

**Golf Commission Minutes
Special Goal Setting Session/Dinner Meeting
Tuesday, November 20, 2007 6:00 pm
Wartburg College Heritage Ballroom**

Members Present: Klamfoth, Lutz, Striepe, Tyler, VanDaalen
Members Absent: None
Staff Present: Ray, Mason, Snook
Council Present: Ribich
Visitors Present: None

Summary of Formal Action: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chairperson Van Daalen.

Motion: Approve September minutes as amended and the October minutes as written.

15-07 Moved: Tyler Seconded: Lutz
Yes: 5 No: 0 Absent: 0

Regular Business:

1. Review and Recommendation of Lease Agreements with the Waverly Country Club

A Sub Committee of Golf Commissioners, Country Club Board members, and their respective staffs met twice to negotiate the Pro Shop Lease and the Selling Alcohol on the Golf Course Land Lease.

The Pro Shop Lease is recommended to increase rent to \$9,500/year for the next three years. It has been \$9,000/year for the past 6 years. There is additional language regarding cleaning the downstairs restrooms, more definition of the major events, notice of dates for major events, and deleting the language for reopening the agreement if there is a change of management.

Selling Alcohol on the Golf Course Agreement is basically the same as previous agreements. There are updated liability insurance limits.

The City Attorney has reviewed both of these agreements. The Country Club Board of Directors has approved these agreements.

The Commission noted the dates on the Pro Shop lease need to be corrected to say 2008 rather than 2007.

Motion: To recommend to the City Council the Pro Shop Lease agreement as amended and the Beer Lease agreement with the Waverly Country Club for 2008-2010.

16-07 Moved: Klamfoth Seconded: Striepe
Yes: 5 No: 0 Absent: 0

Study Session

Five Point Plan to Increase Revenues- Mason

Ray and Mason handed out several support materials.

Mason reviewed several statistics from this past year. He talked about the percentage increases in rounds and revenues over the past years. He mentioned after being at the course for a year has allowed him to see some things that could be done. Mason talked about the revenue per golfer, both season and daily. The idea is to increase rounds and in turn revenues will increase.

He talked about the information he has received from the municipal courses in Waterloo and Cedar Rapids. Both experienced drops in rounds over the past 5 years. The only exception was a course in Waterloo with a pro that aggressively markets. Otherwise this year rounds were flat or dropping.

Mason said that he has raised prices every other year. Season passes one year, carts and daily fees the next. There are fewer complaints when this is done.

Mason's Five point plan began with marketing. He strongly feels to continue with TV, Weather Channel crawl and newspaper ads. He is a believer in consistency of ads. Any additional funding would be used for ads in community newspapers in our north market. He is seeing golfers from Mason City, Charles City and Oelwein so he feels this is an untapped area. Mason suggests \$1,500-\$2,500 additional funding.

With the new computer software, email addresses can be captured and direct marketing can be done at little to no cost except the time to input the addresses. Special offers can be sent to attract golfers. Tracking responses can assist in knowing where to put the marketing efforts and funding.

His next point was season passes. He feels there are opportunities in the junior and senior passes. Seniors are currently not offered and he feels the service should be brought back. He also would like to offer a junior pass limited to the weekday afternoons- the slow time on the course. Both of these will bring more traffic to the shop and produce more sales of concessions and merchandise.

Mason wants to continue the specials that were offered this past year. They seem to work and help the marketing.

Mason wants to start a series of monthly public tournaments. He wants to start in the early season to catch the "early birds" so they start golfing here. The events would include couples events that were very popular at other courses. He would also keep track of the tournament winners and create an end of season tournament with the top players. This would create some interest and would have people sign up for the events to keep themselves on the top of the list. Lastly, Mason would run a junior tournament because youth are the future golfers.

Mason then said that he would like to produce a small brochure to advertise outing play to businesses. The Pro Shop staff would call on businesses to talk to them about having their event

at the course. The outings could generate additional revenue by securing sponsors for flag prizes, hole sponsorship, cart signs, etc.

Marketing, season passes, specials, tournaments and outing play are the keys to growing golf, and producing more rounds and revenues. The Commission had many questions and Mason answered them with the data he has received from the other courses and the data from the past year.

Goal Setting Session

Ray reviewed the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) from the 2006 Commission Goal Setting Session. The Commission added and deleted items on the lists. They then listed items of immediate need, short term need and long term need.

Strengths of Commission and Course

- Available to play
- Easy to get on
- Playability of the course
- High quality of care staff
- Longevity of staff
- Affordable
- Support from City Council
- Great shape/renovation project
- Unique situation with Country Club
- Challenging but playable for all abilities and ages
- Trees- well designed
- Private Carts
- Realistic revenue projections
- Cart Paths
- 2003 Golf Course of the Year

Weaknesses

- Lack of practice/teaching area
- Youth program-don't know how it is going
- Acceptance of private carts as a norm
- Supply of golfers in Waverly
- Weeknights when there are league activities
- Partnering with the motels
- Restroom on the course
- Compared too much with Waterloo/Cedar Falls
- Unique situation with Country Club
- Outside uses-Fair/Fireworks

Opportunities

- Coordination of youth program
- Draw golfers from metro area

- Ability of guests to use Country Club facility
- Seniors
- Joint event
- Marketing
- Set realistic revenue budget
- Outings
- Golf foundation for \$ gifts
- Partnering with Wartburg on parents/student events
- “W” golf hitting area
- Waverly Bucks for prizes
- Centennial Oaks joint efforts

Threats

- Accepting mediocrity of course conditions
- Self supporting
- Other golf courses
- Competition for the recreation time and dollar
- Key staff turnover
- Trees lost
- Moving TCC

Immediate Needs

- ❖ Trees
- ❖ Country Club
- ❖ Marketing
- ❖ Seniors
- ❖ Revenue budgeting
- ❖ Marketing during construction
- ❖ Irrigation update
- ❖ Centennial
- ❖ Fairway improvements

Short Term

- ❖ Youth program
- ❖ Key Employee Retention
- ❖ Fair
- ❖ Income/Revenue Streams
- ❖ Fireworks
- ❖ Trees
- ❖ Market new holes

Long Term

- ❖ Restroom
- ❖ Practice/Teaching Area
- ❖ Trees
- ❖ Cart Staging Area

❖ Better Pro shop

Director's Report

Ray distributed the corrected financials through October.

Chairperson Van Daalen suggested the next meeting have sufficient time to discuss several important items. They included the 80% plan report for the project, fees and charges, and the budget. The Commission thought two separate meetings would be best to adequately discuss the issues. Ray will see if the architect can give the project report at a noon meeting on December 5. The budget and fees and charges will be discussed at the regular meeting date of December 11 in the evening.

Next Meeting: Next meeting is tentatively set for Wednesday December 5, Noon at WAGOCO. And, Tuesday, December 11, 5:00 pm at City Hall.

Adjournment: Adjournment was at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tab Ray
Leisure Services Director
Commission Secretary