

City of Melbourne



Leisure Services Department
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**CITY OF MELBOURNE, FLORIDA
MINUTES – GOLF COURSES ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING
May 12, 2010
Melbourne City Hall – Council Chamber
900 East Strawbridge Avenue
Melbourne, Florida**

A meeting of the Golf Courses Advisory Board was held at the Melbourne City Hall, 900 E. Strawbridge Avenue, on this date, called to order by Chairman John Francey at 6:30 p.m.

- 1. All present gave the Pledge of Allegiance.**
- 2. The following members and staff were:**

Present:	John Francey	Chairman
	Gubi Sachidanandan	Vice-Chairman
	Robert Paquette	Member
	Jack Bryant	Member
	Paul Murray	Member
	Mary Ann Bowman	Leisure Services Director
	Robert Nachreiner	Golf Director
	Lynn White	Manager, Crane Creek Reserve
	Ed Barbour	Golf Pro/Manager, Mallards Landing
Absent:	Penny Goode	Member
	Eric Martin	Member

Mary Ann Bowman introduced Councilman Mike Nowlin who was attending the meeting.

- 3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – January 13, 2010**

Motioned by Sachidanandan/Paquette approve January 13, 2010 minutes.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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NEW BUSINESS

4. Fiscal Year 2010/2011 Budget and Fees

Robert Nachreiner informed the board that it is this time of year that we look at next year's budget. It has been recommended that we look at raising the annual fee by 5% to build up the reserves. Staff does not recommend this since it would create bad faith among the players due to the conditions of the courses after the harsh winter and the competitive prices that other courses are offering. He advised that the overall golf industry is in a tough spot. He stated that raising the annual fee would only generate approximately \$15,000. He pointed out that next year the expenditure side of the budget will be flat or decreased since the \$60,000 equipment lease will expire this year along with not filling several positions and using volunteers to save on the payroll. Janitorial services are being contracted out verses filling a custodian position. After a three-month trial basis the cost and services being received have been good. Concessionaire workers are being hired through a temporary agency therefore no city employees are being hired to work in the lounge. Ms. Bowman reminded the board that last year the golf course fund took a loss and borrowed money from the general fund in the amount of \$127,000. A payment plan has been set up with the golf courses paying back the general fund \$8,000/month. Mr. Nachreiner reminded the board that \$110,000 was spent on the repair of the netting and bridge from tropical storm Faye. FEMA denied the claim so the golf course fund had to pay for it. The Risk Manager advised that he has requested mitigation on the denial of the claim, however, if you've read the newspaper lately you would have seen that FEMA is broke.

After the second quarter this year the fund is in good shape with a cash balance of \$118,000 after expenditures. Revenues collected are between 48-50% of the budget with expenditures around 41%. Mr. Nachreiner reminded the board that several years back the board voted to raise the annual fee by the CPI (Consumer Price Index) however, last year there was no increase and he anticipates it will be pretty much the same this year however, if it does go up then that is what the annual fee goes up by. Last year fees did increase along with the walking policy during the winter including the implementations of a Brevard County daily rate. Annual fees have steadily declined since 1995 with 427 this year.

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A lot of this is with the younger generation wanting to travel and play various courses in the vicinity and not join one particular course along with the state of the economy contributing to the decline. The board agreed that fees should remain the same and the annual fees increase per the CPI. Ms. Bowman advised that if something changes regarding the fees a special meeting would be called since they are currently in the midst of the budget preparation.

Discussion followed.

5. Annual Board Presentation to City Council – June 8, 2010

Ms. Bowman reminded everyone that the board presentation to Council will be June 8th at the City Council meeting. Copies of the last presentation were distributed to all board members to review. Chairman Francey asked all the members to e-mail their comments and suggestions to Ms. Bowman to update.

6. Staff Report

Mr. Nachreiner reported that year to date play is down 12-15% with the average golf course in Florida down by 15.8%. Revenues are down by 10% with the average down about 16%. He emphasized how the winter weather was brutal with 11 straight days below freezing in the mornings with little or no play on several days. It significantly affected the greens and the conditions of the golf courses. It wasn't until the end of April that the weather got warm. The type of grass we have did not hold up well to the weather. In the last two weeks the courses have improved and by the end of May should be 98% recovered due to the aggressive treatment.

Staff took over the concessions April 1st with food and drink sales going well. The golfers have been very receptive with the prices and customer service. If board members have any suggestions on what else they would like to see, please let staff know. Staff will be offering specials, happy hours, etc. to entice players back to the lounge.

Both courses were treated with curfew for nematodes. This was something that was cut out from the budget last year. Since it was not done last year they really showed up this year. Mallards Landing was affected more than Crane Creek due to the sandy soil.

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7. Petitions, Remonstrance's, and Communications

Jim McDonald of Woodlawn Circle asked the board if they plan on having the cart policy again next winter. Mr. Nachreiner responded that they do plan on implementing it again next year. Mr. McDonald responded that he objects to the walking restricting and it is his personal opinion that it did not have a positive affect on revenues. He stated that if the walkers could have started at 8 a.m. there would have been more tee times available at 11 a.m. for those who wanted to play at that time. He would like to urge the City not to continue with the walking restriction during the winter months. He said the only positive effect he could see on the revenues was by the new tier of a lower daily Brevard County rate. Mr. Nachreiner informed the board that if you looked at the tee sheets you would see most mornings the tee sheets were 80% full with the cold weather actually affecting those who did not come out and play.

Jack Bryant inquired about insuring the driving range netting. Mr. Nachreiner stated that the netting has a 7-year warranty and with the most recent storm the netting held up very well however several poles had to be replaced since they snapped off and broke in half. Mr. Bryant also asked about the possibility of lighting the driving ranges to increase revenues. Mr. Nachreiner stated that the cost to do this is very expensive and was looked into several years ago. Several years back the average cost to build one was in excess of \$200,000. Many of the lighted ranges have closed since they are not cost effective. Mr. Bryant asked if the courses are being provided enough re-use water. Mr. Nachreiner advised that the Water and Sewer Plant upgrades have improved the amount of water they need.

Chairman Francey inquired if we need to revisit the administrative fee that the golf course fund pays the City. Ms. Bowman advised that the fee continues to be in-line. She advised that staff reviews the report every year. He also encouraged management to work with staff on customer services. Ms. Bowman encouraged board members to please let staff know if they ever witness an employee or volunteer who is not promoting good customer service. During these tough economic times staff needs to bend over backwards in servicing the customers. Education and training should be ongoing with staff; and management will continue to address this.

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Lynn White informed the board that Mr. Nachreiner recently met with the Crane Creek Reserve Men's Association and reviewed the budget and answered any questions or concerns they had.

8. Adjournment

Motioned by Sachidanandan/Bryant to adjourn.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.


Mary Ann Bowman, Recording Secretary