers at 271-1311.