

# MINUTES

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BOARD OR COMMISSION: Recreation

DATE: August 20, 2014

MEETING: Regular X Special \_\_\_\_\_

CALLED TO ORDER: 7:02 PM

QUORUM: Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

ADJOURNED: 9:07 PM

## MEMBER ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT: Chairman Cornwell, Commissioners Browder, Carroll, Graham, Jourdan, and Leuzzi

ALSO PRESENT: Trustee O'Shea, Director of Golf Vesevick, Golf Course Superintendent Chris Pekarek, Village Links interim General Manager Bill McIntosh

ABSENT: Commissioners Girsch and Student Commissioner Dickinson

The August 20, 2014 regular meeting of the Recreation Commission commenced at 7:02 PM at the Village Links of Glen Ellyn; 485 Winchell Way; Glen Ellyn Illinois. A quorum was present.

Director Vesevick noted that he has asked Superintendent Pekarek to attend all Commission meetings during the growing season.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Jourdan moved, and Commissioner Graham seconded, approval of the minutes of the July 16, 2014 meeting. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **STANDING REPORTS:**

### **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Pekarek said that the on-site assessment service made their yearly visit. While it is not a report card on the course condition, it identifies some possible solutions for various issues. An example is suggesting using asphalt rollers as other courses are starting to do. Because the course is in good shape while so many are not this year, the service was actually taking notes on some of the Links practices.

Chairman Cornwell initiated a wide ranging discussion about priorities, particularly using in-house personnel versus hiring outside contractors. Superintendent Pekarek said he is assessing on a day-do-day basis the best use of his people. When directed to do so, he has pulled staff from one task to address another. It is always less expensive to do work in-house, and he noted that his staff has not received raises in five years. They are getting more than the minimum done, and the golfers are happy. It was suggested that the Commission review a list of maintenance needs, it can assess and prioritize the list and assess whether to do the work in house or by contract. Superintendent Pekarek said that some things can be done later in the year when there is less course maintenance, such as tree trimming. There was also discussion as to how work at Panfish Park and Lambert Lakes is prioritized. Commissioners would like to see a list of projects at the September meeting. Chairman Cornwell emphasized the importance that there be no public perception that maintenance issues are being let go. Commissioner Graham noted that the biggest problem continues to be that customers do not respect the course, a situation that is not likely to change.

Trustee O'Shea asked about staff resources. Superintendent Pekarek said that he currently has five full time employees, compared to eight in 2007. An additional \$30,000 was approved for seasonal workers, increasing the available man-hours to 27,000, compared with 24,000 in 2013.

Superintendent Pekarek said that his staff has been addressing the short driving range issue. The tee was lowered two feet during construction, which helped the problem, and a screen will be put at the back 15 feet on top of the berm, which will protect the players on the other side.

There was discussion concerning how many core aerations should be done in a year and how to read a core sample. Superintendent said that he would try an asphalt roller, as suggested by the USGA, but feels it will scalp the turf.

### **Manager's Report**

Manager Vesevick reported that July was an excellent month for golf. Driving range sales were excellent and sales were 33% higher than each of the last four years. Rounds played, green fees and motor cart revenues were all up for the year. Only 3-4 golf outings will completely close the course. The Ed Posh Scholarship Shootout was very successful, and the party was easily accommodated in the Blue Heron Room and the patio. Plans are already in the works for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015. Commissioner asked for data comparing the average revenue from a round played during an outing against regular greens fees. Manager Vesevick will compile those figures and send to Commissioners.

The golf course continues to be in very good condition. Dyed green sand is replacing Milorganite for aesthetic reasons to fill divots and ball marks. Three hundred tons of new

sand were added to the 18 Hole Course bunkers. Eventually the bunkers will have to be rebuilt, but hopefully not within the next 10 years. There was discussion concerning the advisability of removing bunkers that are never played.

The roll of the grounds crew was discussed extensively. They currently do most of the building repairs and maintenance that is generally contracted out at other courses. Should they be concentrating on revenue-generating work on the course itself? There is also coordination needed with the Village facilities maintenance staff. The Links grounds crew also maintains Panfish Park, Lambert Lake and Manor Woods, having cleaned up debris, removed trees and landscaped those areas. Commissioners asked for a list of maintenance needs so that the Commission work through them and set priorities. It may be necessary to bring in a contractor so that the grounds staff can concentrate on the course, or provide funds for the grounds crew that would otherwise be spent on a contractor. Superintendent Pekarek will have that list to Commissioners by September 8.

Food service sales for the first full year of operation (August 1, 2013 through July 31, 2014) totaled \$1.6 million with operating expenses of \$1.47 million. Net operating profit for the first 12 months was approximately 8.9%. As training, inventory control and banquet business have increased, the calendar year-to-date profit is 15%. Marketing efforts for Reserve 22 are underway with signage, print, Facebook and website campaigns.

Chairman Cornwell expressed desire to see a financial report that simply shows revenue in, expenses out and what is in the bank, along with the monthly debt service. There was discussion concerning how much of the reserve is being taken each month to make up the deficit caused by the debt service. Mr. McIntosh said that if operations continue in their current trends, the Links should be at break-even by this time next year, including making debt service payments. There was discussion concerning the appropriate amount of reserves to carry the Links over the winter. The consensus was \$1 million. Currently reserves are \$1.7 million, and will continue to increase until the winter months. It was noted that the business services coordinator should be on board in September, and can help provide the financial information sought by the Commission. This person will also be able to provide more timely coordination with the Village Finance Department, and generate reports that are timely. The goal is to have a single set of numbers used both by the Finance Department and the Links staff.

There were questions from Commissioners about the make-up of miscellaneous income. It was noted that it could include donations for a memorial tree or auction prizes. Manager Vesevick will make a list of what has been put into that account.

There was discussion concerning signage. There is a temporary sign at the entrance, and permanent new signage is still a couple of months away. Trustee O'Shea said that input from

this group is needed for the permanent sign. He also suggested that funds for the new signage initially come from the Village facilities budget, and be paid back over time by the Links. The Board of Trustees approved an additional \$50,000 in the marketing budget at Golfmak's suggestion. The new signage is to draw attention to Reserve 22.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER BUSINESS**

Manager Vesevick announced that Mike Atkins has left, therefore a new food and beverage manager will be sought. Food and beverage staff training is ongoing by current staff and via video. A new, very experienced, floor supervisor will be coming on board next week.

Commissioner Carroll asked about food changes in the half-way house. Mr. McIntosh said that there has been too much spoilage with sandwiches, although it was suggested that perhaps ½ sandwiches would be appropriate.

Chairman Cornwell asked about several items. Regarding smoking areas for employees, Mr. McIntosh said that they are being encouraged to smoke in their cars, as there is no good place for a smoking area on the facility. Also, bar shrinkage was level in July. The issue may be with the POS and not over-pouring. Regarding NFL coverage on Sundays, Manager Vesevick will look into licensing and what can be obtained on the cable system. There was discussion concerning how to camouflage the heat lamp cables out to the patio. Comments about the price of the menu seem to have stopped. Chairman Cornwell noted that there will continue to be changes, and that the Commission needs to be able to respond to the Board of Trustees at any point.

Commissioners discussed the possibility of enclosing the patio with an all weather tent into November. Manager Vesevick said that past research has shown that it is cost prohibitive. However, he will investigate again.

Commissioners discussed the current hiring situation. A general manger and food & beverage manager are both needed as well as 2-3 more floor supervisors. The Board of Trustees has discussed outsourcing the restaurant staff so they are not Village employees. An organizational chart is being developed by Mr. McIntosh, and it will show the restaurant staff as a stand alone group.

Mr. McIntosh reported to the Board of Trustees at a recent workshop. He said that the goal for Reserve 22 is to reach \$1.8 million in sales this year. It is doable, but will need to generate significant revenue this fall. Branding has started. A recruiter has been engaged for identifying senior staff candidates. The half-way house needs to be refreshed. Various levels of valet service have been researched, and the costs vary. The website will be an information gathering tool. The range of topics on Facebook is being expanded to generate more "likes".

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The 2015 initial budget needs to be to the Village by the end of September. Trustee O'Shea suggested a separate meeting of this Commission for the purpose of budget discussions.

Commissioners discussed the solicitation of Legends of the Links that will be put in the next newsletter. While creating broader awareness of the award, the consensus was that Matt Pekarek's nomination be moved forward now. Commissioner Graham made the following motion:

**To nominate Matt Pekarek for keys to the Links while rolling out the broader program.**

Commissioner Leuzzi seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Commissioner Graham noted that it is appropriate that Matt Pekarek be inducted on his own. Manager Vesevick will decide on the date of the presentation and have the plaque made. The language on the plaque will be decided by the Commission at a future meeting. It was also suggested that Mr. Cronin be contacted with an explanation as to why his nominee was not immediately approved.

The next Commission meeting will be Wednesday, September 17 at the Links.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Jourdan moved, and Commissioner Graham seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:07 PM.

Submitted by Karen Blake, Recording Secretary