

**Wicomico Shores Golf Course Advisory Board  
Special Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, February 18, 2009**

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Phil Cranford.

**RP&CS STAFF AND OTHERS ATTENDING:** Phil Rollins, Director, Recreation and Parks (R&P), and 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. in the Clubhouse.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Jim Hodges moved, seconded by Bob Richardson, to approve the minutes of January 14, 2009, with one correction. Motion carried 5-0.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Safety Concerns with Outside Balcony/Patio**

Patty Meyers, Golf Course Manager, met with the Fire Marshall and Adam Knight, Code Coordinator for Land Use and Growth Management, about safety concerns and falling hazards at the balcony area. Ms. Meyers provided a sketch of the Clubhouse outside patio/balcony area and suggested safety railing. The thought was that this might prevent patrons from standing next to the stairs and falling. A gate was also discussed as a safety measure. The Fire Marshall and Code Coordinator recommended starting with the safety railing and posting signage. The County's Risk Manager reviewed the sketch and had no issues or concerns. The County's insurance carrier, Local Governmental Insurance Trust (LGIT), will conduct a site visit in early March. Ms. Meyers obtained an estimate of \$1,600 for the barriers. Mr. Rollins expressed concern that the proposed safety railing wouldn't prevent the majority of falls and was concerned about the aesthetics of the proposal. Mr. Hodges asked if this was the only option; Ms. Meyers stated that this was only one option; perhaps LGIT will have some additional suggestions. Ms. Tippet asked if posting signage would work; that would reduce liability, but might not stop falls. Ms. Myers suggested painting the last step orange to draw attention to the steps. Ms. Meyers will provide a report to the Board on LGIT's suggestions.

**Riverview Restaurant**

Chairman Rivers reported that the Valentine's Day special brought quite a few customers to the Riverview. The special included 116 reservations, 21 walk-ins and 2 specials to go. Ms. Meyers stated that business has been a little slow, but it takes a while to get any new business up and running. She reported that a wedding reception is planned for Friday night; the Red Hat Ladies and Harley Davidson groups are regulars; and a Chamber of Commerce business after hours event is upcoming. Phone calls are coming in for 2010 receptions and parties. Rick Smith asked if staff thought about specials or packages to get restaurant patrons to use the golf course and golf course patrons to eat at the restaurant. He suggested if you play 18 holes, and rent a cart, the greens fees would be waived if you purchase a dinner special. He mentioned looking at ways to

compliment each operation. Ms. Meyers stated staff has considered these types of specials and may offer some in the future. Ms. Tippett stated that patrons like the new breakfast menu and asked if it could be expanded.

Mr. Rollins referred to the Riverview Restaurant profit and loss statement and the Golf Course annual comparison FY04 – FY09. These reports have been updated since the financial report was provided at the last meeting. He noted that, as expected, the restaurant has been operating at a loss since it opened about five months ago. Staff is hopeful that warmer weather, additional marketing and increased golf play will turn this around. Preliminary numbers for February look promising. He also referred to the annual comparison sheet, actuals July 1, 2008 – February 15, 2009 column, and noted that the total operation, the golf course and restaurant, is in the red. Again, with better weather, this should improve, but the course may not be able to make up the entire deficit this year. The fund balance may need to be used to break even. He noted the debt service has been paid for the entire year and considerable expenses were incurred with the start up of the new restaurant.

Mr. Hodges asked if the banquet room rental fee line item could be added to the restaurant profit and loss statement as it's more a part of the restaurant operation than the golf course. Mr. Rollins will have staff check into that.

Ms. Myers stated that she and Mr. Morgan plan to meet with staff from the Maryland Small Business Development Center to discuss the Riverview operation and possible ways to maximize revenue generating potential.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Meeting Schedule**

Rick Smith recommended that the Board meet on a bi-monthly basis instead of on a quarterly basis. This could also eliminate the need for some special meetings. Wayne Pettit was not opposed to the idea, "but didn't want to have meetings just to have meetings." **Rick Smith moved, seconded by Bob Richardson, to have the WSGC Advisory Board meet on a bi-monthly basis, on the second Wednesday of the month, beginning in April 2009. Motion carried 3-2 (Mr. Hodges and Mr. Pettit voted nay).**

### **Interclub Matches**

Ms. Tippett provided a copy of a letter sent to Ms. Meyers regarding interest in ladies inter-club matches with Breton Bay, Hawthorne and Swan Point golf courses. Several lady golfers at WSGC have expressed interest and would like the opportunity to play with other clubs. These private clubs have been participating in inter-club play for the past four years. Requirements include: host one play day between April and October; shot gun start; cart fees only; and each club sets format of play. Dates would need to be coordinated with each course. Events average about 35-40 participants. She feels this would be good exposure for the golf course and restaurant. Mr. Rollins said the challenge would be the precedence this would set for other groups wanting similar arrangements. Mr. Pettit and Mr. Smith supported the proposal provided that it can be managed with no scheduling or other conflicts. The consensus was to leave this to staff's consideration as a management decision. Ms. Meyers will continue to examine this and try to define some parameters and update the Board on her findings.

**Update on Information from Golfers**

Chairman Rivers had nothing significant to report from golfers at this time. He noted that on a few warm days recently, staff worked hard to accommodate golfers and their tee times.

**Annual Report**

Chairman Rivers referred to the draft Annual Report document that was previously emailed to Board members. During the last meeting, staff was asked to develop the draft document for review. The Board will continue to review the document for approval during the April meeting. Ms. Tippet noted a change on page four; she did not serve on the interview panel for the Food, Beverage and Banquet Supervisor.

**Other Business**

Mr. Hodges referred to the Board by-laws and stated that he thinks the Chairman should be a voting member; currently the Chairman votes only when there is a tie. He referred to a recent vote on raising fees and where the minority of members present passed the recommendation to raise fees (a 2-1 vote; with one abstention). He doesn't like three votes determining what a Board of seven does. Mr. Smith stated the bylaws were developed as such to have the Chairman be the tie breaker and to enable business to move forward. Mr. Pettit stated he missed the meeting due to a funeral; he's not opposed to the fee increase but recognized that in these economic times we could be turning people away with fee increases. Chairman Rivers stated that the ability to vote could give the Chairperson too much authority. Chairman Rivers stated that in the future, when an important issue comes up, the full Board should be present or the vote delayed. Chairman Rivers stated this topic could be placed on the next agenda for consideration.

**Suggestion Box**

Ms. Tippet reported that she received requests from patrons for a suggestion box. Ms. Meyers said in the past the course had a suggestion box, but didn't receive many valid suggestions. She thinks the Board members are doing a good job bringing concerns and issues to the Board and staff.

**SCHEDULING THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the WSGC Advisory Board will be held on Wednesday, April 8, 2009, at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting concluded at approximately 7:30 P.M.

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Kathy Bailey, Recorder