



WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

1324 GOLF ROAD • WAUKEGAN, IL 60087-4831 • PHONE (847) BIG-PARK • PHONE (847) 244-7275 • WWW.WAUKEGANPARKS.ORG

April 16, 2021

Dear Golf Advisory Committee:

Due to the current ongoing pandemic, and at the request of the Advisory Committee, we will be providing our May 2021 meeting update to you and our residents with this letter. If you have any questions, you can contact Mike Jesse at 847-360-4735 or mjesse@waukegangolf.org or Jon Beckmann, Superintendent of Finance, at 847-360-4715 or jbeckmann@waukeganparks.org for any input related to golf operation services.

As we reflect on the FY 20/21 golf season, one might describe it as chaotic or controlled chaos with a high priority on being able to adjust. As the new fiscal year took off, the operation and maintenance areas had just come off an approximately 45-day shutdown, whereby staff remained working on grounds, but were not able to service or produce revenues due to Governor Pritzker and the IDPH shutting down all non-essential operations through the State of Illinois. Despite being shut down, the Waukegan Park District, in coordination with GolfVisions, allowed the staff to remain employed at the facility as long as staff were active and productive. GolfVisions moved all staff to grounds maintenance while the General Manager Mike Jesse pulled double duty working on grounds and working operationally calling outing coordinators, cancelling events, and reorganizing the tee sheet to meet governmental recommendations of social distancing and safety.

GolfVisions staff did an outstanding job getting the course ready to go for the general public. Despite hard decisions throughout the golf season, staff was able to adjust on a weekly and monthly basis with new guidelines coming out about the pandemic regularly.

Despite the pandemic, the course had a very successful year as golf was the only game in town, meaning many recreational activities and programs were cancelled due to safety guidelines put in place by the State of Illinois. This allowed the golf industry to thrive, producing in excess of 10% to 20% above normal rounds and revenues beyond historical norms.

Moving forward, we believe golf will have another good year in FY 21/22 as people get vaccinated and society starts to open up a bit more as pandemic pressure eases.

Bonnie Brook and Greenshire proved their worth during the pandemic, allowing golfers a place to relax, get away from the news of the pandemic, and provide a place to recreate for 2 or 4 hours while out on the course.

Operationally, the courses did 35,674 rounds and total revenues of \$1,139,484 in FY20/21, compared to FY19/20 with 28,531 rounds. This was without a fully active food



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and beverage operation because of pandemic regulations put in place by the State of Illinois.

Despite having a great year, GolfVisions had to continue to restructure the operation as a whole. The General Manager position now oversees the food and beverage area as the Food and Beverage Manager position was a fatality of the pandemic. Additionally, overhead in the food and beverage department couldn't support a third chef and that position was eliminated in FY 20/21. These changes shifted an operation to focus more on a grill/bar operation that could do banquets as a tertiary part of the operation.

Maintenance wise, Greg Benson and his staff did a good job controlling his expenses throughout the pandemic while giving golfers an outstanding golf course from tee to green.

Improvements done at the facility in FY 20/21 included the following:

- New 85 gas powered cart fleet
- New flooring in the banquet operation
- New range dispenser
- New grill in bar/grill
- New Coke Fridge in pro shop to expand grab and go items available to golfers
- New menu pricing for bar/grill and banquets
- New reel/bed knife grinder

All in all, a strong financial year despite a pandemic. Lessons learned on how important outdoor recreation is during a pandemic and how important sustaining and providing recreational opportunities to the general public is.

Michael Jesse

General Manager & Head Golf Professional

c: Jeremiah Johnson, President & Golf Advisory Chair, Waukegan Park District
Jay Lerner, Executive Director, Waukegan Park District
John Miles, Senior Vice President, GolfVisions
Greg Benson, Golf Course Superintendent, GolfVisions
Golf Advisory Committee Members