

IRONHORSE  
Golf Club



**GOLF COURSE COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of February 22, 2006**  
**5:30 – Leawood City Hall**

Members in attendance were Dick Fuller (Chair), Bob Reid, Council Member Lou Rasmussen, Council Member James Taylor, Chuck Sipple, John Campbell and Bobby Davidson. Shane Gardner, Matt Roberts, and Pete Spratlin of Orion and Parks and Recreation Director, Chris Claxton and Sara Dinkel were also in attendance. Bob Oppold and Dave Doherty of ISTRC.

Dick Fuller called the meeting to order at 5:55 p.m. Chuck Sipple moved to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2006 meeting. Bobby Davidson seconded the motion for approval subject to the changes he requested be made. Minutes were approved based on said changes.

**I. Fred Merrill Presentation**

Fred Merrill, developer of Ironhorse Center, where the property line is adjacent to holes #14 and #16 on the Ironhorse Golf Course. Fred shared with the group the original site plan and a revised version. The change to the plan was “use specific” and requested by the C3 Company that is currently headquartered in Overland Park. C3 designed their own building therefore requiring a change in lot lines. Fred went on to explain how the building design moved the structure to the corner lot which resulted in a change in the lot line. Also a couple of retaining walls have been incorporated on the east side.

Chris asked Fred if the wall on the east side of the property line was terraced and Fred said yes.

Dick explained to the group that the planning commission will have say in the final details and Fred was here to share the new plan with this group. Dick also added that the change discussed doesn't affect the golf course.

Dick then questioned the location of the property line and Fred explained that the fence is already in place and in conformance.

Pete added that he appreciates the company moving into this building wanting the views of the golf course, but went on to warn Fred that the view includes the back of the restrooms.

James Taylor added that the north side of the green at this location is maintained by us but the east side is not maintained at this time and he wanted to know who plans to maintain this area?

Fred said he and Pete have talked about this and decided to trim and thin out the trees, which would encourage grass to grow but leaving the area in somewhat a natural state. Fred said he

would be responsible for clearing it out initially and then the maintenance will revert back to the golf course. Fred also added that there is no change in the storm water run off.

Chuck Sipple then asked the group what kind of feedback were they receiving about the wall on the south side (adjacent to #14 fairway) and Matt replied that they get good feed back about how nicely it was done.

The group decided to make a motion to accept Fred Merrill's changes to the site and to confirm that it has no impact on the golf course. Bobby Davidson moved to approve the motion; Chuck Sipple seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **II. ISTRC Report**

Dick initiated this discussion by explaining that we are trying to determine if all the greens need to rebuilt or resurfaced. Then Dick referred to the original report and distributed copies of the supplemental report.

Bob Oppold of ISTRC gave some background information concerning ISTRC:

- Founded in 1990
- Worldwide
- 1998 Rebuilt Augusta National and Pine Valley
- Locally owned
- 2 owners
- Provide information to greens committees.

Pete reported that he had asked Bob Oppold and Dave Doherty of ISTRC to come out in February and they looked at five greens but tonight the information and pictures we are looking at are of the practice green. Bob went on to share with the group that the top four inches are sealed off and we need to do something about it so the water can get down to the drain. This is the first issue. This leads us into the next question of whether the water can get through the drain.

Pete speculated that the drains have not worked properly since he's been here (1998).

Pete then shared with the group a power point presentation documenting the testing and digging of the samples and vents.

Pete said he thought it was beneficial to vent the drains and ISTRC said maybe we should vent both ends of the drain.

Lou asked if they were using a French style drain and Pete said yes.

Dick then asked Pete to explain the difference between USGA and California greens which Pete did.

Then Dave with ISTRC shared with the group a diagram of two different types of drainage systems and added that we don't have either of these at Ironhorse. When the samples were taken of the green it was very wet.

James Taylor then presented the group with the question “Do we have a green that can be improved by routing out the existing drains or do we need to replace these drains?” Lou said if we could get the drainage improved by cleaning them out will they remain clean. He also asked how do you avoid the gas building up in the drains? Pete and ISTRK agreed that cleaning out the drains would likely not improve the situation.

Chuck Sipple asked how many vents and drains are there? Pete replied 2, 3 and maybe 4 per green.

Bobby Davidson the asked ISTRC if they had access to the original construction document so they could determine what materials were used in construction.

Dave Doherty of ISTRC said they did not have the original documents.

Slides were shown that depicted the composition of the drains and their condition.

Dave said you could potentially resolve the gas with sub-air if the drains worked. He went on to explain that the test holes were dug and the drains were exposed. The sand in the drains was rotten and hard and the gravel in the drain pipes had solidified and this mix acted like mortar in the drains not allowing for water drainage. He also mentioned that the gravel was dirty. He explained how they poured water into the drain but it was unable to drain as it should.

Pete said he will continue to dig holes and vent the existing drains.

Bob Reid asked “Can you grow grass like this?” and Bob of ISTRC said yes but it is not going to be of the quality you should have on a golf course.

Pete said he can get the grass to grow but it dies and then growing it again is really difficult.

Pete also went on to say when the greens don’t drain, and the standing water heats up, it is very damaging to the grass.

James Taylor asked what ISTRC can give us.

Dave with ISTRC said that the water heating up on the greens is probably the case with all the greens.

Dick added that from the very beginning we have not had good greens and that it is the layout of the course that has saved us with our customers. He also said if we are going to close down the golf course then it would make sense to rebuild the greens.

James Taylor asked do we have the report pulling all this information together to give the council; what they need to approve the \$1 million cost?

Lou asked if you do rebuild the greens how do you prevent this from happening again?

Pete and Bob of ISTRC both answered that we could build greens according to USGA standards or add four inches of gravel to the greens. Our greens do not have this gravel base now.

Dick said no matter what number green you are talking about out at Ironhorse the greens are in bad shape. Pete is fighting this battle constantly, year to year.

Lou asked what if you only did half of a green because we all know someone is going to ask that question.

Bob Oppold went on to explain that if you take out a green partially, you will not save any money and it will only create another problem. It won't cost you anymore to remove the whole green.

Bob Oppold then went on to talk more about the water build up and heating up to create the gases that were so toxic to the greens and how it affects the growth of grass.

Lou then asked Chairman Dick Fuller what would you like to see from the group?

Dick thanked ISTRC for attending the meeting and for all their efforts and excellent information.

Dick then made the comment that "What we should do is; Pete continues to dig holes (on all the greens) and, along with those results and the PowerPoint presentation, provide all this information to Scott.

Chris added that we need to provide the options along with the results expected from each option.

Lou did add that we need to be done talking about the options because we need a decision from the council.

Dave with ISTRC suggested that we not overlook educating the golfers and communicating with them our plans moving forward. This is crucial!

Dick then asked Lou and James once all of Pete's work is complete do we do a work session or go directly to the council?

Lou and James agreed it should go straight to the Council for discussion.

He also asked do we pay ISTRC for their time to come and answer questions from the Council. James said yes, we would do that.

James Taylor then suggested we meet in the middle of March instead of waiting until the end of March. We need to get this on the April 3 council agenda and we need to discuss it prior to the 30<sup>th</sup>, which is the next scheduled meeting.

### **III. Discuss Move of General Manager, Matt Roberts**

Chris informed the group that the General Manager of Ironhorse, Matt Roberts will be leaving his position at Ironhorse to take on a new course in KCMO that is now under contract with Orion. He will start in his new role on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March but will remain a principle of Orion.

Bobby Davidson motioned to recommend that Matt be released from his commitment at Ironhorse and move to the new course under Orion's Management. Chuck Sipple seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously and the committee wished Matt well in his new endeavor.

#### **IV. Operations Report**

Matt reported that the course held a very successful open house last Saturday and approximately 80 people attended. Matt reported he booked three new tournaments at the open house and the membership sales for the year are good. Matt also added that tonight out at the course we hosted the Chamber of Commerce "after hours networking", which had an excellent turn out and was sold out.

January has been the best January ever in rounds of golf sold. Resulted in \$50,000 in revenue. He reported the course has come through the winter really well. Chuck asked Pete if they have fixed that 1,000 feet of irrigation system wiring cable by hole #2 and Pete said not yet. Pete added that the crew is busy full time venting the drains and working on trees.

#### **V. Crescent to EDEN**

Shane explained to the group that they were set-up and operating the new Crescent system that has now been linked to the EDEN system. He expressed his frustration at how this arrangement no longer allows them to take advantage of vendor discounts because of the lag time in getting invoices processed and paid. Chris said she thinks the reason this process was set up like it is was for the City to avoid having to pay taxes on golf course purchases. Thus we could either not pay the sales tax or take the discounts but not both.

Shane also reported that now the golf course has to process their bills through the system at City Hall, which also requires them to open Purchase Orders. Shane also added that in his opinion the contractor brings efficiencies to the process that the City of Leawood can't provide.

Shane also expressed concern with the current arrangement of reporting and how it doesn't provide you with the information necessary to see where you are in relation to the budget.

James Taylor then said that the management company did have these responsibilities and now they don't, and if we want to know why this is, maybe we should have Lou take this issue up with Scott Lambers.

#### **VI. Miscellaneous**

Chuck Sipple moved to adjourn the meeting and Bob Reid seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director  
Parks and Recreation

