Winter Pines Golf Course Advisory Board Regular Meeting Minutes

January 29, 2024 at 8:00 AM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present
Sidney Cash, Marc Reicher, Sean Connolly, David Webster, Paul W. Smith Jr., Nancy Freeman,

Absent
Justin Ingram

Staff Present
Director Jason Seeley, Assistant Directors Cathleen Daus and Mike McCosker, Operations Manager Gregg Pascale, Recreation Coordinator Laura Halsey

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Consent Agenda**

   a. Approve the minutes of December 11, 2023

Motion made by Sean Connolly, seconded by Nancy Freeman, to approve the December 11, 2023 minutes.

3. **Public Comments (for items not on the agenda): Three minutes allowed for each speaker**

4. **Action Items**

5. **Non-Action Items**

   a. Keith Rhebb, Consultant/ Course Designer Summary

Keith Rhebb, Golf Course Consultant, presented a brief summary of the course updates and progress. He discussed the walking tour of the golf course and what areas of improvement they discovered. Mr. Pascale stated that the premise of the walk was to move the course from a par 67 to a par 70, irrigation improvements, and a long-term plan for the course.
Mr. Rhebb stated an additional hole could be added at hole 3 across from hole 13. There could always be a split fairway in that area as well. Additional recommendations

included moving the green closer to the creek at hole 4 and improving the drainage at hole 5 as stated in the walk-through summary. He concluded the additional holes could be at hole 3, hole 12, and hole 15, bringing the course to a par 70. While most of the focus would be on the back nine, there are also opportunities on the front nine.
Mr. Cash agrees with Mr. Rhebb's recommendations and is encouraged by the feedback on the improvement possibilities for the course. He also stated that removing the trees and other foliage that are not a good fit has made a positive change to the esthetics of the course. The board is encouraged by the conversation and is supportive of the recommendations. Mr. Connolly spoke about the improved health of the creek and inquired about future plans for continued improvements. Soil and water samples would assist in improving the health of the creek. Expansion of the creek is also a possibility for improved water flow and esthetics.
Next steps are obtaining quotes for an irrigation audit as well as a preliminary plan for the additional holes to increase the par. Ms. Daus stated that now is the time to discuss the recommendations and create a proposal to present for budget approval. Board requested Mr. Rhebb to provide a breakdown of the improvement plans and perhaps staff could work on fundraising efforts. Mr. Reicher feels this would set a good stage for the project.

b. Paul Twyford, Bonfire F&B Update & Overview

Mr. Twyford walked the board through his 2023 report and some of the successes, which included the bar area and the food & beverage options.
The food menu has been expanded and updated, as well as the cocktail menu, which has added several craft cocktails. They also kept a 'quick menu' for those patrons that want to grab something on the go rather than having a seated meal. Financial goals would be to increase revenue through higher ticket prices, increase volume through neighborhood community, and maintain revenue from existing customers. He provided a revenue comparison from 2021 to 2023. Bottled beer sales are down 32%, food is down 15%, but liquor and draft beer sales have increased more than 100%. 2022 was not factored in due to it being the acquisition year. Operational expenses have increased and even though ticket prices were increased, there was less foot traffic in 2023 than in 2021. Efforts moving forward include marketing and additional engagement through member surveys, ads on the cart GPS, hosting chamber events and small wedding receptions, a brunch menu, community interaction activities such as live music, bingo, and trivia nights.
The board feels the beverage cart may not be an economically feasible idea. They believe that the water machine is probably the most popular area, so perhaps creating some grab & go options or a cooler with beer in that area would be beneficial. Another board member suggested having pitchers of domestic beer available in addition to the tap and craft beers.
(Ms. Freeman excused herself from the meeting at 9:39 am)
The board feels Mr. Twyford is doing a good job on improving the F&B area of the course and provided suggestions based on personal experience as well.

(Mr. Webster excused himself from the meeting at 9:46 am)
Mr. Pascale stated we had over 100 members and around $43k in revenue.

6. Staff Updates

a. Brightview Consultant

Mr. Pascale updated the board on the progress with Brightview representative, Jason, and where we stand on the discussed changes for improvement. Mr. Pascale also stated Brightview is looking for more of a long-term plan. We do have a 6-month plan with them at this time with the Superintendent's position remaining open. He informed the board that training is being provided for current staff to become licensed spray technicians. Ms. Daus added there are two open irrigation technician positions as well. The WP18 does not have a greens specialist at this time, but current course staff has stepped into the leadership role in the interim. The board inquired about hiring updates and if we are close to hiring for the positions. The board also suggested having one person that can oversee both courses, much in the way Mr. Pascale oversees both courses in an operations capacity.

b. WP18 Financials

Ms. Daus provided a brief synopsis of the financial status of the course noting an issue with the tracking software which caused the counts to be off.

c. WP9 Financials

Ms. Daus covered the financial status of WP9 and recounted that the software glitch caused the member numbers to be off. The margin is better this year, per Mr. Pascale.

d. Social Media Efforts

Ms. Daus provided the board with some statistics and comparisons regarding our social media pertaining to the golf course.

7. Board Comments

8. Upcoming Agenda Items

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:05am

ATTEST:

Approved by the board
/s/ Laura Halsey, Recreation Coordinator