



WILMETTE PARK DISTRICT
Golf Operations Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 15, 2021
Village Hall Training Room

Present

Commissioners/Committee: Chair Lindsay Anderson and Patrick Duffy

Staff: Executive Director Steve Wilson, Adam Kwiatkoski, Nick Marfise, and Sheila Foy

Visitors: Sue Salay, Fred Watson, Walter Keats

Absent

Commissioner Julia Goebel

I. Meeting Called to Order

Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

A. October 25, 2021 Golf Operations Committee Meeting

Commissioner Duffy moved and Commissioner Anderson seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2021 Golf Operations Committee meeting.

By a unanimous voice vote; **motion carried.**

III. Communications and Correspondence

Commissioner Anderson acknowledged that correspondence was received with respect to the golf club restaurant.

IV. Public Comment/Recognition of Visitors

Commissioner Anderson facilitated public comment. The Attendance Record will become part of the permanent record.

Sue Salay – Ms. Salay stated that the WGA held a retirement coffee for Jamie Locke, the departing Head Golf Professional. She noticed that the Park District is adding an Operations Supervisor in 2022 as part of the operations budget. She asked if this individual would be the liaison between staff and the leagues. Manager Kwiatkoski advised this is to be determined as it will depend on the skill set of the individual hired and what makes the most sense for the facility. Ms. Salay then asked if the 10% discount for returning members in 2022 takes into consideration green fees being raised by 5%. Director Wilson clarified that this calculates the same as giving members back 10% off of this year's membership and then raising the rates 5%. It is reducing the administrative back and forth. Ms. Salay thanked Director Wilson for his response.

V. Manager Reports

Nick Marfise (Golf Course Superintendent) reported on the following:

- Superintendent Marfise provided a brief recap of the past Committee meeting in which staff advised that early closure of the course would bring additional benefits such as accomplishing projects that otherwise fall to the wayside during the season.
- He provided a picture of the small putting green in front of the proshop and advised this gets a lot of use by golfers warming up before their game. Staff took on the task of renovating this area by stripping the area and removing the grass. Then staff leveled the ground underneath to prevent the area from becoming crooked. On a frosty morning, staff laid the sod that was delivered and the project is now complete. Staff is looking forward to its development come next season.
- Staff also decided to sod the 6th tee. This area is tucked back in the woods with very little sunlight and is a difficult growing environment for the grass. It has been beat up over the years and it was time to start fresh. All of the unwanted grass was removed and sodded.
- Similar to the 6th tee, staff treated the 9th tee and sprayed it to eliminate the poa annua. The grass on this tee started to decline after the spray applications. Staff then removed all the unwanted grass and sodded.
- Another task staff has taken on is sodding the bunker faces. A lot of the bunker faces are eroding due to overplay. Supervisor Marfise advised this is a tedious task because the material needs to be removed by hand. Once the face is prepped, it is sodded. The finished product redefines the bunker edges.
- One of the techniques staff uses to sod the bunkers is roll the sod all the way down into the bunker and then covers the sod with a little bit of sand. This prevents the edges from dying out over the winter. Staff repeated this process on the 1st, 4th and 8th fairway.
- In an effort to prepare for winter, staff began verticutting tees. Verticutting is a vertical slice as opposed to a horizontal slice to help the grass grow laterality. Afterwards, the grass is covered in sand. Staff will continue to cover the tees and the fairways in sand.

With respect to the practice putting green, Commissioner Duffy asked what it will look like next year. Specifically, if the eastern side will remain the fringe. Superintendent Marfise advised that is to be determined but that staff is looking to get away from chipping in that area as it is too heavily trafficked to allow for chipping. Staff has discussed purchasing no chipping signs. Commissioner Anderson thanked staff for their hard work in maximizing this opportunity while the course is closed.

Adam Kwiatkoski (Golf Course General Manager) reported on the following:

- Manager Kwiatkoski advised that he has been busy the past couple weeks meeting with vendors. He has ordered all the product for next season but remains concerned about supply chain related disruptions. Product such as

golf balls and range balls are on backorder. Shirts are on back order until July 1st of 2022. This will affect the facility's revenue as it affects other retail businesses.

- The RFP for a new restaurant vendor has been distributed with a December 10th due date.
- The WGA held a retirement breakfast for Jamie Locke which was well attended.
- The Men's Club held the OGC closing dinner on November 4th.
- Jamie's last day will be on November 26th.
- Staff intends to hire an Operations Manager in 2022.

VI. Unfinished Business

A. Golf Club Facility Improvements

Director Wilson initiated the discussion by introducing Andy Tinucci of Woodhouse Tinucci Architects to walk the Committee through the Clubhouse Design Concepts presentation. Mr. Tinucci provided the floorplan of the existing dining room interior and stated the room capacity is currently 144 guests. For orientation purposes, he advised the 18th hole is near the covered area of the patio and pointed out the bar's location in comparison. Mr. Tinucci noted the high vaulted ceilings and the current bar configuration. He stated one of the original explorations was to extend the bar into the dining room to allow for additional seating and still maintain a walk up area. Within this rectangular bar option, interior seating is reduced by one six-top table but eight bar seats are gained. This would be a permanent fixture in the dining room and so the loss of a six-top is something to consider with respect to events. Mr. Tinucci then provided a rounded bar option which would reduce interior seating by two six-top tables but gain twelve bar seats. He suggested leaving seats out for a walk up option in this scheme. Mr. Tinucci provided the Committee different seating options to contemplate such as lounge seating to diversify the seating arrangements.

Mr. Tinucci further explored changing where the doorway exiting the clubhouse is. As it currently exists, the door near the window is often congested by traffic. If the door were moved, it may become more of a free flowing space. This would not be an easy project as the existing door would need to be closed in and a new door added but it is all possible within the structure of the building.

Moving to the exterior, Mr. Tinucci presented the outdoor area as it exists with the covered patio. He contemplated an additional patio with more seating to the north. The existing patio wall would be moved slightly to the east and steps would be incorporated. He provided pictures of what the space could look like with the addition of fire pits, additional lighting and an outdoor bar to take the pressure off the indoor bar. He suggested that the existing cart path be converted to a paver to direct carts away from patrons or planters to separate the patrons from the path. Mr. Tinucci noted this entire area is full sun and almost never in the shade.

Mr. Tinucci then directed the Committee's attention towards a potential soft scape patio to the south where the ground was gravel or discomposed granite. The idea being something more natural to follow the grade around the trunk of the big, beautiful shade tree. The shade tree casts a shadow and provides a great environment for outdoor seating and socialization. He also suggested removable bollards or potted plants to prevent carts from blocking the view of the patrons.

Commissioner Duffy asked if Mr. Tinucci had explored an additional room divider. Mr. Tinucci advised that a divider could be imagined. The only challenge with this is traffic circulation into the remaining bar area. Manager Kwiatkoski added there are limitations of the HVAC system and an additional divider would require a separate heating and cooling element which is incredibly expensive. There was a brief conversation regarding storage and the desired use of the facility by whomever the Park District chooses to partner with, specifically with respect to restaurant operations.

Commissioner Anderson asked how buffet service during an event would work if a lounge seating option was chosen. Mr. Tinucci advised the lounge seating option is harder to move and does not stack so it may limit the amount of buffet tables during an event. Commissioner Anderson then asked if the patio could be extended further out to the east. Mr. Tinucci advised that is an option but he prefers the options to the north or the south due to the proximity of the 18th hole and potential safety concerns.

Commissioner Duffy expressed a preference to refine the north patio renderings and indoor bar options. Commissioner Anderson asked if there would be congestion in the north patio option considering carts must come around that direction to make the turn. Mr. Tinucci stated this is a consideration but that changes in pavement, bollards or plantings may alleviate this problem. It is not directly behind the 18th green and more off towards the side, which makes it a slightly safer option.

B. Golf Cart Path Project

Manager Marfise advised that due to the good weather, the construction contractors have been at the golf course almost every day in some capacity. At the last Golf Operations Committee meeting, there were only a few fairways that had not been excavated – these included holes one, six and seventeen. Staff was waiting on the contractors to dig out the native soil and fill those areas with the gravel base. Since then, the latter half of hole one is complete and also hole seventeen. Part of the path on hole seventeen crosses over the middle of the fairway. This is the only hole on property in which the cart path has to cut across the fairway. Where the path does cross, it is out of distance for most golfers for their first and/or second shot. Manager Marfise advised the path should not take away visually from the hole aesthetically. With respect to hole six, the bunker that was in question last month is no longer there.

Commissioner Duffy asked if a fence was there currently. Manager Marfise advised there is a silt fence there per MWRD requirements. If the earth is disturbed, a silt fence is required to make sure material does not get into the flood plain. Commissioner Duffy noted there was a hill on the far side of the sand trap and asked if that area was still elevated. Manager Marfise provided pictures to clarify where the bunker was and what work was done. He advised that the contractors brought in heavy stone to lay a substantial base. This base is approximately 24 to 28 inches in height. Then the contractors began to pack the fine stone on top of the thicker stone. There will be asphalt on top of the gravel to add another few inches. He showed the Committee what the new outer edge of the fairway would look like and stated staff's goal would be to bring the fairway height up to the edge. This will also gain approximately 30 ft. of fairway to the left. As of today, all of the concrete curbs have been poured. The tentative plan is to potentially pour asphalt this week. Staff will have a meeting tomorrow to discuss that plan with the contractors and ensure they are still on track. Manager Marfise noted that there will still be restoration work required throughout the course after the project and this work will continue into the spring in certain areas.

VII. New Business

A. Golf Financials through October 31, 2021

Manager Kwiatkoski stated that with the course being closed, the revenues haven't increased and will not increase much through the remainder of the year.

VIII. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Golf Operations Committee is scheduled for Monday, December 20, 2021.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Commissioner Duffy moved and Commissioner Anderson seconded a motion to adjourn the Golf Operations Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m.

By a unanimous voice vote; **motion carried.**

Minutes Approved on December 15, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Catherine A. Serbin

Catherine Serbin
Executive Administrative Assistant