

IRONHORSE
Golf Club



GOLF COURSE COMMITTEE

Minutes of May 28, 2009

5:30 P.M. – Ironhorse Golf Course - Clubhouse

Members in attendance were Dick Fuller (Chair), Bob Reid, and Tommy Davidson Newly appointed member Steve McCartan also attended (appointment effective June 1). Also present were Council Liaison James Azeltine, Shane Gardner of Orion Management Solutions, Inc., and staff members Pete Spratlin, Chris Claxton, and Tonia Morgan.

Chairman Dick Fuller called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m. Tommy Davidson moved to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2009 meeting and Bob Reid seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

I. New Committee Members

Councilman Azeltine introduced new committee member Steve McCartan. He is an attorney with Lathrop & Gage. Steve plays golf at Ironhorse often. James believes he will be a great addition to the committee.

Steve reported that he recently played during the Swing into Summer promotion this past Saturday. He enjoyed the free lunch as well as the shirt he received. It was a nice event.

The committee introduced themselves and welcomed Steve to the committee.

Chairman Fuller reported that Jud Alford is also a new committee member and will begin attending meetings beginning in June.

II. Discuss Maintenance Plan Progress Report #9 (Pete)

Pete reported that the yardage markings for the entire course are complete. The course has also been GPS'd and is very accurate.

Pete reported that the markers will replace the entire top of the irrigation heads. There will be three measurements per head on the entire course. Once complete, this will be well received by the players.

Pete also reported that the split rail fence on #15 has been repaired. New rails and posts were installed instead of replacing it.

Pete reported that he has also been busy working on the zoysia replacement.

Chairman Fuller asked for an update on #5.

Pete reported all contracts have been signed and the City of Leawood holds the deed to the property in question. The drainage work should begin next week.

Pete reported that he has also been working with the parks division landscape supervisor in regards to a tree selection for #8. Pete selected a tree but Dustin, City of Leawood horticulturist, didn't feel it was the best choice for that area. Dustin is working on selecting other options and will notify him once they are available. Once a selection is made, the tree left of the green will be replaced.

Chris reported that the remaining items on the report are minimal. Next month will probably be the last maintenance report (number 10). Everything should be completed at that time.

Councilman Azeltine asked that the Council be made aware of this.

Chris reported that she will make sure they are notified. She doesn't anticipate a problem because the maintenance report is attached to the minutes.

Councilman Azeltine asked how the primary rough area is between #4 and #8.

Pete reported that the area is filling in nice. They are also individually spot-seeding certain areas. The grass is filling in where it should.

Pete reported that a contractor will assist him on the front approach of #10 to strip and re-grade to level the area. The disturbance should be minimal. \$3,000 is budgeted for this project but it shouldn't be that expensive.

Pete reported that the trees behind #10 have been limbed up to 20 feet. This will help the grass in that area.

Pete also reported that the blue tee on #10 has been drained. It is dry but a path will be added.

Pete reported that the current stone work has worked really nice. He has received a lot of compliments about it. He will continue to add more in various areas on the course.

Pete reported that the area on #12 is draining a lot. As a result, it is has been delayed behind several other priorities.

Chairman Fuller asked about the blue tee on #13.

Pete reported that the blue tee and the white tee will be re-established as soon as the sod arrives next week. The back corner will also be re-built.

Tommy Davidson asked about the blue tees on hole #5.

Pete reported that the drainage is fixed. The zoysia is coming in really nice on the black tee. A huge drain system was installed between the golf course and the adjacent property. This should fix the problem on a long term basis.

Pete also reported that the drainage problem on #18 has been fixed. It was an inexpensive repair. They tapped into the spring at the top of the hill and diverted it to one of the existing catch spaces. The hillside dried the next day.

Chairman Fuller asked if the zoysia will be open on the practice range or will they continue using the mats. He has received a lot of questions about this.

Pete reported that the practice range will be open soon. People have been very patient and he appreciates this.

Pete also reported that his staff is doing great. He has received a lot of compliments on the condition of the golf course.

Chairman Fuller reported that he has also received several compliments about the course. A lot of people played during the promotional weekend that hadn't played the course in years and were very complimentary.

Tommy Davidson reported that the rough is filling in well. The course looks nice.

Chairman Fuller reported that Pete and his staff should be complimented for their hard work.

Pete also reported that the representative from the soils lab (ISTREC) visited today. He was very pleased. He thinks everything looks fantastic.

III. Discuss Success of Recent, and Plans for Short Term, Promotions (Shane)

Please see attached.

Shane gave an overview of his report.

Shane reported that in regards to the financial information from Crescent, there was a significant difference in 2006 vs. 2009.

Shane reported that he contacts other facilities to inquire about what percentage they were in relation to their budget. He also compares our information with other facilities Orion manages. Most are 20% off budget in relation to the April numbers.

Shane also reported that the days we had play in April, were decent days. But, there were a large number of weather impacted days that weren't good. When you lose those days, they don't come back.

Shane reported that you can typically miss days in March, October, November, December, and January. But, when you miss days in April, it is difficult.

Shane reported that there are 36 tournaments currently booked. The larger percentage booked are in the months of July, August, September and early October. A lot are return events but some are new.

Chairman Fuller asked how many tournaments were booked in 2006 at this time.

Shane reported that there were 75 tournaments booked, which is half from 2006. This is due to the course being closed and its condition when it re-opened.

Shane reported that when he is contacted with questions about dates or the condition of the course, he invites them to come out for a visit. This is the best selling point. Shane will comp their round of golf and meet with them afterwards.

Councilman Azeltine asked Chris if there is a way to account for this. Or does this matter.

Chris reported that it was discussed to put names on the tee sheet, as well as the non-employee comp log sheet, to account for them and report it in the notes section as well. We can garner good information from what is being gathered.

Shane reported that if he can get a chance to speak with them one on one, he is sure he can convince them to select Ironhorse.

Councilman Azeltine reported that he appreciates Shane doing this and is not opposed to it, but as a member of the governing body he wants to make sure we are accountable.

Shane reported that they are being accounted for as promotional rounds.

Shane also reported that a lot of people are leaving various private courses and are coming back to Ironhorse.

Councilman Azeltine asked how much an individual when leaving a private course. This would be a nice marketing effort when trying to increase memberships. He suggested providing an incentive to those that bring members with them from private courses.

Councilman Azeltine reported that this would be extremely helpful in today's economy.

Shane reported he has considered this. A direct mail piece was recently sent out targeting different zip codes of males between the ages of 35-60 with a household income above \$75,000. Thirteen thousand mailers were sent out. It cost \$8,000 to mail them. The piece advertised the advanced purchase programs and membership options. It also had a special offer card for a reduced round of golf. As of May 24, 181 cards have been turned in.

Shane reported that the Swing into Summer Promotion was held Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Nearly 700 people attended and played golf. It was a very positive event. The golf course was as full as it could be from 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Shane reported that \$41,000 in revenue was taken in. A total of \$10,000 in shirts was spent, the meal cost \$2,000, and the total net amount was \$28,000, which was very good.

Shane reported that there is an After Hours event for the Leawood Chamber Of Commerce on June 24. This will be a good opportunity to speak to a large group of people. It is usually a nice event and very well attended. Gifts are provided for the first 50 people to attend.

IV. Discuss Upcoming Events/Marketing Efforts (Shane)

Shane provided the committee with an inventory list of remaining items from 2006. The items listed are below wholesale cost. Most of the items are marked 50% off wholesale price. Hopefully this will move the items quickly.

Chairman Fuller reported that he has a problem with items that have been here since 2006 and haven't sold. He questioned if enough discount is being offered to move the merchandise.

Shane reported that this is the first blush to get started and offer them at this price. This will hopefully get rid of them. If they don't sell at the current discounted rate, we will need to continue to mark them down, write them off, or donate them to the Goodwill.

Shane reported that a definite decision will need to be made soon.

Chairman Fuller reported that it is not a good perception of the Pro Shop when items in the golf shop become stale; when they have not sold after many months and are out of season and style.

V. Discuss Financials Through April (Shane)

Shane combined his reports. (Please see above in agenda item III)

VI. Discuss Golf Cars

Shane reported that he has received a bid from Club Car for replacement of the golf cars. In his opinion, they are the only real option as far as dependability. Other companies have had significant issues with dependability.

Shane reported that there are two options available. There is a standard feature and the ones with the GPS system, which he is recommending. You are able to see the yardage and control where the golf cart goes. It also notifies the golfer if they are in a restricted cart for cart path use only and makes a buzzing sound that the car is going to shut off. This is a nice option. Another major feature is it offers a way to monitor which cars have been charged and which haven't been used as much to rotate the fleet. It will also provide an overview of the location of every cart on the course. The GPS version is more expensive but well worth the extra money.

Chairman Fuller reported that in today's competitive climate if a golfer spends \$70.00 to play golf they expect a GPS system. When you are at upper tier pricing, it is expected.

Chairman Fuller asked about the \$12.00 per cart, per month maintenance fee charge listed in Shane's report.

Shane reported that the company charges a monthly maintenance fee.

Chris reported that Shane is planning to try to negotiate this charge. It makes the total cost harder to consider when this fee is added in.

Councilman Azeltine asked if we budgeted for this.

Chris reported that we did budget for new carts, but not for the addition of the GPS system.

Steve reported that in terms of pace of play, having a GPS really improves it. A lot of time is wasted finding a marker and walking it off.

Chairman Fuller made a recommendation that the Golf Course Committee approve the purchase of the GPS golf carts for reasons stated in relation to the expectation of players and the competition of other courses.

Tommy Davidson seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

VII. Misc

Tommy Davidson asked where we stand on a recommendation for the approval of the merchandise sale discount. Does it require Council approval.

Shane reported that it does.

Councilman Azeltine reported it would require approval based on what the committee recommends. There are accounting issues that need to specifically addressed.

Chairman Fuller asked if a recommendation is needed to clarify the continued need to seek council approval if items do not sell at approved prices.

Chris reported that she is uncertain about needing a recommendation since it is an accounting situation. She will check with Scott.

Shane reported that he was informed by Scott, the City Administrator that the only person able to approve selling items below wholesale is the governing body.

Chris reported that this is the first time we've sold items below cost. She doesn't anticipate a problem, based on the fact that the merchandise is over 2 years old.

Councilman Azeltine asked Chris to meet with Kathy Rogers in the Finance Department as well as Scott for clarification. We don't want this to be an audit issue.

Chris reported that she will meet with them and report this information to the committee at the June meeting.

Chris reported that it would be nice to have a "Blowout Sale" and move everything into one area outside the golf shop.

Chairman Fuller agreed. It would be nice to have a sale rack displaying the items away from regular merchandise. People would feel they are getting a bargain.

A motion was made by Tommy Davidson to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 pm. The motion was seconded by Bob Reid. The meeting was adjourned by a unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director
Parks and Recreation