

IRONHORSE  
Golf Club



GOLF COURSE COMMITTEE  
Meeting Minutes-May 20, 2021  
5:30 P.M. – Vista 154

Members attending: Chair Dick Fuller, Gary Bussing, Dr. Greg Peppes, Scott Picker, Mark Bodine, and Leo Morton

Members absent: Tommy Davidson

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

Council Liaisons attending: Chuck Sipple and Mary Larson

Staff attending: Chris Claxton and Camille Sumrall

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

Leo Morton motioned to approve the February 25, 2021 minutes, Dr. Peppes seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**I. Old Business**

**A. Discuss Possible Next Steps for Clubhouse Renovation**

Chris stated the Council added phase one of the clubhouse renovations to the unfunded list of the CIP. These renovations are approximately 1.2 million. Chris stated the reason this project cannot move forward is because the city currently has projects totaling over \$25 million over the next two years including a new aquatic center pool house, event space and bike hub in City Park, replacement of fire station #1 and the new parks maintenance building.

Gary asked if the three sided maintenance building for the maintenance equipment could still be built this year. He added that the building would extend the useful life of the maintenance equipment and save money in the long run.

Chris responded that the new Parks Maintenance facility will include a three sided maintenance building for equipment. That project is set to be bid in the next 45 days, which could give an estimated cost for building something similar at the golf course. Chris added she will have PGAV come look at the site at the golf course. Chris stated it may be a challenge to meet Leawood City Code for a three sided metal building at this location and doing so may increase the cost of the building.

Dr. Peppes asked if there is a possibility the golf course maintenance building project may be funded this year.

Chris stated that there is a possibility the project could be funded, but it will need to go to City Council again for approval.

Dr. Peppes asked what the steps are to have the three sided maintenance building on the CIP for next year.

Council Liaison Sipple responded that having a well thought out justification statement and an accurate cost estimate are necessary. He added it would also be helpful if Troon could provide insight and evidence supporting the loss of the useful life expectancy of the equipment due to it being exposed to the elements.

James added the cost of repairs also goes up when the equipment sits exposed to the elements.

Chris added that if a project is in the CIP, the money may be rolled over. Chris requested that Troon staff provide evidence of loss of useful life expectancy and provide costs associated.

Council Liaison Sipple asked if the maintenance building at Leawood City Park or the old out building at 104<sup>th</sup> and State Line could be dismantled and moved to Ironhorse.

Chris stated that we will keep the building at Leawood City Park and the storage containers would be sold.

Gary asked what the process may look like to have this maintenance building completed this year.

Chris responded that the first step would be to get an accurate cost estimate and to introduce the project at the budget meeting next spring.

Chris stated that they have had several meetings with BBN architects to parse out the cost for renovating the clubhouse. The project would include renovation or replacing both sets of entrance doors, installing LVT flooring throughout entrance and grill area, new furniture in the grill area, soft seating in entrance area, and moving IT equipment out of the janitor's closet. The first-blush estimated cost for these projects combined is \$175,000. There is currently \$225,000 available to spend. These projects will still need to be approved by the City Administrator and City Council. A large portion of the funds cannot be rolled over to next year so construction would have to begin this fall.

Ryan stated that these projects would not require a contractor and are a great way to achieve a huge leap forward in improving and balancing the look and feel of the building. Ryan stated the new parking lot, gates, and golf carts have all been received well and he believes these renovations would help improve the experience even more.

Chris stated she will print the plans from BBN and mail them out.

Council Liaison Sipple asked when the kitchen renovation would be included on the CIP.

Chris stated the earliest possibility would be 2023 since 2022 is completed already.

Chair Fuller asked if the Art in Public Places committee would consider putting a sculpture at the golf course.

Chris stated she believed the Art in Public Places committee would consider it. She also added the cosmetic renovations to the clubhouse will include a painting and new lighting.

## **II. New Business**

### **A. Financial Update**

#### 2021 Year to Date Financial Report:

Ryan reported the following:

- Ironhorse has continued to enjoy the favorable golf boom in 2021. Through April 30, we have recognized year-over-year revenue growth in all categories aside from Event Facility rentals. Nonetheless, at \$541,112, we are \$286,567 ahead of prior year revenue. With May 2021 revenue having already surpassed prior year May, we will see this revenue growth continue into the summer months.
- While the scale of this growth looks large when compared to 2020, due to being closed for April 2020, when comparing against the January – April performances of each year (going all the way back through 2010), we are almost \$150,000 better than even the prior best year of 2015.

#### Marketing and Operations Update

- Our 2021 Event business has been steadily returning to normal. We currently have 44 golf outings on the calendar for this year and are continuing to receive interest for the remainder of this year and into 2022. Our non-golf event business is also coming back. For 2021 we have already had 10 wedding receptions, 7 rehearsal dinners, and 5 receptions where we are also the site for the ceremony. For 2022, we already have 3 receptions with ceremonies and 2 rehearsal dinners booked with further inquiries expected.
- To better capitalize on the current demand for golf, we have taken a more aggressive approach with our dynamic pricing strategies for non-Leawood resident golf. In addition to adding dynamic pricing rules to our winter and afternoon golf rates, we've also recalibrated the algorithms to raise the price floor and increase the price ceiling. As a result, we've seen an average rate increase of roughly \$5. When combined with the sharp uptick in rounds, this has helped push our year to date green fees to over \$286,000, approximately \$100,000 or more than it has been at this point in the past eleven years.

- A full parking lot resurfacing has been completed. In addition to a complete mill and overlay of the existing lot, the layout was updated to create a pass through lane, which encourages a more natural flow of traffic. New LED lights were installed in the lot with a more decorative look. Landscaping was improved to enhance the overall look and feel with more trees being added to provide shade. Combined with our new golf car fleet, the exterior arrival experience has been significantly upgraded.

## **B. Agronomy Report**

### March

- Pressurized irrigation system and checked all heads. Several small leaks found this spring. Each year we see more weeping heads that require either full replacement or valve replacement.
- Brought nursery green out to original size and seeded.
- Graded along path on 13 and installed sod to wrap up fence and drainage work we completed earlier. Once established we plan to allow carts to access fairway in season.
- Pre-emergent application completed on all Rough and Zoysia areas.
- Fertilizer applied to all rough areas.
- Completed 1<sup>st</sup> green aerification on 4<sup>th</sup> week in March. Pulled cores and collected prior to filling with sand.
- Aerated Green surrounds with solid tines

### April

- 2<sup>nd</sup> greens aerification completed on April 12<sup>th</sup>. Solid tines followed by topdressing to fill holes.
- Parking lot work throughout month. Added the addition of a path to short course gate to allow safer access for guest and equipment.
- New fans arrived and began installation on 12 and 18. We moved location on both holes to improve coverage of green. We plan to change fans on 14, 15, and 17 as well.
- Black and Red markers were re-painted by Line-X. These colors had faded more than other colors and were dull. All damaged or scuffed markers in Blue, Gold, and White were also repaired.
- Began verticut and top-dress programs on greens.

### May

- Par 3 course repaired with improvements to access road on P2 for equipment.
- Staff returning to school and beginning and continuing training
- Planting floor beds
- Applying grub application in rough
- Applying fungicide prevention in rough

- Applying fungicide treatment to all Zoysia. We will follow up with spot treatment of areas that have been infected.
- Planning to apply grub control and fertilizer to all Zoysia when weather will cooperate.

#### Upcoming Projects

- Traffic area restoration
- Sod repair in zoysia areas

Council Liaison Sipple asked if there has been any pushback with the higher greens fees during peak times.

Ryan responded that they have not had pushback. He added that the new parking lot and golf carts have helped improve the overall experience.

Scott asked if there is any reason the golf operations would continue to operate at a loss.

Ryan stated that the deficit would not be entirely erased by this year.

Leo asked what expenses are play driven.

Ryan stated labor is a play driven expense and the most play sensitive. More labor is needed to repair the course and more labor is needed in the clubhouse.

Ryan added there is a very robust event schedule in Vista 154 with at least 18 weddings already booked. They also have a healthy golf event schedule.

Leo asked how close we are to the ideal sustainable number of golf rounds and events.

Ryan stated that the ideal capacity for golf rounds would be around 30,000 rounds.

Gary stated that Troon has done an excellent job managing the course and he commended the staff.

Ryan stated that they are very grateful to be managing the course and to be grateful to have an invested owner who supports the course. Ryan added that Chris has been a great advocate for the course.

Chair Fuller asked what the capacity for events is due to Covid-19 precautions.

Ryan stated that golf events are around 100-150 and weddings have been around 75. He stated he believed wedding would trend back towards around 150 later this year.

#### **C. Discuss Renewal of Troon Management Agreement**

Jeff stated that the original proposal for Troon management would include an extension of three years ending December 31, 2024. He stated he would like to

propose increasing the number of years by 2, bringing it to 5 years total, from 2022-2026 with the management fee locked in.

Chris added the current contract expires on December 31 of this year.

Dr. Peppes stated he supported the contract extension. Dr. Peppes moved to accept the contract extension proposed by Troon. Leo Morton seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Council Liaison Sipple asked if a 5 year contract was a normal contract in Troon's standards.

Jeff stated that yes, a 5 year contract is not out of the ordinary. Some clients also have 10-12 year contracts. Having a longer contract helps with retaining the best staff and provides stability for the course.

Leo stated that there is an issue at hole 13 with golfers going down to drop and chip. There is a blind spot from the tee. Leo stated he has almost been hit there. He asked if they could add the spot to the GPS map where carts are shown.

Ryan stated the ball dispenser on the driving range is averaging close to \$5,000 a week which is very high.

#### **D. Discussion of Renaming of Negro Creek**

Discussion tabled until the August meeting.

### **III. Miscellaneous**

Chris stated that the creek section near under the Mission Road tunnel at hole 3 green has been partially obstructed with silt. The creek will need to be cleaned before it becomes a real problem potentially even causing water to come out across the cart path and up near the green

Jeff Thomasson stated that he believes the creek needs to be cleaned as soon as possible because it is likely to become even more obstructed very soon.

Chris stated that a large portion of the cost will be to haul away the silt and debris unless we can find a location on site to deposit it. Chris stated that they will work on getting a bathometric survey done to determine the amount of silt that needs to be hauled away.

Dr. Peppes made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Leo Morton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Claxton, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department