

GOLF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

APRIL 7, 2020

The Carbondale Park District's Golf Advisory Committee held a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. at 1115 W. Sycamore Street, Carbondale, IL. The attendees participated via zoom format.

PRESENT: Chuck Vaught, Kay Brechtelsbauer, Dominic Cittadino, John Washburn, Brian Matzenbacher, Trey Anderson, Mike Day and board liaison Commissioner Jane Adams.
Absent: Elaine Vitello and Stan Curtis.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None.

WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION: The Association has been in contact with its members and are on hold waiting for Hickory Ridge to open back up. The earliest opening date is estimated to be May 1, 2020.

MEN'S ASSOCIATION: The Association is on hold waiting on Hickory Ridge to reopen to public play.

SENIOR ASSOCIATION: The Senior Association has began to organize its members and is on hold waiting on Hickory Ridge to reopen for public play. The Association has 50 paid members to date.

GOLF SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Trey Anderson provided the following information of course conditions for the committee:

1. The maintenance crew is only working with full time staff, mowing the roughs and mowing and spraying the greens. The fairways are beginning to come out of dormancy and will soon require mowing also.
2. A small area of the driving range was taken out of play and will not be mowed in the future. This will reduce the work load on the maintenance staff.
3. The irrigation system has not been turned on and staff is spraying the bunkers to kill unwanted vegetation.
4. Trey stated that he plans on aerifying the greens while the course is closed so that the turf can heal before the course is opened for play.

GOLF PROFESSIONAL'S REPORT: Mike Day provided the committee with the following information:

1. Mike announced that there are currently 41 season pass holders and stated that in the near future he will have to address the question about a possible reduced fee for a season pass due to the temporary forced closure.
2. The renewal of the gaming machine license is currently being completed and will be submitted to the City of Carbondale.
3. Mike stated that from what he has learned, there is no funding in the recently passed "Cares Act" for units of local government. He indicated that there may be something in the future.
4. Mike informed the committee that the District is reviewing a new contract between the District and SIU for the use of Hickory Ridge Golf Course by the SIU Women's Golf Team. The current contract was entered into in 2004 and was for a 25 year period. The proposed contract would replace the existing contract and would run for a 25 year period. The proposed contract increases the annual payment from \$1,000 to \$3,000, establishes the fees charged to visiting teams for the Saluki Invitational and provides for specific terms of the agreement, ie rent, fees and range access, to be reviewed and/or amended every three years. Mike did note that the SIU Men's Golf Team pays a \$3,000 annual fee but there is no contract between SIU and the District for their use of Hickory Ridge.

REVIEW FINANCIAL REPORTS: No financial reports to review.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

1. Projected Opening Date: Currently the earliest opening date would be May 1, 2020. However this is subject to the state's mandate. The club house restaurant will open when the course opens.
2. Safety precautions for staff and customers: Mike stated that he does not know what the "New Normal" will be when Hickory Ridge reopens to public play. However committee member Dominic Cittadino offered to meet and

discuss with Mike what procedures and PPE equipment might be advisable. He also stated that the discussions could also include two additional individuals from the medical field (Doctors). Mike stated that he would appreciate their input and assistance.

3. Golf Outings: Mike stated that there were two golf outings originally scheduled for April that had to be canceled. He stated that he would work with the groups and try to reschedule the outings after the course is reopened to public play. He also will reach out to any groups that have an upcoming outing in an effort to keep them on the schedule.

4. League Play: Mike stated that league play will begin when the course opens.

5. Affect on Customer Service and Course Maintenance budgets: Mike stated that although the revenue stream has been essentially shut down due to the temporary closure, there are cost savings on the expenditure side as well. The extent of which will not be known for sure until the financial reports for April 2020 are available. Trey said that everybody, meaning all district operations, had to identify what they can do without for the next sixty days. Staff wise, both customer service and golf maintenance operations are operating with less personnel than normal. The hourly personnel have been significantly reduced. On the maintenance side, the reduced maintenance staff is concentrating on mowing the roughs and greens and spraying operations so the course is ready and playable when the course reopens.

6. Future actions and/or considerations: There is a definite need to increase the user fee revenue to offset the expenditures. Committee member Brian Matzenbacher will discuss with Mike Day a proposal for additional classes or types of season passes over and above what currently exist. Mike stated that in his view to increase play will require Hickory Ridge to attract the out of area golfer, meaning north of Mt. Vernon, IL. He said that in previous years the advertising budget has been between \$7,000 - \$10,000 annually. In the current budget, the advertising/promotion budget has been reduced to only \$3,000. He indicated that he will have to look for other ways to promote Hickory Ridge Golf Course and increase play.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS: One committee member did address the issue of the cost of the season pass and the value received in return. They indicated that, in their personal opinion, the value received was more than the fee they pay for a season pass. As a result they felt that the cost of the season pass could be increased significantly and they would still receive "Fair Value" for the cost of the season pass. However, Mike pointed out that although Hickory Ridge is the premier golf course in the area, you must consider the fee structure at the areas competing courses when setting the fees at Hickory Ridge. You can't price yourself out of the market when attempting to maintain or gain market share.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: None.

NEXT MEETING: May 5, 2020

MEETING ADJOURNED: 5:07 p.m.