



Phil Chambers brings business background to Board

Phil Chambers, president and chief operating officer of Townsend Corporation, was sworn in as a director on the TCIA Board of Directors during an induction ceremony at Winter Management Conference in February.

Chambers, a former investment banker, joined Townsend Corp. dba Townsend Tree Service Co., Inc., a TCIA member since 1977, as its president and COO three-and-a-half years ago and is part owner of the privately held firm. Townsend is an integrated group of companies that provide vegetation management, line clearance, construction and storm-damage response as well as other peripheral services in both national and international markets. (Chambers and Townsend were featured in “Can ROW Maintenance Be Green... and Profitable,” in the February 2010 TCI Magazine.)

He has a bachelor of science in business from Indiana University, and attended Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia. He has served as president and/or executive officer of several national investment advisory, brokerage and insurance companies in the financial services industry. That experience running diversified companies over a wide geography should prove useful to the Board, he says. Actually, the fact that his background was not in tree care was, in part, why Gary Townsend hired him to help run Townsend Corp., he says, because he is able to look at problems and opportunities from a different angle.

“I have a strong financial and organizational development background. During my career in financial services, I gained experience in starting new companies and leading positive change in existing companies.”

And that leads to why he joined the Board.

“I believe that I can help TCIA navigate the political and financial climate as well as provide leadership with membership expansion.”

He hopes to put his collaborative skills to use in getting other members more involved with the association, in particular utility line clearance companies. He would also like to encourage creation of an accreditation program specifically for line clearance companies. An accreditation program can help line clearance companies better serve their utility clients, he says, and TCIA’s existing program, he feels, does not fully address some issues faced by the line clearance companies. However, he states, an accreditation

program for line clearance contractors would have a positive effect on the current TCIA Accreditation program and its members by encouraging utility and co-op endorsement and, subsequently, state and local government agencies to recognize TCIA Accreditation as the “industry” benchmark for professional tree service. As a result, TCIA membership would grow.

He’s been a member of the TCIA Executive Officer Selection Committee. He has been a board member for the Pleasant Run Children’s Home, St. John’s Villa for the Developmentally Disabled, and Noble of Indiana, which helps create opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to live meaningful lives.

He and his wife, Karen, live in Indianapolis, Indiana. They have two sons, Brandon, a sophomore at Indiana University, and David, an IU graduate who recently joined Townsend as a business analyst. In his free time, Chambers enjoys water and snow skiing.