



City of Santa Barbara

GOLF COURSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, August 13th 2014

Minutes

Dominic Namnath called the regular Golf Course Advisory Committee meeting to order at 4:36 pm at the Parks and Recreation Department Conference Room.

Roll Call

Committee members present

Others Present

John Craig
Bob Garcia
Bryant Henson
Maureen Masson
Dominic Namnath (Chair)
Gretchen Ostergren
Bob Swider

Simon Herrera, Golf Course Superintendent
Mark Sewell, Parks and Recreation
Mario Medina, Mulligan's Restaurant
Lani Medina, Mulligan's Restaurant
Chris Talerico, Director of Golf

Changes to the Agenda

None

Written Communications

None

Public Comment

None

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approval of Minutes from May 14th, 2014 and June 8th June 2014

The approval of the minutes was unanimous.

The Staff reports for maintenance addressed the issue of the height of the bushes near #10 tee.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND STAFF REPORT

2. Golf Rounds and Financial Reports

Mark Sewell presented the Rounds and Revenue report for Financial Year 2014 and the first month of FY15 (July).

Golf revenue and rounds were lower than both budget and last year for June and July.

Drought conditions following conservation efforts and high heat in the early summer may have impacted the demand for golf, however the trend is continuing through July and August where play conditions have improved while water savings remain on target.

Mark advised that current reserves are below policy levels and that a continuation of the current reduction in play of 15% would dramatically impact the ability for investment in capex and may result in the fund balance falling to zero by the end of FY15.

Staff continue to try to increase the rounds and revenues and have requested that home club members look to increase play for their groups by sharing ideas with each other and working with staff more collaboratively to identify opportunities.

3. Marketing Report

Pace of play continues to be good at Muni with the average speed for June and July being 4:05 and 4:10 respectively.

Fastest rounds are 3:30 and tend to be the groups teeing off earlier.

4for \$100 promotion was launched in July and had a good response. Flyers were distributed at concerts in the park and paid facebook adverts were used to increase awareness of the offer.

Other promotions are planned to launch in August.

Mark Sewell requested that GAC members forward examples of promotions from local courses that they have acted upon for idea generation.

4. Golf Maintenance Report

Simon Herrera presented the maintenance report and received many complements as to the current conditions of the course as well as the efforts made to conserve water.

The golf course has used 35% less water in the time period since stage 1 drought was declared compared to the same time period last year.

Staff presented the P&R strategic drought response to City Council, and this was very well received. Council members were very complimentary of the department drought strategy, and maintenance staff continue to work within the parameters of this and stage 2 restrictions.

Dominic asked Simon about the #16 tee box and this had been impacted by fertilizers not being able to be appropriately watered due to a breakage in water supply.

July has been a challenging month for the maintenance crew with electrical wire breakages causing irrigation controllers to stop working. Twice this issue caused 1/3 of the golf course not to be watered by the central control system and required many extra man hours to find and fix the issue and water the course by hand.

Trees remain a concern in terms of the drought impacts and the need to manage the weight of the tree canopy for certain trees. The pruning of the high risk trees will become a maintenance priority in coming weeks.

Improving the line of sight to #10 tee for golfers coming from #9 green will be worked on in August by reducing the height and thinning out the bushes that currently block the view.

Improvements in #9 green have been made with careful monitoring and care taking by staff. Hourly labor has been added to help to remove Bermuda grass from greens but this is

a lengthy job and may result in some temporary cosmetic only impairments. During this process the greens will still run fair and true.

This is essential to maintain the quality of the Poa/Bentgrass greens on the course.

5. Golf Pro Report

Chris Talerico presented that while play volumes are lower than hoped for, that range and merchandise sales are strong.

Chris advised that he had met with the organizers of the Santa Barbara Classic tournament and offered advice and guidance for building the popularity of the event.

Chris was very complimentary about the quality of the golf course and in particular the efforts made and results gained with regard to prioritizing greens and tee boxes for watering. Many positive comments had been received by staff in the pro shop and that is a testament to the maintenance staff.

Junior camps are more popular than ever and womens golf leagues continue to thrive.

Chris thanked the Cosmopolitan Club for their generous donation of three benches near the putting green and stated that they were opened for use in August.

6. Restaurant Operator Report

Mario and Lani Medina announced that Mulligans continues to deliver growth month on month and year on year.

Mario commented the need to work more collaboratively with the pro shop and city with regard the pricing and customer service aspects of hosting events and tournaments.

Mulligan's staff are currently conducting a bench marking exercise and will present options to the marketing committee for gaining more share of this market.

7. Home Club Reports

Home club reports were presented on behalf of the EWGA and Men's Club.

Men's club membership is now at about 280 members, down from 330 at its peak. Many of the members are playing Muni infrequently and improvements here would help to grow revenue. Recent events promoting an alternate bracket have helped to increase the golf played by the most active members.

Mark Sewell asked for suggestions from the home clubs of how they could be encouraged to play more golf at Muni and is open to working with the clubs to make this happen.

8. Players Improvement Fund (PIF) Sub-committee

Mark advised the committee that Nancy Rapp was working on the framework for the creation of the PIF committee and Mark advised that if possible a meeting prior to the next GAC would be scheduled to discuss progress and aim to provide the pathway to creating the appropriate structure.

Staff is working on the costing for proposed projects but will await the outcome of the process framework to provide the appropriate approval before commencing any work.

The list of proposed projects received from sub-committee in July is included in the attachments to the minutes.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6.45 pm.