

IRONHORSE
Golf Club



GOLF COURSE COMMITTEE

**Minutes of February 23, 2012
5:30 P.M. – Leawood City Hall – Main Conference Room**

Members attending: Dick Fuller(Chair), Bob Reid, George Waterman and Chuck Sipple.

Members absent: Leo Morton, Steve McCartan, Shawn Hickey.

Member absent but listened via tele-conferencing: Tommy Davidson.

Council Liaison attending: James Azeltine.

Council Liaison absent: Lou Rasmussen.

Staff members attending : Chris Claxton and Tonia Morgan.

Members of Troon Golf Management Team, Jeff Thomasson [General Manager] James Kennedy [Superintendent] Matt Shrum [Golf Operations Manager] and Dan Cutler [Assistant Superintendent]

Chair Fuller called the meeting to order at 5:50 p.m.

Chair Fuller reported that this is not an official meeting due to lack of a quorum regarding voting; two members are unable to attend. Council Liaisons count toward the quorum but aren't able to vote.

Tommy replied that he doesn't understand how this can happen; meetings are scheduled far in advance.

Chair Fuller reported that the hope was for better attendance once we changed to a quarterly meeting schedule. He understands that unfortunately things come up that require Committee members to cancel.

Chuck Sipple made a motion to approve the October 27, 2011 meeting minutes. George Waterman seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Chair Fuller thanked Tonia for doing a stellar job on the minutes again.

Chuck Sipple asked if he could clarify two areas of concern brought up at the last meeting before we move forward with tonight's meeting.

Chuck Sipple questioned the subsidence of #13 tee regarding the irrigation problem.

Jeff reported that neither he nor James have met with the homeowner but plan to do so soon. He won't take an adversarial approach but notify the owner how to save water and money and provide options to help manage and organize the system. If pushback is received from the homeowner we will move in another direction.

Chair Fuller reported that this has been an issue for years.

Chuck asked if the bridge plank repairs have been done. Will this be done before the beginning of the season.

James reported that planks needing repair have been located. He will order them soon. It wasn't as many as he initially thought. We will be fine before the season begins.

I. 2012 Meeting Dates

Chair Fuller reported that the 2012 meeting dates were distributed. Hopefully the four meetings this year will fit into everyone's schedule. Tonight's meeting is referencing the budget, the October meeting is in regards to the C.I.P. All are important. It is nice to know in advance if we won't have a quorum. It makes it extremely difficult if notified at the last minute. Please do your best to communicate and attend.

Tonia included a copy of the meeting dates in the handouts tonight as well as e-mailed the dates to each Committee member prior to tonight's meeting.

II. Operations Report

Jeff reported the following for 2011.

- The revenue per round as of December 31, 2011 increased \$3.04 versus the same period in 2010 for a 5% increase.
- Total paid rounds were 23,155- an increase of (1,377 rounds) compared to 21,788 in 2010.
- The total facility revenue increased by \$129,566- an improvement of 11%.
- There was an improvement in the tournament revenue of 15%.
- Food and Beverage revenues increased by 8%.
- The total operating expenses were under budget by \$107,719.
- Expenses were \$47,000 less.
- The net result reflected an improvement in NOI of \$159,345.
- Daily averages have improved the bottom line \$500 per day since 2010.

Jeff added that January & February 2012 were positive due to the mild winter. There have been 14,000 rounds thus far generating \$40,000 in total revenue compared to \$11,000 same period last year.

Jeff reported that the Kansas City Golf Show begins tomorrow at the Overland Park Convention Center. Ironhorse doubled their booth space by partnering with two of their facilities in Branson and sharing the cost of the booth. Hopefully this will generate a lot of traffic. Eighty-five preview rounds were sold last year generating nearly \$5000 in revenue. This will be offered again along with a retail store front which should cover the cost of the booth.

Jeff added that the annual pass event and the instructional programs have been heavily promoted on 810 Sports Radio. A lot of good results have been received as a result. Television advertising is being done through Sure West and Time Warner on the Golf Channel, ESPN, TNT, and USA. Cable Advertising doesn't reach a very broad audience but is significantly cheaper than network advertising.

Jeff reported that we are currently at 75% of the 2011 actual revenues for our pre-book outings and group businesses. This should increase the current business to 120% of the 2011 group business revenue.

Jeff also reported that annual passes will be renewed the first of March. There are currently 60 pre-books. Most will renew from prior year and we should easily reach 80 annual passes for the 2012 season. The prices overall increased an average of \$40. This is very affordable relative to the market.

Council Liaison Azeltine asked how many there were in 2011.

Jeff reported that there were 67 total.

Jeff added that there are currently 200 Facebook followers. There are also 75 text-club members. Hopefully this will double with signups at the golf show.

Jeff reported that Ironhorse recently received two awards at the Troon Golf Global Conference: one award recognized Ironhorse as the “Most Improved Facility in 2011, and the other was America’s ‘Top 100’ Golf Shops. He is pleased and very thankful to the staff. It represents their hard work and the improvements made.

Jeff added that the goal is to focus on being the Facility of the Year in 2012.

Chair Fuller reported that the Committee acknowledges how proud and pleased they are and recognizes the work done by Jeff, James and his crew. There is no question about the difference and the change that has happened.

Council Liaison Azeltine added that the Mayor made a presentation to Jeff at the last Council meeting to recognize the awards.

Jeff reported that he can’t take the credit. This is a testament to the ownership group and the City’s commitment, as well as the Committee. It is truly a team effort. He and his staff are blessed that the owners are committed to making Ironhorse the type of facility it is expected to be. James, Dan, Cody Amy and all staff have worked effortlessly.

Chair Fuller added that he is at the course a lot and is amazed that staff is constantly working. The crews are everywhere!

Jeff reported that they also received the Golf Digest Golf World Magazines Top 100 golf shop award. They were one of two (Wichita Country Club) to receive this award in the Midwest.

Jeff reported that retail revenue has increased 35%. This was nice considering the economy and competition faced.

Jeff reported that the fence project is finished with the exception of the repairs need on #14 by the Ironhorse Center developer. Involvement may be needed from the City Attorney.

Chris added that we are getting a lot of traffic with people coming onto the facility from that area. They need to finish the fence and won’t respond to Jeff.

Chair Fuller and Chuck Sipple reported that the new fence around the green and the driving range along Mission Road gives the protection needed and also looks nice.

Jeff added that the seasonal hiring cycle has begun. Some were brought back early due to the heavy business flow. They were also able to work on maintenance projects that they wouldn’t normally be able to do, due to the mild weather. Twenty-five (25) seasonal staff will be added within the next month.

George asked if there is any way to stretch the carpet area on the south end of the driving range.

Jeff replied that he spoke with Ken Smith and bids have been taken on pulling it up and adding concrete. This would solve the problem but it would cost nearly \$10,000.

George asked if money can be found in the budget this year to fix it.

Jeff reported that they considered including it in the 2013 C.I.P. to complete it in January 2013. The bids have been received if the Committee would like this done sooner.

George reported that this should be considered if the sprinkler system is complete. Since the overall facility is now such high quality, this portion of the operation seems to be of lesser quality.

Council Azeltine reported that he agrees. This gives a negative impression.

Jeff reported that he met with the vendor and expressed that this was inaccurately done from the beginning and they should have made it right. The vendor will re-lay it, if we pull it up, and install concrete and make sure it is done right. The cost is \$8,000 to repair one half. The other half can be done next year. Monies aren't available in the operating budget nor is there room in the C.I.P. to justify the cost. This is a high traffic area and is used daily due to people walking on it. The irrigation, rain and freezing etc., suggest that concrete is the way to go.

George added that it would be nice to find a contractor who is a golfer to trade work for golf.

Chris reported that trades are not allowed.

Council Liaison Azeltine asked Chris if this would be worth discussing with Scott.

Chris reported that she will meet with Scott to review the 2013 budget soon. She will also review the agreement to see if the specs agreed to were met.

Jeff reported that monies were approved for improvements to the irrigation pump house structure. Repairs include skylight (leaking), foundation work and roof work. Extensive carpentry is also needed, as well as replacement to the siding and sockets.

George asked if we talk to the Finance Department, is there a possibility of inserting funds to take care of these problems. Can they issue reserve monies and the course repays them.

Chris reported that the City doesn't operate like this. She will see what options might be available.

Council Liaison Azeltine reported that the City Administrator has authority to approve up to \$15,000 but has been known to take items less than this amount to the Council for approval to make sure they are informed.

George asked how much it would be to purchase rectangular individual mats on top of the artificial turf if the monies aren't available to repair the surface at this time.

Chris reported that these were used in the past and if she recalls they were expensive.

Jeff reported that a concerted effort will be made to move forward with this soon. A memo will be sent to Chris to forward to the necessary personnel.

III. Course Maintenance/Projects Report

James reported that the weather has been nice, which has allowed him to make the following repairs:

- All VP irrigation controllers from the irrigation project discussed last fall.
- The sprinkler heads are in and separated to individual stations.

- New software has been installed and upgraded.
- Faulty isolation valves issues on #7, 10 and 17.
- Irrigation leak on holes on #9 and #10.
- Bridge repair on the front nine and also boards have been tightened. All of the noise hasn't been removed but the repairs helped tremendously.
- The contractor has completed the roof replacement on the maintenance facility. The pump building skylight will be replaced soon. It was also damaged in the hail storm.
- Extensive amount of tree work has been complete with Dustin Branick, City Arborist, who has helped removed dead and storm damaged trees from last season. He also helped with safety training to take care of some in-house on #2, 5 and 18 which were removed. They also trimmed the large elm and the walnut trees near the clubhouse. This will help with air flow on the course.

Jeff added that Urban Tree Specialist did an amazing job; they are very professional and get the job done. He would recommend them to anyone inquiring about home tree needs. Jeff added that Dustin has been a God send and goes out of his way to help anyway he can. He is the most helpful although busy he comes out every chance he gets to assist at the course.

Council Liaison Azeltine interjected that he has used them before; they do a good job.

Chris reported that Dustin will work on the entry, the main beds and the area by the clubhouse soon. She also spoke with him regarding the ornamental trees that are no longer on the road between #11 and #12 that need to be replaced. Dustin will coordinate the work that needs to be done with James

James reported that crews have been working on limbing up trees around the property and opening up sight lines for cart traffic and golf. Sumps have been grinding in conjunction with the tree removal projects. They have begun aerification in roughs and sand projects have preemergent irrigation to check all installed to make sure it's correct. Greens aerification is scheduled for March 26.

- There are a lot of drain projects scheduled and bunker renovations to complete.
- They will clean up mulch beds and landscape work soon.

Chuck asked if it is possible to add trees on the right side of #1 to obstruct the view of the maintenance shed. He has brought them up for several years. It would be nice to have trees in the distance of the corner.

Chris reported that James should contact Dustin to talk with him about discounts.

Chair Fuller thanked James for the hard work done. The course is in excellent condition.

IV. 2013 Budget Recommendation (Troon) *(Jeff presented a handout)*

Jeff reported that it is hard to estimate the market for 2013. He is working expeditiously to plug away at the top line number and grow the top line revenue and the rounds. If you have good conditions you will do rounds of golf. It will be a healthy increase this year, but there isn't a magic number in rounds although he hopes to continue progress in 2013.

Jeff reported that we are stabilizing expenses and growing revenue per round to ultimately impact the bottom line, with continued improvement moving forward.

Jeff reported that we are showing positive growth. This is huge.

Chris asked if there are any thoughts about trying to get people to golf during the All Star Week because there are a lot of professional players in town and some Royals live here in Leawood. How can we market to the influx of people here for the week looking for a place to play golf.

Jeff replied that this is a good idea but the course is in the southern part of town, which may cause a problem. He will contact event planners from the many hotels in the area inquire to about partnering with them.

George suggested packaging a deal with a local hotel.

Several Committee members suggested that we contact those they know, who are major league players, and notify them about a "special" at Ironhorse.

Tommy suggested distributing flyers at hotels.

Jeff reported that some are reluctant to this but he will explore this option.

Jeff also reported that his goal is to get to a black number not a red number.

Chuck reported that this has been Council Liaisons expectation since day one.

Chuck made a recommendation for approval to accept the recommendation of the proposed 2013 budget as presented.

Tommy seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

V. 2013 CIP

Jeff reported that there haven't been any changes materially that were looked at last year. Equipment purchases and replacements are on the current list. There are also a few upgrades that are needed.

Chris reported that there aren't any changes.

Jeff reported that major bunker renovations will be needed in the future. They are not functioning properly. This has a major impact on the overall playability of the golf course. There are also serious tee box issues regarding the levelness and quality size. Jeff will contact Dr. Hurdzan to see about designing a new tee box between the existing white tee and the existing blue tee. On hole #16. Additionally, they will discuss the re-surfacing of other tees on the course. There are five to six that are unlevel- #3, 13, and 15 need attention. They won't get better only worse.

Chair Fuller reported that players look at tees and greens.

Chair Fuller asked the status of the bunkers. How many times have they been redone.

Chris reported that a significant amount of money has been spent on the bunkers in the past.

Jeff reported that he is unsure if the resources are available in house to complete the renovations at the same time the golf course is being maintained.

Chair Fuller asked how many bunkers are there.

James reported that there are 53. Some have eroded and are not in the best of conditions.

Chris asked where the water is coming from on #13 fairway.

James reported that the drain system backs up and causes it to retain water.

Jeff reported that he will get prices and prioritize a list for the bunkers.

Chuck asked in regards to the C.I.P.- is the cleanout under Mission Road the responsibility of Joe Johnson and the Public Works or Ironhorse.

Chris reported that it is Ironhorse. It is likely not a stormwater initiative.

Jeff reported that it is hard to maintain. Once cleaned, it will take a lot longer to get back to the level it's at currently.

Chris reported that it's an expensive project and we have still not received an estimate from O'Donnell.

VI. Misc.

Chuck asked if there is a problem with certain Committee members attendance that Chris and the Mayor should address.

Chris reported that she provides the Mayor a yearly attendance report.

Chair Fuller reported that condolences were expressed to Bob Reid and his family for the loss of his wife Jan who passed away recently. We are very saddened about his loss.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2012. 5:30 p.m.in the Main Conference Room at City Hall.

A motion was made by Bob Reid to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by George Waterman. The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director
Leewood Parks and Recreation Department