

**Wicomico Shores Golf Course Advisory Board
MINUTES
Wednesday, April 17, 2014**

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

ABSENT: Tom Schumacher, Vice Chairperson.

R&P STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Loewe, R&P Director; Patty Meyers, Golf Course Manager; and James Farran, Golf Course Superintendent.

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 January 15, 2014; the motion carried with all in favor.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBER

Chairman Slagle introduced new Board member Jenny Russell to those in attendance.

OLD BUSINESS

Financial Report

Ms. Meyers referred to four reports that were previously e-mailed to Board members for review. She reported that revenues are down and expenses are up at the present time. This year's weather has been difficult for play; lack of play has resulted in the decreased revenue. The majority of the increases include: health insurance, post retiree benefits and electric bills and gas bills (due to the cold winter). The expenses in the golf shop normally rise in the spring when inventory is stocked.

Season pass revenues are down because some pass holders did not pay by April 1st; hopefully that will improve in the next month. Winter and spring work on the course has been completed; the hope is the weather will improve for golf play.

Jenny Russell asked: what constitutes total rounds of golf; Ms. Meyers stated that all play, including tournaments, is included in the total rounds. 2 nine-hole rounds are included as eighteen hole equivalent. She noted the rounds in 2008 as 38,000; Ms. Myers stated that's when the operation was running out of the temporary trailer and the new facility opened October 2008. Ms. Meyers stated that about 35,000 is the target number for rounds of golf. The operation's fourth quarter is normally the best quarter for golf.

Pass Holder Discount

Ms. Meyers stated that the discount to bring in new pass holders has been going on for approximately three months. To date, eighteen new pass holders have signed up. Current pass holders get \$ off their pass for bringing in a new pass holder (\$100 for 7 Day Unlimited; \$75 for 7 Day Limited; and \$50 for 5 Day Limited). Prorated credit can also be provided. Ms. Meyers will send an email message out to pass holders letting them know the offer is ongoing.

Mr. Slagle asked if staff knows why some pass holders are not returning. Ms. Meyers stated the few she has heard of included reasons such as: started a new job; just had a child; death or illness; or joined another club with friends.

David Phalen moved, seconded by Jenny Russell, to continue the season pass discount offer; motion carried with all in favor.

Golf Cart Replacement

The current golf cart lease ends in March 2015. A package for new carts / new lease needs to be developed this fall.

- Current lease - \$28,000 per year; preliminary (this rate may go down)
- Course currently leases 69 carts; may lease less in the future
- New Carts with new lease – new lease would nearly double
- Add another year to current lease – projected cost \$26,300
- Buy carts at end of lease – \$2,422 per cart and \$2,910 for utility carts
- 2010 used carts retail for approximately \$3,500 each (the value new was \$4,200)

The carts are in good condition now; however, tires, batteries, and other items will need to be replaced soon. Another year would probably be feasible; however, all the batteries may need to be replaced if the lease was extended by two years. The carts generated \$318,500 in revenue last year.

Sand Trap Drainage Schedule

- Chairman Slagle expressed the interest in installing drainage for sand traps in the fall. Several traps hold water after significant rainfall.
- Jim Farran, Golf Course Superintendent, will check into that; possibly an October project. Mr. Farran noted that drainage work on sand traps is costly. A truckload of sand costs about \$800; washed gravel is about \$500-\$600; roll of pipe about \$100; and equipment rental. Each trap would cost about \$2,000; additional upgrades could make the total \$4,000 for each trap.
- A professional company quoted Mr. Farran \$8,500 per trap about eight years ago for this work.

New Equipment

The new equipment was received about three weeks ago; this includes a Jacobson greens mower and Kubota front deck mower. Exempt financing was able to be used for the equipment, which provided a cost savings for the course.

NEW BUSINESS

Restaurant Operations

- Chairman Slagle stated with golf play down, the restaurant operations need to be expanded. Ms. Meyers noted that restaurant hours will be extended until 9:00 p.m. starting in May.
- The new Banquet Coordinator is doing a great job in marketing for weddings, receptions and events. Most of the events will be marketed for Saturday evenings.
- Mr. Slagle suggested a happy hour, specials, etc.; he suggested keeping these things going over time; the challenge is with the expenses associated with the events.
- During the winter, the restaurant was closed more due to weather conditions.

- The kitchen normally closes by 8:30 p.m.; if there are patrons in the restaurant they won't be asked to leave when the bar closes at 9:00 p.m.
- Dinner specials will be implemented again this summer.
- Bob Collier mentioned his daughter and son-in-law live in the area; are to go menus available? Ms. Meyers stated those are available; it was suggested they should be placed provided to residents of Wicomico Shores.
- Mr. Slagle suggested that if members have ideas, to bring them to Ms. Meyers' or the Board's attention. He asked staff to think about additional supervision at the Restaurant since, most of the time, there is no supervisor at the facility after 4:00 p.m.

Pro Shop Phone Lines

Mr. Slagle noted that all the phone lines need a system for recordings when the course is closed. Ms. Meyers stated that the bar line has an answering machine; the line in the Pro Shop does not. Sometimes the Pro Shop is staffed when the course is closed if weather conditions are predicted to improve and someone is needed to reserve tee times. She will check into options for the call forwarding or answering services for the Pro Shop line.

Other Business

- Ms. Meyers noted that Julianna Goldsmith was nominated and received the County Government's Employee of the Year Award in the non-administrative category. Kim Cullins, Marketing Specialist, from the Museum Division, was awarded Employee of the Year in the administrative category. Congratulations to these outstanding employees.
- Customer Satisfaction Cards – Ms. Meyers, Mr. Slagle and Mr. Shumacher met to discuss marketing and customer satisfaction. She provided copies of draft customer satisfaction cards for the golf course and restaurant for Board members to review. This would take the place of a suggestion box; cards will be placed on golf carts and at tables and the bar.
- Annual Report – Calendar year 2013 annual reports need to be submitted to the BOCC this spring; the last one was done in 2010. Kathy Bailey will draft the report. Boards have the option of mailing the report in or presenting the report during a regular BOCC meeting.
- Mr. Slagle noted that he and Jenny Russell attended the Board and Committee training conducted by the County Attorney's Office on February 5, 2014.

SCHEDULING THE NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the WSGC Advisory Board will be held on Wednesday, July 16, 2014; the meeting was subsequently changed to July 9, 2014.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Kathy Bailey, Recorder (from tape recording)