

**Work Session****THE LEAWOOD CITY COUNCIL**

April 18, 2022

**Minutes**

The City Council of the City of Leawood, Kansas, met for a Work Session at Ironhorse Golf Course, 15400 Mission Rd., at 5:30 PM on Monday, April 18, 2022. Mayor Peggy Dunn presided.

**Councilmembers Present:** Andrew Osman, Julie Cain, Jim Rawlings, Debra Filla, Chuck Sipple, and Lisa Harrison

**Councilmembers Present via Zoom:** Mary Larson

**Councilmembers Absent:** James Azeltine

**Staff Present:** Scott Lambers, City Administrator                      Patty Bennett, City Attorney  
Chris Claxton, Parks, Rec & Arts Director      David Ley, Public Works Director  
Ross Kurz, Info. Services Director                      Mark Tepesch, Info. Services Specialist  
Ryan Eckroat, Troon GM of Ironhorse Golf Course  
James Kennedy, Superintendent of Ironhorse Golf Course

## **Discuss Ironhorse Golf Course Capital Improvement Plan and Equipment Replacement Schedule**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Peggy Dunn.

Scott Lambers, City Administrator, stated that the purpose of the meeting is in response to the consideration of the cost and need for a new storage facility at the golf course. He felt it was important that the City Council have an overview of the entire budget requests for the next several years and what to prioritize. Mr. Lambers intended to have this data presented tonight so it is easier and quicker to discuss at the Budget and Finance meeting in June.

Chris Claxton, Parks, Rec & Arts Director, thanked the Ironhorse staff for helping to prepare the report. She explained that when it comes to capital projects, the golf course does not stand by itself and that it is incorporated into the Parks and Recreation CIP.

Mayor Dunn thanked all the volunteers who work on the Ironhorse Advisory Board. She stated that the City is very grateful for Troon's management.

Ryan Eckroat, Troon General Manager of Ironhorse Golf Course, thanked the Council and staff for the opportunity to present tonight at the golf course. He expressed appreciation as being a partner with the City and as a consultant to make the best possible recommendation for the City in order to move forward.

James Kennedy, Golf Course Superintendent, shared a presentation of each item to discuss.

- Irrigation Pump Station – Mr. Kennedy stated that the current pump station is the original from 1993. He stated that there is currently money in the budget to replace the pumps but they have delayed making repairs since components are becoming obsolete and the entire pumps are in need of updating. He stated that the normal life expectancy of the pump is 15-30 years.

Mr. Kennedy pointed out that the water that is pumped for the course and to fill the lake comes from the Blue River and that the course only pays for the electricity to pump it. He indicated that based on their average usage, if they had to purchase water, they would have to purchase a new pump once a year. Ms. Claxton explained how important it has been that the course have been able to use effluent water, so it has been a huge savings.

Mr. Eckroat stated that there is no other piece of equipment that is more impactful at the course than the pump station. He pointed out how destructive to the course it could be if the pumps were not working, especially during the summer. Mayor Dunn asked if the replacement was already budgeted for 2022. Ms. Claxton stated that it was not, but cautioned that there is a 6-8 month lead time, of which staff is concerned. Mayor Dunn asked if the 2022 budget will need to be amended if the Council approves it. Mr. Kennedy replied that it would depend on when the expenditure would take place. Councilmember Sipple asked if a down payment would be needed. Mr. Kennedy stated the purchase order would lock in the price and installation would be in 2023.

Irrigation heads – He stated that those on the course and around the greens are original, but the heads on the fairway were replaced in 2011. Mr. Kennedy stated that they would prefer to have the work done by a contractor with little impact to the course’s daily business and to have all the heads replaced at nearly the same time would be ideal. Mr. Kennedy mentioned that there are 985 irrigation heads at the course. Mayor Dunn pointed out that this work is proposed for late 2023 to early 2024.

Councilmember Larson stated that when Hallbrook County Club replaced their irrigation heads, they also had to replace the PVC pipes throughout the course at an expense of approximately \$1.7M. She stated that Ironhorse is fortunate that their PVC pipes are in good shape.

- Bridge repair – Mr. Kennedy explained that there are some concerns of erosion and settlement caused from traffic, storms and age. Ms. Claxton mentioned that the unevenness of the bridges does take a toll on the golf carts and likened it to hitting a curb when a cart drives over it.

Mayor Dunn asked if the bridge repair is in the 2022 budget. Mr. Eckroat stated that it was not named specifically in the budget. Mr. Lambers explained that if it is an on-going issue and not every 5-10 years, then it would be budgeted into the operating budget. If it is an infrequent expense to the budget and not spent, then it becomes a capital expense. Ms. Claxton stated that Troon works with the City’s Public Works Department to get the best prices for repair work.

- Overflow pipe – Mr. Kennedy stated that the galvanized overflow pipe at hole #11 pond is deteriorating and will need replaced soon. Councilmember Sipple asked about the age of the pipe. Ms. Claxton replied that it pre-dates the course and recalled issues with silt when the development around the course began.

Mr. Kennedy mentioned having bathymetric surveys done to the pond to check the depth, as it gets very low in the summer drought. Ms. Claxton stated that the pond is not stocked with fish and it does no irrigation for the course. The fountain was added later for odor and algae control.

- Silt on east side of Mission Road - Mr. Kennedy pointed out the significant amount of silt that has been deposited over the years from perimeter construction in that area. Councilmember Sipple asked if the contractor who is currently dredging the pond at Ironwood Park would also bid this area. Ms. Claxton replied that this would be a different type of work because it is an added expense when the silt has to be hauled away. She cautioned that when the silt builds up water does not flow well and comes too close to the cart path. Mr. Kennedy added that the buildup could also cause issues being so close to the Mission Rd culvert.
- Erosion at hole #6 pond – Mr. Kennedy pointed out the effects of the erosion at the pond and presented photos of where the water level should be. He stated that there were isolation valves, a sprinkler head, a tree, and air compressor line all under water due to the erosion. He explained that staff had to install a temporary rock wall for repairs, and that they have lost approximately 3-4 feet around the pond.

Ms. Claxton stated that this is similar to what happened prior to the repairs at the pond at City Park. Councilmember Filla asked how it can be repaired. Mr. Kennedy stated that there are several ways with rock lining, erosion mats, etc. He stated staff would review the most economical fix. Ms. Claxton agreed that they would likely need to work with an engineer to help stop the problem. She pointed out that this pond is the irrigation source and to try to keep the algae and pond growth down, they will add grass carp to the pond.

Mr. Kennedy briefly mentioned that they are reviewing the water supply lines and the backflow preventers with the Public Work Department for the restrooms.

- Range – Mr. Kennedy explained that the project will be to get the infrastructure in better shape by renovating the range floor and rehabilitate turf conditions. He stated that over time it starts to suffer due to the high traffic on the range. He noted that the terrain is very rocky and not sustainable for turf. Mr. Eckroat pointed out that they are not expecting to maintain fairway quality turf, but need to have the proper irrigation and drainage and no ruts so that their equipment is not being damaged. He stated that once that is done they can re-sod.

Councilmember Cain stated that the money can be recouped from this area, as it generates revenue. Mr. Eckroat agreed and mentioned that it is also the first thing that is seen as visitors approach the course. Ms. Claxton stated that this practice facility is one of the very best in the metro area. Mr. Eckroat echoed that it is preferred by golfers because in the afternoon they are not looking into the sun, they can practice chipping, putting and driving, it is a wide open space and has good targets. He explained that having turf and not sand will help the moisture in the ground.

Mayor Dunn congratulated Troon staff with Ironhorse Golf Course being named by *The Kansas City Business Journal* as #2 in public golf courses in the entire region and have been voted #1 in the past.

Mr. Kennedy briefly pointed out that the bunkers were replaced in 2016 and is on track to be replaced again until 2026.

- Shop yard storage on north side of building – Mr. Kennedy stated that the cart storage area was created to relieve space inside the building at the back of the building and that sand bins, loaders, and attachment storage are located on the west shop yard. Councilmember Rawlings ask how

many pieces of equipment are stored in the west shop yard. Mr. Kennedy replied that it is approximately \$800,000 worth of equipment sitting outside. Councilmember Sipple asked how many square feet of storage space would the staff like to have. Mr. Kennedy replied that the original estimate was approximately 8,000 square feet and their current storage is around 3,500 sq. ft. and is completely full with mowing equipment.

Mayor Dunn asked if the \$900,000 request is for an 8,000 sq. ft., 3-sided building. Mr. Kennedy stated that they would prefer a 4-sided building, but cost estimate was for three sides. Ms. Claxton explained that some of the equipment currently inside could be moved around so they could get some equipment inside for climate control.

Councilmember Osman asked about the reason for having climate control on the proposed new building. Mr. Kennedy stated that their current building is cold storage. Councilmember Osman mentioned the square foot price is high for 9,000 sq. ft. Councilmember Rawlings agreed about the price and asked why the City does not allow metal, 3-sided storage buildings. Mayor Dunn stated that the City does not allow metal or steel buildings on the City's property or any other exceptions. Councilmember Osman asked if a metal building could be built with a different façade. Mr. Lambers stated that the City must abide by its own codes. Mayor Dunn suggested that the \$120/sq. ft. estimate may be higher than the actual cost. Mr. Lambers cautioned that in today's market, the cost estimate might not be high enough and mentioned that he would not want to have something that is underbuilt as demands grow.

Ms. Claxton stated that the cost estimate was presented by PGAV. She stated that they wanted \$62,000 to do a complete plan and staff did not feel that was justified until they knew the building was an option at all.

Councilmember Filla asked if there is any room at the Police Station garage located at the Justice Center. Mr. Lambers stated that equipment needs to be onsite at the golf course. He confirmed that there is space at the golf course.

Councilmember Cain stated that if it is on the City's property why the new structure could not be grandfathered in for cost-savings and because it is next door to the other buildings and would look the same. Mr. Lambers indicated that other projects could argue the same point but that the City needs to abide by the same rules as the residents. Councilmembers Osman and Cain remarked that the City would be fiscally responsible in using tax-payer dollars for the good of the community. Mr. Lambers stated that it would not be considered grandfathered because it has to be that 50% gets destroyed and would have to be replaced.

Mayor Dunn stated that she believes working with the Codes and Building Enforcement Department, that the costs could be reduced, but she reiterated that it has to be a structure that the City permits and cannot break the rules. Councilmember Cain replied that she is trying to be creative and fiscally responsible with tax-payer money. Councilmember Harrison stated that the building would not be visible from any home or street. Mayor Dunn stated that is commonly expressed by individuals at the Board of Zoning Appeals meetings also, but that the City has to play by the same rules that is required of everyone. Mr. Lambers echoed the Mayor and stated that the Council would need to make it public as to why they are doing something different than what residences are allowed to build.

Councilmember Sipple asked if there are any unused building facilities the City owns that can be deconstructed and used. Ms. Claxton replied that one of the buildings has a metal roof and the structure itself has been through some floods, but stated that she could have it evaluated.

Councilmember Cain asked about trailers at the Ironwood Parks maintenance facility. Ms. Claxton stated that there are 3 trailers and were purchased in the hopes to sell them when it became necessary. She stated that only small equipment, such as weed-eaters and blowers, are stored inside them. Ms. Claxton mentioned that the City had to gain approval for those units from the Planning Commission, since they were in 3 different locations. Mr. Lambers stated that the costs of selling the trailers versus maintaining them needs to be evaluated.

Councilmember Sipple asked if the storage facility is bondable. Mr. Lambers stated that if it is new to a park facility it cannot be bonded, but if it is over \$100,000 and is an expansion, then it can be. He stated that this will be discussed further in the City's annual budget and finance work session.

Councilmember Harrison expressed consideration for being responsible with tax dollars and taking care of golf course equipment.

Ms. Claxton summarized that she will meet with Travis Torrez, Director of Building and Code Enforcement, about materials and to arrange to have the trailers and unused building evaluated. She stated that she will have information to the Council before the time of the budget and finance work session meetings. Councilmember Filla asked to also have an estimation of cost savings available.

- Clubhouse Phase II (expanding and improving the kitchen) – Mr. Eckroat stated that they have outgrown the current kitchen and that it has very little storage. He stated that there is not enough room to store needed items, products, equipment, and utensils. He explained that it is inefficient and limited as a work space, especially for more than 1 person.

Mr. Eckroat stated that Phase II would be to expand the footprint but not as far as the roofline. He explained that it would allow the relocation of the walk-in freezer unit and provide ample storage space. Ms. Claxton mentioned that the dishwasher needs to be replaced. Mr. Eckroat agreed that there are a number of equipment that needs replaced and would like to build for not only for their current needs but for the future.

Mayor Dunn stated that there was Council approval of some kitchen item replacements in 2022. Ms. Claxton replied that there had been discussions, when updating the bathrooms at the clubhouse, that the approved kitchen funds would be redirected to that remodel. She stated that because of a pipe in the wall, the Fire Department has reviewed and approved the plans for expansion.

Councilmember Rawlings asked if the upgrades and expansion would allow the staff to make more offerings to those renting the facility. Ms. Claxton stated that it would be minimal and that they are not capable of being a restaurant. Councilmember Sipple asked how much of the estimate is construction and equipment. Ms. Claxton stated that moving the wall is a significant amount, but she can provide the Council with the detailed estimate from the architect. She explained that there is damage to the sub-floor in the kitchen and that the building was constructed after the golf course and never had the amenities it was supposed to have originally.

Councilmember Harrison asked if the Players' Grill is profitable. Mr. Eckroat replied that it is very active and heavily used by the daily golfer. Ms. Claxton stated that it is a revenue generator. Mr. Eckroat confirmed that the original walk-in freezer is due to be replaced and that the goal is to relocate it and change the type of style for more efficiency.

Councilmember Osman stated that the Sykes/Lady Golf Course (Overland Park, KS) has a substantial revenue stream. He acknowledged that the Ironhorse Grill is dated and speculated if the proposed changes would be beneficial to create a revenue stream.

Councilmember Larson recommended that the Council tour the current kitchen area to see how limited the space is that staff has in which to work.

Mayor Dunn asked how imminent Phase III is. Mr. Eckroat stated that it is comprised of remodeling the golf shop and to expand work space for staff, and add an addition of an outdoor pavilion that could be rented for weddings, cocktail parties, etc. Mr. Lambers stated that it needs to be two separate projects.

Ms. Claxton stated that she would send the Council a diagram of the proposed remodel of the kitchen, pavilion and golf shop. Mayor Dunn stated that staff is hoping to bring these items before the Council for the 2023 budget, as well as the storage facility. Mr. Lambers replied that they can be brought forward as part of the project but have them listed as separate decision packages. Councilmember Filla mentioned that the storage facility is approximately the same cost as Phases II and III for the clubhouse. Mayor Dunn stated that she believes the storage facility could be done for less money.

Mr. Lambers stated that all the equipment replacement will be reviewed at the staff level. Mayor Dunn confirmed that the Council will be approving the equipment replacement as part of the CIP.

Councilmember Osman asked if it would be better to lease the equipment rather than purchase replacements. Mayor Dunn stated that the golf carts are leased. Councilmember Osman stated that he was considering lawn equipment. Mr. Lambers explained that it depended on the cost and how soon it could be paid off, and that for lower priced items it was more advantageous to purchase than lease.

Councilmember Filla asked how much the City is subsidizing the golf course. Mr. Lambers replied that it was originally not a good decision to establish the golf course as an enterprise fund. He explained that at the end of each year the golf course was running a deficit so then a contribution had to be made to the general fund. He stated that the golf course has gotten past that now. Ms. Claxton stated Ironhorse operated in the black for the first time last year. Mayor Dunn reminded the Council that the figures are available in the report provided by the staff.

Mayor Dunn thanked the staff, Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Eckroat.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.