

MINUTES

BOARD OR COMMISSION: Recreation DATE: May 20, 2016
MEETING: Regular X Special _____ CALLED TO ORDER: 6:58 AM
QUORUM: Yes X No _____ ADJOURNED: 8:10 AM

MEMBER ATTENDANCE:

PRESENT: Chairman Browder, Commissioners Chandler Dell, Graham and Jourdan

ALSO PRESENT: General Manager Jeff Vesevick, Golf Course Superintendent Chris Pekarek

ABSENT: Commissioners Carroll and Kennebeck

The May 20, 2016 regular meeting of the Recreation Commission was called to order at 6:58 AM at the Village Links of Glen Ellyn Maintenance Facility; 485 Winchell Way; Glen Ellyn Illinois by Chairman Browder. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Jourdan moved, and Commissioner Dell seconded approving minutes of the January, February, March and April Commission meetings. The motion was approved.

STANDING REPORTS:

Manager's Report

GOLF

Manager Vesevick welcomed new Commission member Les Chandler.

Manager Vesevick reported that April weather was inconsistent and not great for golf. Participation and revenue was down. Every golf category was down for the month, but still slightly up for the year. Resident card sales have trended down because of the rate increase from \$5 to \$10 implemented a couple of years ago. Staff has not received feedback on the newly implemented rate increases.

Commissioners praised staff for the Channel 7 AM report on the Links. There was discussion about Score radio advertising and broadcasting from the facility. Advertising is not cheap at \$225/week. However, it was thought that enough golfers listen on Saturday AM to make it worthwhile.

An additional 38 golfers purchased a Spring Special membership in April, bringing the yearly total to 243 members, up 77% from last year's purchases. These patrons tend to spend money at the restaurant and bar, and are more willing to come out in questionable weather than other golfers. League play has started, which is guaranteed revenue for the course.

Seventy-two outings have been booked to date. June, July and August each have two large Friday outings with shotgun starts and using the entire course. Staff will be seeking feedback on the course being occupied in this way. Fridays are premium outing times. Staff is now considering Saturday afternoons for outings that will tie up the course for about 2 hours. The comments received have been that afternoon on Saturday is a better time as most residents want to start Saturday mornings. Staff is experimenting with open play and shotgun starts in the mornings at a reduced rate to compensate for the unavailability of the course in the afternoon. Staff is also trying to avoid back-to-back Friday and Saturday outings. No additional Fridays will be booked for 2016. The consensus was to carefully monitor the comments for consideration in 2017, although booking for 2017 outings will commence soon.

RESERVE 22

Manager Vesevick reported that restaurant and bar sales were down due to the inconsistent April weather. The restaurant is still somewhat dependent on golfers for revenue. Revenues were down for the month, but still up for the year. The Mother's Day brunch had over 500 guests at four seatings.

Financial Report

Commissioner Jourdan noted that the decreased revenues look stark against the expenses, and hopes that things will improve. Manager Vesevick said that the third payroll in April, which added approximately \$90,000 to the expenses, did not help the picture. The May figures will even out the year-to-date results.

Chairman Browder asked about feedback on showing only Titleist golf balls. Feedback has been received from one patron and none from the staff. Titleist is the most popular brand. Other brands are carried but not displayed pursuant to an agreement with Titleist. The financial impact will be analyzed at the end of the year. Equipment in the Pro Shop is not sold at a loss, but will never be a large part of revenue. The Pro Shop is more of a service to the patrons.

STAFF PRESENTATION – GOLF SUPERINTENDENT CHRIS PEKAREK

Superintendent Pekarek said that labor conditions are very difficult, made more so by the decline in the golf business in general. Two of the seasonal staff are retiring, and it is hard to find someone in the suburbs to work part-time from March through November. College students are back in school when they are still needed. He has reduced the staff hours and golf budget over the past 10 years to help with the business. He also noted that turf grow regulators now save money and wear on the equipment.

The Commission took a walking tour of the facility. What is now general office space is also used for storage for the clubhouse. The micro greens being grown in the room off the office space are doing very well. They are used at the restaurant. The bunker sand is specified by the PGA, and is stored at the facility.

The maintenance shed was built in the late 1990s, and also serves as an extra storage area. Superintendent Pekarek said that \$125,000 should be set aside each year for equipment replacement. Each mower costs \$40,000-\$60,000. The question was raised by Commissioners about the possibility of sharing equipment with other golf courses, to minimize costs. Superintendent Pekarek said they are used too much to share with other courses. The staff performs maintenance that doubles the life of the mowers. All full time staff are capable of doing maintenance on the machinery. The Commissioners viewed the repair and grinding room. The facility uses some electric equipment near the residences as course maintenance is started as early as 5:00 AM. The greens mowers can mow to 1/10th inch. Walking greens mowers are used during the week. They are less stressful on the greens, but much more labor intensive than the riding greens mowers. Commissioners noted that it is easy to see why some courses fail because so much goes into maintaining them. A golf course must be very precisely managed.

It was noted when viewing the pesticide room that the Links was the first licensed facility in Illinois to handle such materials.

The irrigation control system is now run via internet and phone controls, as well as in person. It is tied into a weather system that shows loss of moisture. The system provides much more precise and ease of control than the old manual system.

A portion of the original building was shared with the police department until the 1990s, and was built in the 1960s originally to be used as a civil bomb shelter. The basement is below the flood plain, but is used now only for equipment storage, and there has been no damage in recent flood events.

Staff has reconstructed a green house for produce to be used at Reserve 22. This program is being expanded, and staff will be trying to produce \$10,000 worth of food for a \$2,000 investment. The green house has thermal heat, so can be used in the winter. Bee hives have just been introduced this year. They are fairly labor intensive, but will be able to produce honey and the much-desired honey combs for the restaurant.

Superintendent Pekarek showed a sample of poa grass on the 5th green. It is an acceptable grass, but dies easily if too hot or cold. It shows up on the 5th hole because it slopes away from the sun and gets wet. There was some discussion concerning the use of fans; however, they would be too much in the way of play.

Manager Vesevick noted that the Links' staff does things that other courses contract out, and the grounds staff does much more than cut grass. Two-thirds of the staff have been at the Links since 2008, some much longer, and Village is very fortunate to have this resource. The crew accomplishes the tasks on the job board with little, if any, direction. Many of the seasonal employees work two full time jobs.

The Commissioners had many positive comments on the staff and the organization. It was amazing to see what is behind the curtain that makes it all work.

TRUSTEE LIAISON REPORT

None

OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be Friday, June 17, 2016 at 7:00 AM at the Links clubhouse.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Jourdan moved, and Commissioner Graham seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 AM.

Submitted by Karen Blake, Recording Secretary
Reviewed by General Manager Jeff Vesevick