

IRONHORSE
Golf Club



GOLF COURSE COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes- February 27, 2020
5:30 P.M. – Leawood City Hall- Main Conference Room

Members attending: Chair Dick Fuller, Mark Bodine, Tommy Davidson, and Dr. Peppes

Member absent: Scott Picker and Leo Morton

Troon Management/Staff: Ryan Eckroat, Jeff Thomason, and James Kennedy

Council Liaisons attending: Chuck Sipple and Mary Larson

Staff attending: Chris Claxton, Camille Sumrall, and Bill Chance

Chair Fuller called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

I. Welcome New Committee Member Gary Bussing

II. Operations/Financial Report

Chris introduced Bill Chance, Facilities Supervisor for the City of Leawood.

Bill reported that he has been working with contractors on insulating plumbing and installing new plumbing lines in the restrooms and kitchen. There was damage above the cart barn area from leaky restroom plumbing. They are working on removing mold because of the leaky plumbing. They are also working on finding a new way to incorporate the walk in cooler. They are considering moving the cooler and changing the façade of the building slightly to incorporate the new cooler location. They are still researching the best location for the new walk in cooler. This will give the kitchen much needed room and functionality.

Chris added that they will be exploring redesigning the entire kitchen for better functionality.

Ryan added that they will also be exploring updating the restrooms as well. They are in need of an update.

Jeff asked if they are considering adding additional square footage if they are already planning on knocking down the wall for the new walk in cooler location. Additional square footage could be used for a larger dishwashing area or storage area, both of which are in desperate need.

Chair Fuller asked when the project would start.

Bill responded that it would likely begin this November.

Dr. Peppes asked where the money would come from.

Chris responded it would come from regular repair and maintenance and the funds are available now.

Ryan reported the following:

Jan 2020 Financials:

224 rounds were played vs. 296 in January of 2019. Interestingly, these were all played in the first half of the month as we recorded 0 rounds the last 16 days of the month due to cold weather and/or snow closures. Altogether, we had 8 days that we were outright closed due to snow coverage. As a result, Golf fees fell \$2.4k below prior year.

Despite the lack of traffic, range revenue was reasonably flat to prior year and merchandise revenue exceeded prior year by \$1.5k due to special orders. Additionally, we ended 2019 with golf merchandise inventory at \$43,481, which was almost \$14k less than prior year. That level of inventory control continues into 2020 with end of January 2020 coming in at \$43,008, which is a \$14.7k reduction from prior year.

2020 bookings for the Vista 154 have been strong. As of this time, we already have almost the same number of events booked for this year that we were able to complete in all of 2019. Further, we are up to 18 weddings booked in 2020 compared to 10 from 2019, and have been receiving inquiries for 2021.

Marketing and Operations Update

- Group golf bookings continue to be strong going into 2020. We have seen a slight waning in small group outings, but an increase in large group outings. We currently have 4,112 group rounds booked for 2020 across 47 different events. In comparison, we reached a total of 4,460 total group rounds in 2019, however that was over 62 events. With the state of the group golf market in the KC area, we are optimistic that we will continue to pick up additional bookings as the year progresses.
- Existing pass holders from the 2019 golf season were provided the opportunity to secure their spot by renewing before 2/29/20. Starting March 1, 2020, any remaining available passes will be sold to those who were not part of the TCC program for the 2019 golf season. Triple Crown passes sold out for the first time in

2019 and based on inquiries we received this winter, we anticipate doing so again for the 2020 golf season. Broadcast email was sent in mid-February to our database announcing 2020 pricing and availability and will be sent again at the beginning of March.

- With the growth of event bookings noted above, we have elected to continue our SEM/SEO campaign with Spectrum Reach. Since initiating the program in 2019, we have seen a steady boost in inquiries coming through our website, phone calls, and emails.
- We participated the 2020 Perfect Wedding Guide Show in February. This show brought in over 500 brides to visit with multiple vendors and we were able to showcase Vista 154. This has been a positive venture for us in the past and we anticipate it driving further bookings. We are also currently evaluating expanding our advertising with Wedding Wire to also include The Knot.
- As 2020 marks the 25th Anniversary of Ironhorse opening, we have begun forming ideas for a celebration.
- We are currently expanding and replacing our golf carts fleet. We are obtaining new golf carts that are powered by lithium ion batteries. Lithium ion battery golf carts are 300 pounds lighter and have a ten year life compared to a four year life of lead acid battery powered carts. We will not have to water batteries anymore, which saves water and time costs. The batteries will also have a faster charging time and longer driving time. The lighter golf cart weight will also help with turf compaction on the greens. We will also be obtaining these new golf carts on a simple lease program. The new carts will be traded in every four years.

Dr. Peppes asked if the carts will have new GPS systems.

Ryan reposed that yes, we will have new GPS and Bluetooth speakers.

Chair Fuller asked how wan can increase capacity at the driving range.

Jeff suggested using smart range technology to increase revenue at the driving range. Several Troon facilities have implemented TrackMan technology, which allows driving range users to track their balls, and coaches users based on their swings. Users will use their smartphone to purchase the technology. The system will archive all of your swings and aggregates the data based on 12 key points including spin rate, launch rate, angles, and speed. Using Smart range technology will be a market differentiator for the course. TrackMan is in every major league baseball stadium and almost all professional golfers utilize the technology. The cost would be approximately \$45,000.00 a year.

Gary added that he believed we could increase our cost of range balls per bucket. He believed we were closer to the bottom of the market in cost.

Jeff stated he will look into similar courses nearby to compare their costs.

III. Course Maintenance/Projects Report - Agronomy Report May 2019

James reported the following:

Agronomy Report February 2020

November

9 cart path relocation

- Mega Construction completed project on 9 path relocation.
- Following completion of path, Ironhorse staff completed all restoration work, for which we were responsible.
- Irrigation heads were added and moved to accommodate the path changes.
- After irrigation updates were completed the area was prepped and final graded for sod work.
- 15,000 square feet of fescue was laid surrounding path to complete project.

3 Black tee drainage repair

- The outlet to the catch basin next to the tee was clogged with tree roots, causing backups that would not drain any longer.
- A new line was installed daylighting drain behind tee area to allow basin to drain. The area surrounding drain has been rough graded and will require some final grading and seed once dry enough to complete work.

4 Black Tee

- Finish grading, seeding, sodding area surrounding #4 black tee.
- Remaining over growth cleaned up along guard rail and tunnel.

December

6 Bathroom Project

- Landscape beds were cut and graded surrounding the path and building.
- Weed barrier and cobble rock installed in beds.
- Turf areas surrounding landscape beds were re-graded to repair wash outs from storm damage. Seed and sod installed.
- Large moss boulders installed in bed. Landscape plants will be installed once weather allows this spring.

Tree work

- Contracted Urban Tree to removed dead and dying trees from the property. Two large elm trees were removed from 17 and 18. Five trees removed

surrounding 7 red tee to provide more sunlight to tee area and open up tee shot visibility.

- Ironhorse staff completed a majority of clean-up of debris from course.

January

- Power washed and detailed all equipment. Each piece of equipment was thoroughly scrubbed to remove all grass buildup from previous year. Once clean protectants were applied to machinery to prepare for season ahead.
- All mowing equipment reviewed for service requirements. Reel and rotary mowing equipment is all being sharpened to prepare for first cuts.
- Shop cleaned of all unnecessary items and floor power washed.
- Shop yard cleaned and organized. Removed old material from last season project work.
- 2020 capital items prepared for council meeting. Disposal equipment prepared for auction.

February

- Installation of 3 additional heads along path towards end of fairway on #8. Moved one existing head 10 feet to the path to eliminate excess water in natural area. When digging trench for irrigation staff uncovered asphalt pieces, concrete, bricks, and drainage tile pieces.
- Disrupted areas will be graded and seed or sod will be installed to prepare for this season.
- Spray equipment prepped for pre-emergent applications.
- Clean up tree debris.

Upcoming Projects

- Apply Pre-emergent products
- Mulch landscape beds
- Install irrigation on #7 by ladies tee
- Repair trail to 4 black tee
- Greens aerification scheduled last week in March

IV. Discuss Prioritization of Long-Term Maintenance/CIP

James reported that they have been reviewing the capital improvement project list. The largest projects on the maintenance end will be a new irrigation system and pump house, major tree removals, renovation of the practice facility, spillway on hole eleven, and several other projects.

Ryan added that they have identified approximately \$200,000.00 for the renovation of the kitchen and grille area.

V. Discuss 25th Anniversary Celebration Event

Chair Fuller stated that he would like to gather input from committee members on what they would like to see for the 25th anniversary event.

Ryan added that they have begun planning and would like to theme the event as a “backyard party” to emphasize the neighborhood feel and location that Ironhorse exemplifies. They will have golf special, live music, bounce house, barbeque, and lawn and carnival games. They would like to make a full family event, inviting all members of the family even if they don’t play golf. They are currently trying to find a date that works around golf tournaments.

Chris added that she thought July 12th would be a good date for the event. She asked committee members to submit any additional ideas they have to her via email.

Chair Fuller added that he would like to see free food and drinks in Vista 154 to get people into the facility.

Tommy added that he would like to see pictures of the golf course throughout the years incorporated into the décor.

VI. Miscellaneous

Dr. Peppes asked when the next club fitting event will be and how they will be promoting it.

Ryan stated they will be having Titleist Thursdays, and a Callaway day as well. They do not have an all-encompassing fitting day including all of the brands. They will be sending emails through the email database. Previously, the fittings have filled very quickly so they don’t have multiple opportunities to promote it because it reaches capacity so quickly.

Dr. Peppes made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tommy Davidson seconded the motion. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director
Parks and Recreation Department