

**GOLF COURSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
May 8, 2023**

**1. Call to Order & Attendance**

Meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Greg Fair.

Eddie Martinez		Kevin Ross	<i>present</i>
Greg Fair	<i>present</i>	Sheri Sheppard	<i>present</i>
Jane Arnett	<i>present</i>	Matt Jones	<i>present</i>
David L. Lock	<i>present</i>	Wade Warmes	<i>present</i>
Ronald Schielke	<i>present</i>	Robert Basford	<i>present</i>
Ceri Davies		Maria Thorne	<i>present</i>

**2. Approval of the 3-13-23 meeting minutes**

A motion was made to approve the minutes by Jane and was seconded by David.

**3. Citizen Comments**

None

**4. Items for individual consideration**

**a. Old business**

None

**b. Golf Course Clubhouse Financial Overview - Robert**

Robert talked about the revenues and gave a financial projection outlook for the next couple of years. Golf has become one of the most popular sports in the last 10 years and many of the courses around us are closing or are undergoing maintenance. Our location and price, and lack of competition in the area has led to a spike in the number of rounds.

We have been trying to strategically balance the rates and find alternative sources of revenue outside of golf. The highest profit margin and lowest impact is on the driving range. The plans for the new clubhouse includes two simulator bays. Players can opt to play 18 holes outside and then come in and practice for 30 minutes inside on a simulator. One person can play 18 holes by themselves in under 45 minutes. People would be able to take lessons inside with the pros, which would increase the number of lessons booked. The simulators would also make it possible to sell clubs any time of the year without having to wait for a fitting day.

The simulator bays are inexpensive to build and the technology would pay for itself in 3 years if rented just 6% of a day based on calculations. This type of amenity has become popular recently, mostly as a social entertainment. Here we would combine the professional side with the entertainment aspect. Some of the simulators we are looking at could offer other games like softball, dodgeball or baseball for broader appeal for birthday party or meeting rentals.

We are also considering softly lighting the driving range to extend availability by about an hour to provide additional revenue. We already have the infrastructure in place to run the electrical wiring. Greg stated that he would be concerned about light pollution. Matt

talked about the new low impact led lighting options, and Robert explained that the plan would be to keep the driving range open a little later, but not all night. We may try a test by adding lights to 100 yards out.

We are trying to get creative with revenue outside of impacting the golf course. We have to limit the number of rounds in order to keep the golf course in good shape. The event center will provide more revenue opportunities with events, meetings, parties, weddings, banquets, etc.

Robert talked about the age of the greens, the condition of some of the cart paths. He also talked about the potential increase in revenues due to the increased square footage of the Pro shop, the new restaurant, concessions, increased greens fees, simulators, driving range and event center. We will hit the revenue expectations this year if we continue on the same path.

Sheri asked if there would need to be a transfer from the general fund and Robert stated that the goal for this year is to not use it. We want to reduce the tax burden on the residents. We may have to budget a transfer for next year because we cannot forecast how much the construction will negatively impact the revenue. We may lose some playability. Construction will close the connection between hole 9 and 18 green, so we will need to consider the options for carts and parking. We may lose some tournaments. Construction will begin on July 10. We have forecast about a 15% loss.

Greg asked how a transfer affects the operation. Robert explained that a transfer is a supplement to the enterprise fund from the general fund to offset the difference in operating expense and revenue to keep the numbers at zero. The transfers are included in the yearly budgets.

We are working on ways to reduce expenses and operating costs. We are testing a robotic mower that can mow at night to reduce staffing hours. We are reviewing our equipment list and working on reducing duplication. Jane asked about the robotic mower noise and Robert explained that it is very quiet. The robotic mower will cut the roughs. Staff is also looking at automatic range pickers.

Kevin asked about budget transfers and Matt stated that he does not think we will need the transfer this year. Golf is more popular than ever and our course is seeing a lot of business. Council will ultimately decide the budgeting of a transfer.

Sheri stated that the transfer amount is very small compared to what it would be if the golf course was just a park and was not offsetting the cost to maintain with the revenue that it brings in. The flood mitigation potential of the golf course also adds to its value to the community. Matt added that the transfer amount has decreased significantly over the years.

The pre-construction meeting will take place in early June. The start date for construction will be July 10. All the contracts were signed and construction is estimated to take about 335 days. We estimate mid-April to finish the new building and mid-July to finish the remodel.

Kevin asked about the quality of the simulators. Matt and Robert said that the simulators they are looking at would be high end. They will be usable indoors and outdoors.

## 5. Staff briefings

### a. **Golf Course Operations Report – Matt Jones**

The last two months have been great – the best on record. Matt thinks that we will do much better than last year. Longwood golf course closed about 3 weeks ago, Wednesday was very busy - 246 rounds. We have too much play. We have to look at different ways to control the number of rounds but not just by raising prices.

We have completed all projects except for the fountain on #3. The projects on #14 lake and the ditch between 13 and 14 lakes were completed. They are removing the pampas grass because it holds snakes and balls. They finished the pump house project and VFD repair, and completed the nets. Tournament requests have been coming in non-stop, but that will slow down once construction begins. Matt said that staff is doing a great job. Luis, the mechanic, is doing a great job of keeping the carts running. We will open the new clubhouse with brand new Club Car brand carts.

The course has been taking a beating due to too many feet and wheels. The greens are struggling. Number 17 is in rough shape. Staff put together a plan to do cart path only on the entire golf course for the month of May. They will also cut a temporary green on 17 to give it a 3-week break. Wade will put in grass plugs on 17 and other areas. Sheri mentioned that at another course they rotate one hole per month as cart path only.

Matt called about 20 courses and asked about prices. They will do a small price increase on June 4. Our location is very good and our prices are very low. He also talked about adjusting the start times to reduce the number of rounds.

### b. **Golf Course Maintenance Report – Wade Warms**

Wade said that we are just getting into the time of the year where grass will start growing. He is doing fertilizer applications and plugging. The greens are the number 1 priority on his list. It is going to take some time get them grown in – especially numbers 17 and 5. They are slicing the fairways every couple of weeks to help with drainage.

Jane said that the women's group played today and that the workers did not want to move out of danger's way. Wade said that it is not possible to move out of everyone's way due to the high number of rounds, but that he will talk to the grounds staff and will get the workers to put up a net.

Ronald asked about getting sod from somewhere to repair the greens. Wade said that plugging is better than putting in sod, that way the grass will look the same.

## 6. Future agenda items request

None

## 7. Next Meeting Date:

July 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm at City Hall

## 8. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn meeting by Ron and was seconded by David. The meeting ended at 6:00 pm.