

GOLF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2016  
DENNIS HIGHLANDS GOLF COURSE  
4 P.M.

PRESENT: Chairman Oman, Members Fenton, Mikkila, Harper and Scibeck

STAFF: Director Cummings, Office Manager Fabiano-Stowe

ABSENT: Member Fiske, Alternate Richard

Mr. Oman called the meeting to order and stated the first thing on the agenda is the proposed Highlands Clubhouse renovation. Mr. Oman noted this was an informational meeting only, to let the membership and residents hear what has been proposed. Staff has been working on this proposal for a few months now. An architect or general contractor has yet to be selected. This has to go before the Board of Selectmen (tomorrow evening). The Capital Outlay Committee and Finance Committee have already seen the proposal and are both favorable. The PowerPoint presentation that will be given this evening is the same that was given to the Finance Committee. The reason the proposal is coming now is so that it is in line with the Highlands front 9 renovation project, to allow for the minimum amount of impact to the operation.

Gary Barber, Building Committee, was present and gave an overview of the project and costs. Mr. Barber showed the layout with additions. The plan is to begin in the fall of 2017 to be completed in spring of 2018.

Mr. Cummings made the PowerPoint presentation.

David White, resident from Dr. Stanton Road, was present and commented he does not see the Golf Courses receiving any money back. Mr. Cummings addressed Mr. White's concerns, stating the Board of Selectmen gave him a charge and was told to appease both the residents and guests, in terms of revenue. Mr. White asked if it would affect league play. Mr. Cummings stated it would not. The anticipated increase in event bookings would occur in the shoulder seasons.

Lois Katanik, member, asked how much a tournament would typically bring in revenue. Mr. Cummings gave the policy outlining tournament play and stated tournaments could bring anywhere from \$4000-\$8000.00. Ms. Katanik also asked if a portion of the renovation would have to be ADA compliant. Mr. Cummings stated it would have to be by law.

Ken Amelin, member, was present and asked what the return in revenue on the investment was estimated to be. Mr. Cummings stated this is not all revenue driven, as the building is tired and is in need of a facelift and maintenance; however, we do lose a lot of outings for not being able to

accommodate them. Mr. Cummings stated the greens fees at the Pines were up almost \$30,000.00 this year. It is hard to pinpoint, but, we are certain the outcome will be positive.

Charlie Jones, member, asked about the capacity of the restaurant and if an outing could be as many as 144 players, why cut the seating to 100 people. Mr. Cummings stated average seating is 110.

Jack Hudson, member, asked if the construction of the new addition would that have full basement. Mr. Barber stated the additions would be on slabs, but the downstairs will be renovated and brought up to code. The only things in the building that will not be addressed are the restrooms, as those have already been addressed.

John Kade, member, was present and asked how much additional space would be accompany the renovation, and asked about bringing the building into ADA compliance. Mr. Cummings explained the law regarding the ADA compliance.

Paul Katanik, member, asked how much in revenue is turned back to the town each year. Mr. Cummings stated around \$1,000,000.00.

Mr. Cummings commented on the timing of the project.

Mr. Oman stated a financial plan has been put into place, without the need at this time to raise fees. Mr. Cummings stated within a four year time span, the golf course will have had \$2.5 million dollars in renovations, and the Golf Capital Improvement Fund will have funded \$2.1 million of the renovations.

David Connolly, member, asked how thirty more tournaments could be held and stated he did not see the need for a bigger restaurant.

Lois Katanik asked if there would be a need to address the parking. Mr. Oman stated that the parking is already over what is needed based upon the square footage.

John Kade asked with regards to the outings, how that would help the golfers that are members, seeing he has had a hard time booking tee times already. Mr. Cummings stated he disagreed with Mr. Kade, and noted that the reason for the difficulty in receiving tee times was not because of lack thereof, but rather the timing that is sought.

Mr. Cummings further stated 68% of the tee times that are used are used by the memberships.

Jack McLellan, Restaurant operator, stated many member tournaments hold their meals in other places because of the lack of space to accommodate them.

Jim Horvath, member, stated it should be emphasized this proposal will make a much more enjoyable experience for everyday non-member play, and the play will. Mr. Horvath further stated this is a municipal golf course, not a private facility.

#### **MOTION**

Mr. Scibeck moved to recommend the proposal for the Highlands Clubhouse Renovation as presented. Ms. Mikkila seconded the motion. The Committee voted 5-0-0.

#### **2. Director's Report/Supt. Report**

Mr. Cummings stated as of the end of February, the Golf Course revenue was \$262,000.00 over last year at this time. The courses are doing well. There has been little snow to affect winter play. Greens Fees are up at the Pines. Fees did not go up this year.

Rick Pace, member, asked about the size of the membership. Mr. Cummings stated it is close to the same every year, 1500 members total. Non-Resident members make up about 90-100.

Bill Allard, member, asked if a cap has been made on the non-resident memberships. Mr. Cummings stated not yet.

Mr. Cummings explained some issues that have come about with regards to seasonal staffing and the Affordable Care Act. The Golf Course has been limited to the number of hours a seasonal employee can work. This will greatly impact the maintenance staff. If the staff were to go over the allowable number of hours, the Town would be liable to pay health insurance benefits, which are very costly. The Department was notified of this change in February, so some shuffling had to be done. It is a very complicated process. Some of the returning employees will not be returning until May, based on the new scheduling requirements. Some have decided not to return at all. This presents a huge challenge for the department. A lot of cleanup is involved. Mr. Cummings asked that members be patient, as some items may not get addressed as soon as they used to.

Ken Amelin, member, asked if outsourcing would be a solution. Mr. Cummings addressed Mr. Amelin's question.

Mr. Cummings stated the Department has received a Chelsea upgrade and it is now web based. If the membership should have issues making tee times, please let staff know. Mr. Cummings also stated there is a new website up and running and is much more convenient.

Mr. Cummings stated the department is in the process of finishing up the Pines. The granite tee signs are being taken out, and new more simplified tee signs have been ordered. The MGA has played the

course. Mr. Cummings stated the architect could not believe the amount of work that was completed for the money that was spent. This renovation was a great experience.

Mr. Pace asked what was being done with the old tee signs. Mr. Cummings stated he would look into it. Mr. Pace also asked if anything was being done about the Pines clubhouse. Mr. Cummings stated money had already been appropriated for the Pines and permission was just received to put in a lift.

3. Public Input

Bill Allard stated he was disappointed to not see the Member/Guest on the tournament schedule.

5. Minutes- January 11<sup>th</sup>

Ms. Mikkila moved to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2016 Golf Advisory Committee.  
Ms. Scibeck seconded the motion. The Committee voted 4-0-1(Fenton)

6. Old/New Business

None

7. Next meeting

Mr. Oman stated we would hold off on scheduling the next meeting until the architect has been contacted, as we would like for him to make a presentation.

Mr. Oman stated this was Mr. Fenton's last meeting and thanked him for serving. Also, Ms. Fiske would not be returning.

**MOTION:**

Mr. Fenton moved to adjourn.

Mr. Harper seconded the motion. The Committee voted 5-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.