

**Minutes of the Waukegan Park District  
Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners**

**Golf Advisory Committee Meeting  
December 1, 2016**

The Board of Commissioners of the Waukegan Park District and staff met for a Special Meeting to hold a Golf Advisory Committee Meeting on December 1, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. at the Bonnie Brook Clubhouse, 2800 North Lewis Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois.

**I. Call to Order**

Acting Chairman Bill Sarocka called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and directed the roll.

**II. Roll Call**

Only Commissioner Bill Sarocka was present. GolfVisions staff present were Dirk Skelley, John LaFoone and Ralph Sabatini. The staff and members present introduced themselves. Waukegan Park District staff present were Greg Petry and Jim Glogovsky.

Due to lack of a quorum, no official board business was conducted.

**Dirk Skelley**

Dirk spoke about a new, three- year trend weather impact report for 2014, 2015 and 2016. Should be helpful, will contain information such as “non-playable” and “above average” days. Dirk reviewed the report, noting that the weather is tied directly to income at the course. Significant weather in the past year (heat in this case) has caused lower income. This report reverses the theory about golf play trending down. Some courses are more impacted depending on senior players. It appears that the younger players are actually playing more often. He noted that junior play is up and that Bonnie Brook is trending nicely in an upward direction. He stated that the course is in great shape, and John has stepped up as the pro. Dirk feels that Bonnie Brook is the nicest course in the GolfVisions portfolio.

Greg Petry noted that the current team with John, Ralph and Greg is the best. They are responsive to needs and have brought in customers. Great customer service is now the norm and it shows that there is now an A+ team working there. Ralph talked about how the employees work hard and take ownership of the facility. They are consistently improving things for the customers. Greg noted that is the result of great leadership.

Commissioner Sarocka noted that sometimes they are considered the coach, but he feels they are more like the quarterback and that they do a phenomenal job. Ralph said he feels an obligation to both the park district and to GolfVisions and he wants everyone

to succeed. He personally takes pride in his work, and in his staff. Ralph noted that he would share these compliments with staff.

### **John LaFoone**

Overall, up 200 rounds from last year, revenue the highest it has been since 2013. Good year, with new events including the nine drive and wine and golf. Programmed with 115 kids in junior golf, up from 92 last year. More twilight passes were sold and many of them were for Hispanic males here in Waukegan. He is encouraged by this new demographic. New outings were held and were referred by word of mouth.

Financially, we are about \$2000 higher this year in net profit at Greenshire. Their Wednesday Ladies League is the largest with about 70 members.

### **Greg Benson**

Greg was not in attendance. His notes indicated that the heat caused stress on the course. There are 50-60 trees left to be removed from the current contract. There have already been about 190 trees removed so far. They noted that a contractor is removing the trees and stumps, as their price is excellent, at less cost than it can be done in house for.

Discussion turned to trees and damage and what is happening in the local area. Commissioner Sarocka then discussed the extension of the hazard areas around #12. He has received complaints about that. He said it is one of the hardest driving holes in Lake County. Discussion followed. Other than that, Bill said that there are many compliments about the course condition.

There was a request for an automatic coffeemaker with a timer on it so that golfers could help themselves to a cup of coffee. Ralph noted that they should have something like that in April.

Also discussed was the par 3 holes and a request to vary the distance on these holes. There was discussion about the pros and cons of doing this.

### **Ralph Sabatini**

Discussion then turned to quinceaneras, with Ralph noting that they are one of the most popular events. The menu was redesigned and made more customer friendly.

Ralph noted that there was seamless transition with John taking over, and that represents good teamwork. He indicated that the scheduling has made everything positive, with happy employees and customers. In addition, he noted that the radius of guests has expanded. There are more wedding leads and that of last 15, three are possible and one is booked. This is also building the club and revenue.

He said that they work with customers, no matter what their budget. He said staff are still happy about the improvements the park district has made, such as the new tiles in the hallway and the sign.

He then reviewed the recent events, and noted that they are constantly planning upcoming events. He complimented the cooks and staff on how they plan for events. He enjoys the business and his coworkers.

Discussion followed.

Ralph closed by saying they want to have more new events and continue to build on their successes.

Commissioner Sarocka said he is excited to see the numbers for the golf operations and noted that he and the board see his hard work. He expressed appreciation to Ralph on behalf of the board.

Jack Bradbury requested seasoned homemade chips that are sold at Bittersweet. Commissioner Sarocka noted that Shepherd's Crook has a special brat that is delicious and he'd like to see something like that at Bonnie Brook.

Comment was received about the phone number that you can call to order from the turn on the course. He said that it never gets answered. Ralph agreed that there needs to be someone answering that line, so they will work to make that happen.

### **III. Questions and/or Comments**

Jack Bradbury noted that the seniors are happy and that there has been a bigger crowd for the Wednesday scramble. Sandy Bradbury noted that when they do come to Bonnie Brook, they don't see a lot of other golfers. Greg Petry indicated we had tried to attract golfers using various methods such as coupons, but it just has not made a difference. Ralph talked about possible reasons why perhaps golfers don't come for dinner or other events.

Jim Glogovsky said that it is set up to replace the hallway tile by January 2nd, 2017 and he feels that it will be a nice change. He also said that the building needs some work, and that you may be seeing painters and other workers to keep the building well maintained. Ralph said that new chairs are needed and that we can do one of two things each year to show the customers we care. Ralph said he would like to see a hardwood floor in the banquet room.

Commissioner Sarocka noted that from being on the board for ten years, we spend a lot of capital money on the facility. He said we appreciate Bonnie Brook as one of the jewels of the park district. We want to keep it nice and we appreciate the staff who work there. Great job by all!

#### **IV. Next Meeting**

The next meeting date is May 4, 2017. Commissioner Sarocka wished everyone happy holidays.

#### **V. Adjournment**

**Motion by Commissioner Sarocka to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

James Glogovsky  
Acting Secretary

JFG:ss