



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: November 18, 2009

TO: Park and Recreation Commission

FROM: Golf Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Proposed Policy Changes for Santa Barbara Golf Club Tournaments

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission approves the changes to the Santa Barbara Golf Club Tournament Policies, which changes will be in effect on an interim basis through December 2010.

DISCUSSION: Revenue for the Santa Barbara Golf Club (SBGC) is being adversely affected by a number of factors including: the national and state recession and two construction projects; the Creeks Division water quality bio-filter construction from Hole #1 through Hole #16 and the golf course safety improvement plan which has specifically affected the play at Holes #5 and #11 with temporary greens. In addition, construction is almost finished on new concrete cart paths to complete the cart path system at the course. Rounds volume started dropping in late 2008 due to the recession; and after construction began in late July, rounds dropped drastically. There was a decline in rounds by over 24% in August, 30% in September and 21% in October (with a subsequent decline in revenue). In addition, due to the construction, Mulligan's Café is experiencing a decline in revenue from loss of customers as a direct result of lower rounds. In a recent survey, a decline in business of between 20-25% is being experienced by other local golf courses.

Although it is hoped that once the construction is complete and there will be an increase in rounds (now anticipated to be the end of January), the Director of Golf and the owners of Mulligan's have requested changes to the tournament policy to enhance the ability of SBGC to attract golfers and increase rounds and revenue. In November of each year, the Director of Golf begins to take applications for tournaments for the next calendar year. In discussing proposed tournaments with tournament organizers, and believing that SBGC is seeing a higher level of competition for tournament business from nearby golf courses, the Director of Golf believes the current policies are hindering the ability to attract tournaments to SBGC and requests a number of changes.

Since some of the proposed changes are an expansion of the current policy, it is proposed these changes occur as an "interim policy change" for the calendar year 2010. This will enable the SBGC and the Director of Golf to review how the changes affect rounds and revenue; if the tournament business is increased at the course; and whether

the changes do not significantly affect the public's normal access to the course to play golf.

Current Policy Restrictions and Proposed Changes:

The existing policy addresses Non-Major, Shotgun, Major and Home Club tournaments and events.

1. Current: Non-major tournaments (a group of 24 or more golfers) can only be held on Friday and Saturday and Sunday.

Change in Practice: In actuality, tournaments have not been held on Sundays; due to the use of SBGC in the mornings by the Home Clubs for their events. However, several times a year, Home Clubs do not have events/tournaments on Sundays and the Director of Golf would like to use those non-Home Club Sundays to schedule tournaments to increase tournament business. This change would implement existing policy when appropriate.

2. Current: No one individual, group or organization may schedule more than six tournaments per year and not more than one in a month.

Proposed Change: A determination of the maximum number of tournaments per month shall be based on recommendations from the Director of Golf to the Parks and Recreation Director.

It is believed that designating a specific limit on the number of tournaments is too restrictive if the course wishes to increase the tournament business. This change allows greater flexibility.

3. Current: Shotgun tournaments are only held during the months of September to May on Mondays and Fridays and during June through August on one Monday per month.

Proposed Change: Shotgun tournaments may be scheduled at any time or day of the year except Sundays, but limited to one per month.

4. Current: Shotgun tournaments scheduled on a Monday pay an extra fee of \$500 and tournaments scheduled on a Friday pay an extra fee of \$1,000.

Proposed Change: Shotgun tournaments scheduled on a Saturday will pay an extra fee of \$500 to cover direct costs of the greens maintenance staff to set up the course for shotgun play (golf maintenance staff don't currently work on weekends). Eliminate the Monday fee of \$500 and the Friday fee of \$1,000.

These fees may be a penalty to the tournament and a factor in keeping tournaments at SBGC when other golf courses do not charge the extra fee. The \$500 maintenance fee is in line with other department facility fees for staffing needed to set-up an event.

5. Current: A minimum of 24 players shall be required to schedule a tournament and the maximum number shall be determined by the Director of Golf.

Proposed Change: Create a new category of play entitled "Event/Outing." This category describes a group of less than 24 golfers (minimum number of players determined by Director of Golf) who desire to golf together for recreational purposes and utilize consecutive tee times.

The Pro Shop states a number of small groups contact SBGC regularly in order to arrange a group outing, and that some groups like to play at different courses in the area. It benefits the SBGC to facilitate these groups by eliminating the restrictive count of a minimum of 24.

6. Current: Under General Policy (last page); the Park and Recreation Commission, as authorized by the City Council, shall have the authority to establish and adjust policies and procedures as necessary related to use of the Santa Barbara Golf Club for tournament play.

Proposed Change: The Parks and Recreation Director shall have the authority to establish and adjust policies and procedures as necessary related to use of the Santa Barbara Golf Club for tournament play.

This change to the policy is consistent with other Department policies whereby the Director has the authority to make policy changes in all areas of the Department. In practice, it is unusual for a Commission to have authority over administrative policy. The current policy may have been established as a result of an issue in the past, which was remedied by giving the Commission authority over tournament policies. This recommended change is to return tournament policy to the authority of the Parks and Recreation Director.

There are no other major proposed changes to the Major Tournaments or Home Club Tournaments policy sections. Minor changes include the requirement that Major Tournaments sign a contract for the event; similar to how all the other tournaments are handled. There is some revised language to clarify the policy directives, including adding definitions of tournament categories.

Golf Advisory Committee Recommendation:

On November 11, 2009, the Golf Advisory Committee reviewed the proposed changes to the Tournament Policies and voted unanimously to recommend approval to the Park and Recreation Commission.

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ATTACHMENT(S): Draft Tournament Policy

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APPROVED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director