

IRONHORSE
Golf Club



GOLF COURSE COMMITTEE

Minutes of May 27, 2014
5:30 P.M. – Leawood City Hall – Main Conference Room

Members attending: Dick Fuller (Chair), Leo Morton, Tommy Davidson, Bob Reed, Chuck Sipple, and George Waterman.

Troon Management Staff: Mitch Harrell, Jamie West, James Kennedy, and Jason Roberts

Members absent: Steve McCartan

Council Liaisons attending: Jim Rawlings and Lou Rasmussen.

Staff attending: Chris Claxton and Tonia Morgan

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

Chuck Sipple made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2013 meeting. Leo Morton seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

I. Operations Report

Jamie reported that they are glad winter is gone. The weather attributed to financials being behind \$16K through the month of April but they are seeing an increase and he is certain the amount will be successful by month end. The revenue increase is attributed to the \$2.00 cart fee adjustment in fees, which reflects 50 more rounds sold in comparison to the same time last year. He has never seen a driving range as busy as Ironhorse. We don't have enough stalls some weekend afternoons. It is incredible, and nice to be busy and reflect an increase over the year.

Jamie added that expenses are up due to numerous needed golf cart repairs. New upgraded carts should arrive by the end of June with GPS systems including cart control and a reduced speed feature that can be limited to 3 mph in unsafe areas and full speed on flat areas. This will be an added bonus to the golf course.

Chuck asked if the carts experience a common mechanical problem that causes them to break down after a certain period of time. Is it mainly battery and motor issues.

Jamie replied that battery issues are minimal, most repairs are related to front end suspension damage resulting in a lot of money being spent on tires. Some players drive recklessly. He stopped a gentleman today who jumped the curb.

Jamie reported that benches and a yardage signs were purchased recently and the club washer was replaced. The enhancements are a nicer, friendlier atmosphere and encourage people to stay longer, which will hopefully result in spending more money.

George asked what happened to the outdoor clock that originally stood on a pedestal located on the side of the building near the ball machine. This was nice feature to know how far away your tee time was. The big poles are a nice feature instead of the flags. The flags weren't in straight and were constantly falling out.

Jamie added that the biggest improvement was the purchase of new Callaway light range balls.

Leo asked Jamie if he's been notified of the malfunction with the ball machine. Occasionally it releases three balls at a time when coins are inserted.

Jamie reported that he is aware. It is a mechanical problem that happens periodically. It will be repaired soon.

Jamie reported that a lot of new customers who have never played Ironhorse have visited the course recently due to hearing our advertisements. A lot of times you think you are throwing money out and never know if it is working but it is nice to know people are taking advantage of it.

Jamie added that they will host a live broadcast "Inside the Caddy Shack" radio show with Mark Nigro and Randy Miller at 8 a.m. from the food & beverage area. They will have specials and giveaways inviting people to the course.

Council Liaison Rawlings asked how our food and beverage menu compares to other Troon courses. Do we have the right mix of what players are looking for.

Jamie reported that a few menu items were changed this year and were well received. They run a daily special, which has been very popular. Alcohol prices were increased this year, which resulted in an increase in alcohol sales.

Mitch added that it is generally based on rounds. Most business is golf business.

George asked if there is potential to enhance the menu if the clubhouse is expanded to bring in lunch traffic. A lot of surrounding residences could benefit from this.

James reported that they have been busy tree trimming; they cleared a lot of brush on #16 and throughout the course. Pre-emergent and post-emergent herbicide was applied to all Zoysia grass areas. Soil samples were sent in for greens, tees, and fairways. They repaired edges on cart paths on #10 and #17 due to lingering damage caused by the floods last year. Landscape work was done on #14 bathroom, plants will be done in the fall. It looks really nice. He plans to do #6 in the future. Greens aerification and top dressing was done the end of March. New sub air valves were added on #4, #7, and #13 greens in the month of April.

Chair Fuller asked is there a reason all sub air valves haven't been done.

James reported that each valve set is \$750 per green and a green with two outlets is nearly \$1200 which is why his goal is to add this in yearly. One blower can't keep up with eighteen greens. He requested the purchase of an additional blowing machine in the Capital Plan; two greens are done daily, three if it is a long day. It would be ideal to have a minimum of three to sub air all greens.

James added that pre and post emergent was put down on all fescue areas. The cart path edge repair was done on #18. All of the flowers were planted in the beds at the front of the clubhouse area, and front entrance, as well as tee monuments. A big thanks to Jason for taking care of this.

James reported that the split rail fence was replaced on #2, #12, and #18 and backfilled surrounding areas. Damaged posts were repaired on #10, #13, and #15. They should last at least two more years.

Chuck asked about the damaged fence on the north side of #10, is the City or the homeowner responsible. It looks bad and is an eyesore. Can James do anything to the fence.

James reported that the fence is the responsibility of the homeowner. It could be stood up but the homeowner would have to grant permission to do anything to it. It is on his property. They cleaned the debris after the flood but the area can't be mowed with the fence down.

George asked if FEMA agreed to buy the house outright.

Chris reported that they did and the City sponsored the action but it is a matter of funding.

Council Liaison Rawlings reported that the homeowner is waiting for FEMA to issue a check. This could take a couple of years. The City will secure the property once the house is knocked down.

George asked if the adjacent lot with a for sale sign is in the same flood area. He would hate to see someone build there and it also floods.

Chris and Council Liaison Rawlings agreed that the house is probably out of the flood plain.

James reported that they installed irrigation on #17 walk-up. Traffic has been a challenge without adequate irrigation. They continue to spot spray weeds and do creek cleanup. Sod work on green surrounds will begin soon. The work on #2, #9, and #12 is also complete; remaining holes #4, #8, #11, #13, #14, and #15 will require work soon. They are concentrating on the area they know will come back in a timely manner and will replace and reassess as needed.

James added that Jeff Spangler stopped by for a site visit last week. He was very pleased with the course.

George reported that he's played the course since 1995 and it is a complete improvement over years past. The drainage repair James did in the rock area on #14 is the best he's ever seen. It is dry for the first time in twenty years. The sod looks beautiful. Overall the course looks great with a few minor areas of concern. He has always been a proponent that on certain holes an entrance/exit, utilizing a separate mulch path, should be added. Although he is aware they've tried, it is the same result year after year. He will be very interested to see if #17 sod holds this year. He's seen it sodded at least ten times in the nineteen years he's played there. The steps leading to #3 have extremely bad wood rot. He is afraid someone may get injured if not replaced soon.

James reported that it is in the Capital Plan to replace. He has received replacement prices, repairs will be done at that time.

George suggests taking care of it now; a temporary fix such as plywood should be placed on top until it can be permanently repaired. Some bridges have holes in the boards. He is also concerned if we will continue to have problems year after year without liners in the sand traps. He is aware they cost more but are needed and will be easier to maintain in the long run.

James reported that he is aware of the concerns and will look into them soon. He and Jeff Spangler discuss the sand traps each time he visits. They've considered removing bunkers in the flood plain and re-grading the area, especially the larger ones we battle each year. They

continue to research options. Sand isn't good in this area; better sand is hours away in Iowa and Arkansas. Our cost delivered is \$28 per ton. If purchased from Iowa, it cost \$90 per ton with a minimum order of 100 tons each purchase, \$60 covers shipping.

Tommy agrees with George. He also asked about the ladies tee on #18.

Chris reported that Scott Lambers is aware. Funding is an issue and we will revisit this in late September. It may be incorporated into the overall Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Several projects on the golf course could fall into this area.

James added that they continue to clean trees from the native areas.

James reported that they will continue working on the course. He appreciates the compliments.

Chair Fuller reported that he doesn't know of a course without bad sand traps, he plays many courses all around. We need to try to get the best situation we can but certain holes will always have mud and water in them no matter where you go. We would love to say ours are the best in town but this is nearly impossible with our terrain.

George asked if the homeowner who resides on #12 is happy with the fan fix.

James reported that it is operating. Jamie added that he hasn't received any feedback.

George reported that he is in favor of less bunkers and better quality of the remaining bunkers if this is the decision made by staff.

George asked if the course will be paid off in twenty years. It was built in 1995.

Chris reported that the course will be paid off in September 2015.

George reported that we could be in a positive state if the clubhouse is expanded with a 2015 opening date.

Chris reported that this could be but no further action has occurred.

Chair Fuller agrees.

Mitch reported that the clubhouse will make the entire package work and the extra money would no longer be needed operationally.

George reported that the bunker and tee projects are probably the two big things the course needs. The course is in good shape and James has done a good job with the greens. How do we find the money to get the expensive projects done. We should look at the budget and try to build in some money for this. It will always come down to finances if we don't elevate a certain amount of money for anticipated bunker issues and/or the note is paid off on the course. He recommends starting in 2015 when the note is paid off and we should anticipate a certain amount yearly for bunkers, understanding that we are in a flood plain and have a reoccurring problem.

James added that cost to constantly improve them is nearly \$10 - \$15K per year.

Jamie reported that it will be easier with extra revenue once the expansion is complete.

George thanked Jamie and James for their feedback. He apologized for bringing so much at one time but his term is up in June and this is his last meeting. He needs to express all areas of concern. He is moving across the state and will not be able to play the course as much.

Jamie thanked George for his input.

Chuck asked if more subsidence has occurred on the side of the hill above the cart path near #13 tee as a result of the rain we've experienced.

James reported that it runs constantly in this area.

Jason reported that it flows down the cart path. It is frustrating. The homeowners run their irrigation three – four times per day which doesn't help.

III. Update on Clubhouse Expansion

Chris reported that the proposed amount for the project was expected to be close to \$1.4 million. There were no changes since they were at 50% of plans but when they reached 100% it increased to \$1.7, without any contingency. Scott Lambers, City Administrator discussed the overall picture and different projects going on at a recent work session with the Governing Body. The project has become a bigger scope than anticipated. At a recent Park Board meeting projects were divided into different categories, ADA safety issues, repairs, and new, which is the category the Clubhouse Expansion falls under. Council wants input from the Park Board on how this is prioritized with the other projects of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Both will get together and work on this moving forward.

Chris added that the Planning and Public Works departments are currently reviewing the plans for the project to make sure that what we are receiving meets code, is without flaws, to make sure we have the plans that actually can be built and that everything is ready to go out for bid. She will have more clarity after the June Park Board meeting.

Leo reported that he doesn't know how "new" is defined but the expansion is an enhancement to an existing investment that will help improve on the return of the investment.

Chris reported that staff recognizes a bigger picture and agrees that although it won't benefit them directly, it is an excellent accompaniment to the Lodge. There is good opportunity for both to cross sell.

Tommy asked if a certain amount of money was approved a year ago to complete the project.

Chris replied that this is correct but this was before the design was complete and the plans at 100%. The price has doubled the budget. Most people could get their mind around the \$1.4 million but it was hard to comprehend the \$1.7 million, especially after no changes from the time the \$1.4 was estimated. The architect and contractor did not appear to be effectively communicating and didn't provide a good explanation during the Council work session. The City Administrator would like to review the plans, which we own, and put the project back out for bid. She is uncertain when this will happen.

Council Liaison Rasmussen reported that Council originally approved \$900,000 but agreed on \$1 million, the building design cost expanded from there.

Chris added that the plan was to begin construction in November 2014. This would have worked great from a time perspective for Troon. If things shake out favorably the project could still move forward in 2015.

Chair Fuller reported that the final plan and costs require Council approval. Once it passes the Planning Department it will go out for bid again before moving forward. His hope is this happens in the fall of this year.

IV. Misc.

Chair Fuller reported that George will be missed. He has been a friend, active participant, contributor and very adamant Ironhorse member and golfer. He has been helpful when we were going through a lot of problems with credibility. He lives on the course and plays there. The Committee wishes him luck in his new endeavors.

George thanked the Committee. He will miss the golf course. It has been a huge part of his life.

Chair Fuller announced that Steve McCartan resigned from the Committee. Two new Committee members have been appointed June 1.

A motion was made by Tommy Davidson to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Chuck Sipple. The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director
Leawood Parks and Recreation Department