Minutes of the Waukegan Park District

Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners

Golf Advisory Meeting

Dec 4th, 2025

Start time- 6:00pm

The Board of Commissioners of the Waukegan Park District and staff met for a Special Meeting to hold a Golf Advisory Committee Meeting on Dec 4th, 2025, at 6:00pm at the Bonnie Brook Club House, 2800 North Lewis Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois.

I. **Call to Order**

Chairman Michael Jesse called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and directed the roll call.

II. **Roll Call**

Michael Jesse and Commissioner Johnson were present and welcomed those in attendance: Cathy Ralston, Joe Cervantes, Enrique Zamudio, and Ellie Gerdt. The staff and members present introduced themselves. Waukegan Park District staff present was Michael Jesse and Commissioner Johnson.

GolfVisions Update

Speakers

Cathy Ralston- Vice President GolfVisions

Joe Cervantes- General Manager

Enrique Zamudio- Golf Course Superintendent

Ellie Gerdt- Director of Food and Beverage

Transcript

Cathy Ralston- Introduces herself as the new liaison overseeing Bonnie Brook Golf Course. Stepped into the role last spring and John Miles stepped down. She is currently the General Manager of Bittersweet Golf Club. We are seeing growth in the younger generation of golfers thanks to social media and influencers.

Joe Cervantes- This is his third season as General Manager. A couple of improvements for this year were adding in the BitterBrook Cup, brought back Battle of the Bars, Spring Scramble, and the Turkey Scramble. Club Championship went well this year, looking forward to hosting it again in the upcoming year. As of December 1st, we have done 27,636 rounds at Bonnie Brook Golf Course with sales at $1.9 million, which is up from last year. Worked hard on keeping the high grass down on holes 1, 9, and 12. Worked on the speed of the greens. Working with Michael Jesse on widening the cart path leading to hole 10 and resurfacing all cart paths. We did 20 outings and events. Next year is the 100th Anniversary of Bonnie Brook, we will be working with the Waukegan Park District to do something fun to celebrate next spring. Greenshire made 6,500 rounds with sales at $106,000, both figures went up over last year. Working on next year keeping Greenshire hours of operations longer and keeping the course open into October, weather dependent. Ellie Gerdt was unable to attend the meeting so Joe will go over her notes, the food side did over 100 golf outing and restaurant events. Average event is 50 people. Currently it has 37 events and 2 weddings booked for the 2026 season. Breakfast with Santa was cancelled because only 9 people were signed up. 175 people for the Mother's Day Brunch and 240 people for the Easter Brunch. Attended the Halloween Trick or Treat Trail, handing out materials to the over 2000 participants.

Enrique Zamudio- Completed all aeration this season. Got all the native areas cut down for the winter season. Winterized all the irrigation systems. Will be using a new chemical next year to make the course look greener. Earlier in the year we removed some hazardous trees on hole 2, 15, and 16. Finally received the utility vehicle from 2023. Will be doing winter pruning all over the course. At Greenshire, completed aeration and overseeded all the greens. Looked through all the machines to make sure they are good to go for next golf season. Dale asked about the green roller, Enrique said the current roller is from 2019 and has been out of commission part of the season. Next year, we are planning on purchasing a new roller to keep the greens in great condition and firm the greens up. We used a demo for a full week at the end of the year and could feel the difference. Ed Holm asked about the water fountains on the course. Fountain on hole 16 has been out for a while, there is a water pressure issue. Fountain on hole 7, the pipe is blocked. Larry asked about the sandpro machine and Enrique let him know they are using it five days a week. On the current sandpro, there was a piece missing on the bottom of the machine and we ordered one and fixed it. Which has made the bunkers better this year. Commissioner Johnson asked what the winter cost is to keep the course operating. I will have to review the budget to get him the numbers after the meeting. Larry asked about how to counter the big roots around the trees, so the golf balls don't get stuck. Enrique has a couple of ideas to counter.

Mike Jesse- I start by going over capital we have done this year. We talked about tree removal on the course. We received the new banquet chairs in May. We will be installing a new water fountain at Bonnie Brook Maintenance. We replaced the Greens mower machine for the course. We replaced the pump house at Greenshire. We replaced the HVAC in the banquet area. For capital year2026-27, will get a new freezer and fryer for the kitchen area. New roller, new aerator, and fairway and greens verticutter. The Bonnie Brook Maintenance Roof was completed, just waiting to get the electricity finished. They changed the roof from a flat roof to a pitched roof.

Commissioner Johnson- Hinkston Park is getting a new shelter and new park features. Field House has renovated the locker rooms. Bevier Park is complete. Roosevelt was completed earlier this year.

Open for questions- Dale said he is happy the greens have improved with the new superintendent. Who was behind the change of the season pass where A-Pass was good for the whole season now it is only good from March 15 to November 15. Cathy talked about how Bittersweet has their season pass is good year long. The reason she believes it is limited to Bonnie Brook is to help with end-of-year costs. Cathy will talk to Joe about this. The mowed areas they believe should include the water lines and the rough area has been so tall they cannot laser the golf pins. What are we going to do about the skunk issue at the end of the season? Enrique said a lot of it had to do when he came on board there was a chemical he needed to spray in April and wasn't aware it needed it. Going into next season, he already has it ordered and will treat it in the spring. Would they bring back the 1v1 and 2v2 match play tournaments? Joe said he will investigate about bringing them back. Snarski talked about how the range has become too expensive and how the golf balls are old. Joe said he brought in 6k new golf balls, and they lost them in the creek over the fence. They are working on repairing the fence or putting up a net, so the balls don't fall into the creek. They might also put a net on the hill at the back of the range since people are hitting over the hill into hole 2 fairway and green.

Closing- Would anybody be against starting the meeting at 4:30pm rather than 6pm next year. Next meeting will be Thursday December 3rd 2026 at 4:30pm. The meeting was adjourned at 7:11pm.