

WICOMICO SHORES GOLF COURSE ADVISORY BOARD

**December 14, 2005
Meeting Minutes**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Merrill "Chico" Rivers, Chairperson, Jim Hodges, Vice-Chairperson, Robert Richardson, Wayne Pettit, Rick Smith and Gloria Tippet.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Phil Cranford.

OTHERS ATTENDING: Phil Rollins, Director, Recreation, Parks and Community Services (RP&CS), and Pat Meyers, Golf Course Manager, RP&CS.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of September 14, 2005 and November 2, 2005 were approved with one change to each. September 14th - The following sentence with regard to the third and fourth motions on page one was changed to read: Chairman Rivers stated that he felt the above motions were inappropriate. November 2nd - The following statement was added to page three, paragraph six: The Board recommended a press release to announce the BOCC taking action regarding the REOI. Mr. Rollins stated the Department did prepare a press release and sent it to the Public Information Office for distribution to the media; staff will follow-up on the status of the release.

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Chairman Rivers stated he had previously mentioned that he wanted to see the requirement for a mandatory walk through included in the REOI solicitation for the Clubhouse project. He since learned from Patty Meyers that Procurement indicated that requirement is not allowed by law. Chairman Rivers was concerned that the site visit would be held before the letters of interest are due. Mr. Rollins stated that the purpose of the site visit is to let potential contractors obtain additional information on the project before they submit a letter of interest. Mr. Rollins stated that if they miss the site visit, they can still visit the facility on their own and have their questions answered, according to Procurement guidelines. Chairman Rivers stated that he would like to see the legal requirements with regard to the mandatory walk through.

Chairman Rivers stated that Phil Cranford and Gloria Tippet have volunteered to serve on the selection committee to review and evaluate submittals and make recommendations as to the selected contractor. Mr. Rollins, Patty Meyers and William Russell, from Building Services, will also serve on the committee. After the interviews, the committee will make a recommendation on a preferred contractor to the Advisory Board. The BOCC will be made aware of the selected contractor and will approve the contract which is later negotiated with the contractor. The BOCC must approve any County contract over \$1 million.

Mr. Rollins stated that the contractor will know up front of the target/not to exceed amount. A contract will be issued and modifications made if needed. The project budget is \$1 million to \$1.5 million; anything over \$1.5 million will have to be considered and approved by the BOCC. A few of the contractors indicated after the last unsuccessful bid that they were comfortable that a renovation project could be done for \$1.5 million.

Mr. Pettit was concerned with telling the contractors up front how much money the County is allowing for the project. Mr. Rollins stated that the problem is, since this is a design build project, that we don't have plans up-front.

Mr. Rollins stated that he anticipates it will take up to a year to go through the design process and get necessary permits and approvals. Mr. Hodges stated that we need to look into shortening that timeline. Chairman Rivers stated that government in general takes a long time to get projects done.

GOLF COURSE UPDATES

Pat Meyers provided the following report for Jim Farran:

- Early rains in April and May led to a very late spring. Bermuda grass fairways had a late May green up.
- Dry June and July with very little rain set the course back, but rains in August saved grasses.
- September was the driest September on record, but rains in October saved the course and revitalized it for upcoming winter months.

Mr. Pettit asked if children should be allowed to sleigh ride across the greens. Ms. Myers stated that most sleds are plastic now and are not really sleds, so they don't damage the course. In the last eight years, there have been no problems with this. A snow fence will be placed around the pond. She expressed concern with the four wheelers driving on the course.

Projects During 2005 Season – Pat Meyers

- The tee boxes on holes 2, 6, 7 & 12 were expanded. The tees are complete, with the exception of the additional top-dressing and leveling for final finish.
- Expansion of hole 14 tee box (with reclaimed fill from waterfront park project) will require additional work in spring after several more months of drainage and drying time. An additional 4-5 inches of top soil will be added and then tee will be seeded or sodded. Opening date is expected to be mid to late summer.
- Thirty-six trees purchased through Maryland's Tree-mendous program have been planted throughout the course.
- Twenty-five trees were cut down to help realign shots that were interfering with homeowners' property.

Projects for the Upcoming 2006 Season

- Weather permitting, staff plans to expand the ladies tee boxes on holes 4, 7, 9, 12 & 15. After top soil settles this winter/spring, tees will be seeded or sodded in late spring. Tees should be opened mid to late summer.
- Tee box on hole 17 will be renovated to one level in fall, and expected to reopen in spring 2007.
- Staff plans to aerify all tees twice during the summer and heavily top dress to level the tops off.
- All fairways will be aerified in July – August time frame.
- If budget allows, 1 or 2 greens will be "water-wicked" by outside contractor. This process was successfully done on hole 17 a few seasons ago.

2005 Policy Update and Review

- Tee times for St. Mary's County residents – SMC residents that are already season pass holders have been taking advantage of this policy change. No additional changes are proposed at this time.
- Gift Certificates
 - Current policy – up to one foursome for weekday play (carts not included). Manager can issue this to any SMC charity upon written request. Out-of-County organizations must request them from the Director of RP&CS.
 - Staff recommendation – allow manager to issue gift certificates to any Southern Maryland charity upon written request. Also, allow manager to issue as group or individual certificates based upon sound business decision. The Board's consensus was to approve staff's recommendation.
- Cart rental policy

- Current Policy – There is a last cart time based on remaining daylight hours (i.e. last cart for 18 holes is 1:00 p.m.; last cart for 9 holes is 3:00 p.m.).
- Staff recommendation – Change last rental time to no restriction and establish a cart must be returned by time policy. The Board’s consensus was to approve staff’s recommendation.

Ms. Meyers will provide Board members with a copy of the Policy and Procedure Manual during the next meeting.

GOLF COURSE FEES

Ms. Meyers provided the Advisory Board with a handout Golf Course fees that included golf seasons 1998/2000, 2001/2003, 2004/2005, adopted 2006, proposed 2006 and proposed 2007. A copy of the handout is attached to the minutes for reference. Staff is proposing to make fee adjustments due to some unanticipated cost increases over the past year. Mr. Hodges did not think it was a good time to raise prices, although he understands the reasons for the proposal. Mr. Pettit stated that it makes sense to base fees on the cost of living index. Chairman Rivers stated that “then you are locking into an increase each year.” Mr. Rollins stated that the philosophy has been not to raise fees each year. Mr. Rollins stated that basing increases on the cost of living makes sense, but market conditions, cost of doing business, and other factors also need to be taken into consideration.

The Advisory Board approved the proposed 2006 fee increases with four members in favor and one opposed. The Board approved the proposed 2006 cart fees for 18-holes to \$14 with four members in favor and one opposed. The Board did not support any 2007 season increases at this time.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the WSGC Advisory Board will be held on March 8, 2006.

The meeting concluded at approximately 8:45 P.M.

Kathy Bailey, Recorder