

**Wicomico Shores Golf Course Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 10, 2009**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chico Rivers, Chairperson; Jim Hodges, Vice-Chairperson; Phil Cranford, Wayne Pettit, Bob Richardson, Rick Smith and Gloria Tippett.

R&P STAFF AND OTHERS ATTENDING: Patty Meyers, Golf Course Manager; and Jay Morgan, Food, Beverage and Banquet Supervisor; Jim Farren, Golf Course Superintendent; and David Weiskopf, Deputy County Attorney.

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

Phil Cranford moved, seconded by Jim Hodges, to approve the minutes of April 8, 2009. Motion carried 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Request that Chairperson Be a Voting Member

Chairman Rivers stated that consideration of the Board's request to make the Chairperson a voting member was to be considered on the June 2, 2009 Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) agenda; however, it was removed from the agenda in order to give the full WSGC Advisory Board time to review the proposed changes to the bylaws.

Chairman Rivers introduced David Weiskopf, Deputy County Attorney, who was present to explain the proposed changes to the bylaws. Since a section on the current bylaws says the Board shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised, the County Attorney has also recommended to delete that language and to insert the following: The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Commission in all cases deemed appropriate by the Chairperson to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the Commission may adopt. He also provided a copy of page 471 of Robert's Rules of Order pertaining to small Boards and Committees, which states that the Chairperson can make motions and usually votes on all questions.

Jim Hodges stated that he felt a complete discussion was held at the last meeting and the Board voted unanimously to request that the Chairperson be made a voting member. Chairman Rivers stated that the Board should be given the opportunity to review the draft document before it's presented to the BOCC.

Rick Smith stated that the current bylaws state that the bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed and new bylaws may be adopted by two-thirds vote of members, so long as a quorum is present, and the WSGC Advisory Board members have received 30 days prior written notice of the proposed change(s). All changes are subject to final

approval by the BOCC. Mr. Smith stated that the Board should have been notified, in writing, 30 days in advance. Mr. Hodges stated that he thought that receipt of last meeting's minutes covered the notification. Mr. Smith stated that the actual amended bylaws are what should have been sent to all the Board members in advance of presentation to the BOCC. Then the Board should have voted on the revised bylaws and sent the new document to the BOCC for consideration and approval. Ms. Meyers agreed to copy the revised by laws for the members.

Mr. Hodges objected to the 30 day waiting period as he felt the previous discussions covered the waiting period. However, it was noted that only the issue of making the Chairman a voting member could have been covered by the waiting period; the other new language added by the County Attorney's office was not previously discussed or covered by the waiting period.

Environmental Areas on the Course

Mr. Smith stated that he would like to review the environmental areas on the golf course and determine if the original goal of keeping errant golf shots away from homes had been achieved. Chairman Rivers asked about the reason for not cutting grass where homes are not in jeopardy; example, the right hand side of number 10. Mr. Farren stated that grass is tall on the left to protect the homes; the grass is tall on the right because 50 yards is traditionally the farthest point out you should be hitting balls. It's also due to aesthetics and the amount of grass the staff has to cut.

Chairman Rivers asked "what are we achieving by letting the grass grow." Mr. Hodges stated he thinks we have achieved the goal of not hitting the homes on left of 10 and left of 4; Mr. Farren agreed. Robert Richardson stated that it does slow play; he recommended if you have the tall grass then you don't go into the grass looking for balls. Mr. Hodges stated that we could cut the right side of 4 and maybe cut the rest more often. Mr. Smith agreed that the grass has achieved the goals; maybe now is the time to let staff "tweak" the areas and cut some grass more often.

NEW BUSINESS

Non Golfers on the Golf Course

Gloria Tippet stated that more non golfers have been seen on the golf course and expressed concern regarding safety. Mr. Farren stated there are several signs on the golf course letting people know that non golfers should not be on the course. Ms. Meyers stated this might be something that should be included in the Homeowner's Association newsletter.

Tee Marker Location for Hole Nine

Mr. Smith recommended that a sign with an arrow be installed for the tee marker for hole number nine. Mr. Farren will look into this.

Food and Beverage Prices

Mr. Smith stated that he's heard some comments from golfers about the prices of food and beverages; some things are evenly priced at \$2, \$3, etc. He suggested rounding to the nearest quarter; Ms. Meyers stated that staff can do that.

Financial Report

Ms. Meyers referred to the financial reports recently emailed to Board members. In 2008, the course sold 208 passes, with 270 passes holders (users); 2009 to date is 198 passes, with 242 pass holders. Sixteen golfers are still playing, just paying for rounds and not buying season passes. This fiscal year to date, the course is down by 3,600 rounds; about 10%. A large outing was scheduled last Friday, but was cancelled due to rain; it was rescheduled for later this summer. The economy and the wet weather this spring have affected the overall revenue.

Mr. Hodges opened a discussion on FY08 actual, the FY09 approved and the FY09 to date budget numbers. He stated that he's concerned about the golf course revenues. He noted the significant decrease in revenue from season passes; that is \$39,128 less than FY08 (he noted a few more season passes may still be forthcoming). He projected that greens fees are down by about \$24,500 over this time last year. He projected that cart fees are down by about \$37,000 over this time last year. He questioned the projections and felt that income was overestimated by about \$314,000. Mr. Hodges stated that weather should really not be a factor, as each year we have good and bad weather. Mr. Farren agreed to an extent; however, he said we have had an extremely wet spring and the economy is causing folks to tighten their belts. Projections are made 1 ½ years in advance per the budget process. Mr. Richardson noted that revenue at other courses is down also. Ms. Meyers stated that June is the biggest revenue month, when the bulk of the season pass revenue is received, and is not included in this report. Mr. Hodges estimated that the course is down about 5,000 rounds; Ms. Meyers stated that June has historically been a better month for rounds and that will be included on the next financial statement.

Mr. Smith asked how the projections are prepared and noted that we lost two months of golf during the construction of the clubhouse. He stated that considering that and the fact that June is not included, this might not be such a bad picture.

Mr. Rivers stated that operating in the red is a cause for concern, especially since no tax dollars go toward the operation of the golf course. Wayne Pettit stated that it's reasonable to assume the economy is playing a big part in the reduction of revenue.

Ms. Meyers discussed several upcoming promotional ideas to generate more play. Some are targeted at folks who may have decided not to take a vacation this year.

Riverview Restaurant Update

Jay Morgan provided an update on the Riverview Restaurant operations; he stated revenues are also down for the restaurant.

- The Maryland promotion has been changed from a \$10 coupon to a 10%

discount; lately, discounts have been used by locals instead of bringing in new customers. Chairman Rivers asked if notice could be posted of the promotion change; Ms. Meyers stated that could be done. Mr. Morgan stated that it's also noted on the website.

- Mr. Smith asked about the expertise of the cooks. Mr. Morgan stated the he has received some customer feedback and has developed a survey card to try and determine where things can be improved. Mr. Smith stated the service at the facility is great.
- Mr. Hodges asked if a small buffet could be set up for large parties who make reservations; this would avoid problems with them ordering off the menu. Mr. Morgan stated that has been discussed and will be done in the future.
- Mr. Morgan stated that theme nights have been implemented and seem to be popular with patrons. There are some challenges to the nine and dine; predicting how many specials will be sold is a challenge. It would be great if people would commit to dinner before they golf. Ms. Tippet mentioned the possibility of a buffet.
- Ms. Meyers reported that the restaurant had a loss of \$2,261 for April and a profit of \$3,528 for May.
- Chairman Rivers stated that patrons are asking for a television behind the bar; Ms. Meyers stated that this will need to wait until after the new fiscal year.
- There will be a 130 person full room wedding rental on June 27th. Staff will work to accommodate the golfers during this event.

SCHEDULING THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the WSGC Advisory Board will be held on Wednesday, August 12, 2009, at 6:00 p.m.

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

Kathy Bailey, Recorder