

Wicomico Shores Golf Course Advisory Board
Thursday, June 7, 2011
Special Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robert Richardson, Chairperson; Gloria Tippet, Secretary; Gerald Slagel, Robert Collier, and Wayne Pettit.

R&P STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Phil Rollins, Director; and Pat Meyers, Golf Course Manager. Shelby Guazzo and Ebie Cooper, of the Marketing Subcommittee, were also present.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Wicomico Shores Golf Course (WSGC) Advisory Board was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Robert Collier moved, seconded by Gerald Slagel, to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2011. Motion carried 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE

Chairman Richardson welcomed Shelby Guazzo and Ebie Cooper, members of the Marketing Subcommittee. Ms. Guazzo provided a report on marketing and promotion recommendations and what's been done to date regarding these efforts.

- Signage is a main concern. Each business in the County can post 3 signs – a main sign and two directional signs. Plans include: posting a sign for the restaurant in Chaptico Park, possibly posting signs on MD Route 234, and on Mechanicsville Road. Drafts of the signs made by Wayne's Signs were provided for review.
- Mr. Nolan has offered the services of the Lundenberg School to fabricate the sign frames.
- Future plans include updating the main sign at MD 234 and Aviation Yacht Club Road.
- Business cards have been drafted with golf course information on one side and restaurant information on the other.
- Mr. Rollins has been talking with the County's IT Department about getting two domain names so the webpage can be more accessible to web searches.
- Ms. Meyers is working with a designer on developing a brochure / rack card for the course and restaurant.
- The membership with the Chamber of Commerce has been continued; it's hoped that the Chamber annual golf tournament can be held at the course in the future as well as Chamber After Hours events.
- Ms. Guazzo, Pat Dugan and Vince Calebro attended the Tudor Hall Business After Hours event to promote the course. Golf balls were provided as door prizes.
- The Chamber Update has space for small ads; there is a possibility the course can do this for \$125 per year for 11 issues. This piece is distributed to 750 Chamber members; the newsletter is available in business offices and waiting rooms for the

- public. Inserts are also an option for the newsletter.
- Radio commercials were done with WKIK and Star98.7
 - The group thought newsprint ads weren't as effective any longer.
 - Ms. Guazzo provided some statistics for banquet room events held over the last 14 months. 71% of events were booked by St. Mary's County citizens; 71% used the Restaurant's food service; there were 15 wedding events; 6 baby showers, 5 birthdays, 10 business events; and 5 others.
 - Ms. Guazzo suggested looking into changing the name of Aviation Yacht Club Road to Wicomico Shores Road or something similar. There are only 27 houses on this road out of 400 homes in the community. Wayne Pettit stated that the reason the road was named AYC Road was that years ago there was a yacht club and a private airport on the property. He agreed the name should be changed. A committee would need to be formed to inform the community of the proposal and ask them to sign a petition.
 - Ms. Meyers reported that plans are moving forward to develop an advertising commercial. The cost is \$850 for the 30 second, professional commercial. Three banners are being developed; one each for July, August and September. Themes will be Juniors play free with a paid adult; starting "twilight at 12 noon" and get 20% off Pro Shop merchandise; and, book a party in September for October through February and get 10% off.
 - Star 98.7 plans to host a golf tournament in the near future. This is a great advertising opportunity as it will be broadcast live with T-Bone and Heather.

Mr. Rollins thanked those on the Marketing Subcommittee for donating their time to promote the facility.

Mr. Pettit reminded Patty to place the information on the upcoming Father's Day Brunch on the webpage.

Mr. Collier asked if staff should be contacting wedding planners; Ms. Meyers stated that advertisements have been placed in the local bridal guides.

Ms. Guazzo noted that a "play book" needs to be developed to keep track of advertising, contacts, procedures and outcomes. She also recommended hanging a few more tv's on the wall over the bar.

Mr. Slagle recommended posting a sign on the 9th tee with the restaurant phone number so golfers can call ahead and order food to go.

Bob Collier noted a friend attended a wedding at the Riverview recently and had a great experience, except for a couple of concerns, such as set-up availability. Ms. Meyers stated that the room can't be closed to golfers until 5:00 pm during peak season; however, this patron was allowed to come in early to set up. She would have liked more information on hotel availability and shuttle service. Staff will refer patrons to the Tourism website which lists all this information; staff can't endorse certain hotels or caterers.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Mr. Rollins provided several preliminary financial reports for review. He referred to the monthly summary of the Riverview Restaurant and Banquet facility for the last three years. To date, through the month of May 2011, the facility is in the black by an estimated \$8,000. This is an

improvement over the last two years. He felt the administrative changes and expanded marketing efforts have helped the overall situation.

He also provided a summary handout on how the overall facility has done over the last dozen years. He pointed to the last line that shows the restaurant banquet facility netted about \$8,000. The challenge will be to bring up the rounds of golf. The good news is that, even with the same level of play, expenses are down considerably. He referred to the final table that provided monthly tracking information. It also showed the course is doing better by reducing expenses even though rounds are down. Chairman Richardson noted that rounds of golf are down at most courses in the area.

Mr. Rollins reported that the BOCC agreed to reduce the administrative reimbursement for R&P staff. The last few years that has cost the golf course about \$50,000 per year based on a percentage of staff time. That fee charged to the course has been reduced to about \$23,000.

Gloria Tippett stated that patrons are still interested in a Friday night league. She stated that Swan Point has a similar "nine and dine" offer. Mr. Pettit stated that a beverage cart would be a benefit to the course; Ms. Meyers stated that was tried in the past and it wasn't cost effective. Ms. Meyers will check with the Liquor Board to see if volunteers could work the cart.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Collier said the hot dogs still need some improvement; it was noted that some members liked the hot dogs.

SCHEDULING THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the WSGC Advisory Board will be held on Thursday, August 11, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. at the Clubhouse.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:15 P.M.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder (from tape recording)