

**Wicomico Shores Golf Course Advisory Board
MINUTES
Wednesday, July 9, 2014**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Gerald Slagle, Chairperson; Robert Collier, Ebie Cooper, David Phalen, Jenny Russell and Tom Schumacher.

ABSENT: Robert Richardson and Brian Loewe, R&P Director.

R&P STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Patty Meyers, Golf Course Manager.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ebie Cooper motioned, seconded by Bob Collier, to approve the minutes of April 17, 2014; the motion carried with all in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Financial Report

Ms. Meyers referred to preliminary reports that were prepared by the Recreation and Parks Fiscal Specialist. She noted that approximately 24,660 rounds of golf were played in FY14 through May 31, 2014.

The biggest areas of concern: greens fees and cart fees are down \$52,000. The course normally averages about \$30 per round; the decrease in rounds also affects sales at the restaurant and pro shop.

Some expenses have increased: greens and grounds by approximately \$18,400; the clubhouse (for utilities) by about \$12,800; administration (benefits) about \$4,600; and retiree health by about \$7,000. Revenues are down and expenses are up at this time.

The prior fund balance was approximately \$96,000. At this rate, the fund balance will likely be depleted by the end of the fiscal year. This challenge is being discussed by County staff. Staff is also discussing the impacts of new minimum wage and Affordable Care Act requirements on the budget.

Ms. Meyers quoted some golf stats and information from Data Tech, of the National Golf Foundation. Golf course managers from around the country send in rounds of golf information and reports are generated. Year-to-date industry rounds of golf for the DC/MD/DE area are down about 16.8 %; WSGC is down about 7%. The East Coast is in a downward trend for rounds of golf; some areas of the west coast are up. Ms. Meyers noted the number of tournaments at WSGC is about the same; however, the number of people playing in the tournaments is down.

New Equipment

The new equipment has been received; the Kubota mower has been in the shop several times for repairs. The Jacobson greens mower seems to be working fine.

Options are being explored and information is being gathered for the new golf cart fleet. The

Procurement Office is assisting with this effort. There is a NIPA contract for purchasing golf carts; EZGO has been awarded the contract for 2015. The Board would like to review the information and make recommendations on the new fleet as it moves forward.

Ms. Meyers stated the course has had some recent incidents of vandalism. The Sheriff's Office is trying to identify the vandals.

Kitchen Grill

Mr. Slagle stated he talked to Ms. Meyers and Mr. Loewe a few weeks ago about possibly getting a larger grill in the kitchen. The current grill is approximately 24 inches; he would like to see a four foot grill to be able to cook food more quickly and efficiently. Staff will check into all the requirements needed to enlarge the grill; a larger grill, similar to the current grill, could cost over \$7,000. Ms. Meyers stated that Sunday mornings are the major impact time. Staff will need to keep track of the days that it would help and potential revenue it could generate, compared to the cost of the grill.

OPERATING ISSUES

Supervision after 5:00 p.m. in the evenings – This has been addressed by providing staff to supervise evening activities.

Menus – Menus were sent out to the Wicomico Shores community in June as requested.

E-mails – Mr. Slagle noted that e-mails of concern were received from a current and a former staff member; those comments have been investigated by staff. Also, an email was sent to the BOCC from a patron regarding flag etiquette on Memorial Day; this will be addressed for the future.

Mr. Slagle stated that he met with the County Attorney to obtain additional information on conducting meetings. Mr. Slagle reminded members that all meetings of the WSGC Advisory Board are open to the public.

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Slagle stated the Board's bylaws specify that an annual report is to be made to the BOCC each year. The report can be mailed in or can be presented in person. When the draft is done, the entire Board will review and approve; it will then be submitted to the BOCC.

Mr. Slagle stated that during a time when rounds of golf are down, then revenue efforts should be focused on the restaurant (dinners, specials, etc.) to help offset the loss. Mr. Cooper stated that staff has to weigh the costs of spending (new grills and oversight) on new items with realistic revenue projections. Some things may need to be "put on the back burner" until the financial picture improves. Mr. Slagle suggested improving a few fairways at a time to see if play picks up.

Mr. Phalen stated that he would like to see more positive information at the beginning of the report (charity functions, high school practices, food drive, Special Olympics, etc.), then list the challenges and recommendations. Ms. Meyers will email the 2013 information on tournaments, events, and other annual activities to the Board. Mr. Phalen wants to show how the course enhances the community (like the pool, skatepark, etc.). The challenges could include: cart lease, capital equipment, restaurant and condition of the course.

Options for restaurant management were discussed for the draft. There was discussion on cost saving

recommendations on contract versus merit employees. There was also discussion on filling positions with contract or hourly employees when merit employees leave or retire. The Board decided to delete paragraph five in the draft.

SCHEDULING THE NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the WSGC Advisory Board will be held on Wednesday, October 15, 2014.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 P.M.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder (from tape recording)