

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

**Golf Advisory Committee Meeting
May 2, 2019**

The Board of Commissioners of the Waukegan Park District and staff met for a Special Meeting to hold a Golf Advisory Committee Meeting on May 8, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. at the Bonnie Brook Clubhouse, 2800 North Lewis Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Janet Kilkelly called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and directed the roll.

II. Roll Call

Commissioner Janet Kilkelly was present and welcomed those present. GolfVisions staff present were Dirk Skelley, Greg Benson, and Mike Jesse. The staff and members present introduced themselves. Waukegan Park District staff present were Jay Lerner and Jon Beckmann.

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

GolfVisions Update

John Miles – Senior Vice President with GolfVisions

John introduced himself and described his role with GolfVisions and the park district. He noted he is well versed in working with park districts and has transitioned with Dirk's departure.

He noted that he is excited to be working with us, and asked that if anyone has ideas, please share them with him. He noted that Dirk has retired and that he and Dirk share many of the same philosophies.

His golf update focused on the new fiscal year, and that they are expecting a good year with both golf and the restaurant. He noted that there are some ongoing projects as well. The food attracts both golfers and non-golfers.

He then spoke about the weather and noted how it seems to be set in a pattern, and that they are hoping for some dry weather for a change.

Chairman Kilkelly welcomed John Miles.

Mike Jesse

Mike greeted those in attendance. He noted that they retained 29 outings, and added the biggest, which is St. Bede,'s with 44 players. There were two new outings, COOL Ministries and the Shanty at 140 players, all day outing.

He noted that they had enhanced the program on the golf simulator downstairs. It is called the Sky Track system and allows you to play over 170,000 different courses. Has gone over well this year and received good feedback. You can even use your own tees while playing the simulator. There will be a lot more of the blackout section and have cleaned up the basement as well, so there is more room.

They made a change and are not using Great Green Fees this year. They are trying something different, with sign-up sheets and the use of social media. We are trying to get more people on the signup and looking at the website. We are getting feedback from those who book parties, too. There is a Facebook posting person named Dom through Course Trends as well. Green fees this year went up one dollar, and cart fees increased two dollars.

For Greenshire, there will be two glow golf games per month for June, July, and August, perhaps in September depending on the weather. The first one is May 31st, and there are already four groups signed up for that.

Food and beverage did 185 events, outside of the weekly fish fry, tacos and chill, and grill. Overall, they went up 7% on food items and goods, and \$1 on the tacos and chill and grill.

Golf leagues only change is that the cart fees increased by \$1. The Waukegan girls' high school golf coach will be here tonight to review some of their programs. We have First Tee, and it is available via the website. It runs from July 9th until August 1st. We will work with the coach to make the programs as successful as possible.

Mike continued, stating that he did a lot of Junior Golf. He reviews the rules with them and has dinners following the golf. Mike has no problem running the program for the high school coach and will adjust times, etc. for the program to make it more interesting. It is a five-week program. First Tee July 9 until August 1, maybe the dates are not convenient. The age groups are 6-9 and 10-13, the cost is \$99. Mike talked about how the programs were run in Milwaukee, at the course he came from before joining GolfVisions at Bonnie Brook. The program will be promoted in the pro shop and online.

Mike continued, and said that it would also be advertised in the Waukegan paper. Jay spoke about the price, and noted that for other programs, they have found that price is important for a program to be successful.

At this point, the high school girls' golf coach was introduced to the group and he discussed some ideas he has for making the programs work well. He has been teaching at the Waukegan High School for the last 25 years. He noted that he would like to attempt to have the youth at Greenshire and rehab the program, using First Tee or another method.

He discussed incorporating into current programs a day of golf just to introduce them to the sport. He thought this would be nice for kids who have not been exposed to the sport. He and Shane (boy's golf coach) and trying to work together and attract more youth to their program. He has shared it with middle school youth, hoping they will stay interested and participate when they get to high school. He noted that he appreciates the support from the district.

He feels we could put a program in place in the future, and influence every third through eighth-grader in the district by introducing them to golf. Put a club in their hand and provide some information to instill interest. Only would be 30 minutes a day or so.

Chairman Kilkelly is excited about the partnership and is glad to hear they are working on some ideas for the kids to be exposed to golf. Executive Director Lerner spoke about incorporating this into the camp programs. More discussion will be had about partnering to make this a reality.

The coach continued, stating that two of his golfers did not play until they were juniors and have done well despite a late start. One of them will be playing in college next year, so that is exciting! This is a testament to working to introduce them to the sport.

He noted that golf is a sport that opens avenues for these kids and they can play for their whole life, unlike some other sports. Director Lerner said that we would work out an agreement and make this partnership happen. The simulator was mentioned as a great tool to use for the students as well. He hopes to grow the program

Greg Benson

Greg greeted the group and noted that all have been on the course this year. He said that the course fared well over the winter. He hopes all are enjoying the course as they have worked hard over the past couple of years to get the course in shape.

Greg noted that there was a personnel change, as Rafael Murillo left his department. He was able to move a mechanic into the position and then could fill the other position with his mechanic who is now the mechanic/assistant. He also hired back a previous employee, so less training is needed, and he is in good shape staff wise.

Greg stated that 50 trees were removed and that the project is near finished. There is still some stumping and cleanup, but the majority of the work is done.

Continuing, he noted that the Greenshire project has not yet been started. He also said that this winter they had an inspection of the underground storage tank at Bonnie Brook. The system failed, and we had the opportunity to put in an above ground storage tank, which should alleviate many concerns. The fire marshal approved it just today. This eliminates a lot of extra work for Greg, as it had to be certified every season.

He said that for the past 10 years, they have been using rollers on the greens and they now have a side-to-side roller, which does a much better job. He is also planning to get a weather station that will be much better to work with for the irrigation system. He believes it will be exciting and will help lower water use by 33%. It works with all the software we already have.

We will also be replacing a triplex with 270,000 miles and getting a new piece of equipment for the tees. In addition, to be replaced at Greenshire is a ride-on type blower. A high-velocity blower will be purchased for use at Bonnie Brook. Finally, he noted that the bridge erosion project is completed.

Greg hopes to get back to tree pruning next year. At Greenshire, work will begin on the fuel pumps soon.

Jon Beckmann

Jon noted that some improvements had been made on the electrical in the kitchen and hallways; we were underpowered and using extension cords, etc. Should now be in good shape for his setups. Also improving kitchen equipment. Made some repairs and updates in the pro shop, and have a few more to make. We are having a facility assessment for Greg's maintenance building. We will let the board know the cost and plan for getting it done.

The cart paths on #10 and #12 will be presented for approval for repair. There have been some upgrades to the equipment in Bonnie Brook, such as electronics, computers. etc.

Jon then presented patio upgrade designs to consider. These were done with the thought in mind of not obstructing the view of the course. The cart path pattern would need to be altered to be out of the way. The gazebo will be torn down and a new one built. The new one would be ADA accessible and could even be the starter headquarters. It could serve as additional dining for a wedding if needed. Wanted to consider adding an outdoor bar with more seating and instead of asphalt, use textured colored concrete. Minimal downlighting or rope lighting would be added as an accent, along with a movable stage and possible a movable fireplace. Those were some ideas, and input and other ideas would be welcomed.

Jon noted that the project would likely be phased in and we would work with Greg Benson on timing. Depending on bids, we may be able to do some things this year. Concerns were presented about using the stage close to the course and size of the stage. It would be low to the ground and be placed out of the way of the golfers so that the view is not compromised. Reassurances were made about the flexibility of the stage so that it would not cause any issues. Cart paths and traffic would not be intruded upon either. Extensive discussion ensued, including about security for the bar and other issues or possibilities for the renovated space.

The conversation turned to a discussion about bugs in the outside space, as well as an awning to protect from the sun in the evenings. In closing, Jon said that other ideas could be passed on to him.

Jon then mentioned that all members were due to be reappointed to the committee and asked if they still wanted to serve. All did and it was determined that there was a vacancy, as Walter Lundquist is no longer on the committee.

Jon discussed an issue that was happening with the toilet paper, and it was solved by installing the rolls in the proper manner.

Jay Lerner

Jay began with an update on the status of the Rose Park project. Demolition has been done, and that area will become a patio area with splash pads. Work on new construction will begin in June.

We received a grant for King Park, and work will begin there soon.

Jay continued, stating that he has been working with staff for a couple of years to look into ways to renovate some of the existing facilities and in general, spruce them up, or modernize them.

Elections for the park board took place in April, with George Bridges winning another 6-year term, Jeremiah Johnson winning another 6-year term and Jacqueline Herrera Giron winning the two-year term that was previously Pat Foley's.

Jay talked about the SportsPark programming along with all the preparation underway for summer.

III. Questions and/or Comments

There were no questions.

IV. Next Meeting

The next meeting date is scheduled for Thursday, December 5, 2019 at 6 pm.

V. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Kilkelly to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Beckmann
Acting Secretary

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