

WESTBOROUGH COUNTRY CLUB OPERATING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Date: March 18, 2015

Location: Meeting Room, WCC

Convened: 7:00 p.m.

Adjourned: 9:01 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Dexter Blois, Earl Storey, John Arnold

Other Attendees: Jack Negoshian, Mike Hightower, Jessica Thomas.

Open Forum: There were no requests to address the Committee.

Minutes: Mr. Blois made a motion to approve the minutes of November 19, 2014 and Mr. Storey seconded. VOTED: 3-0-0.

Mr. Blois made a motion to approve the minutes of December 3, 2014 and Mr. Storey seconded. VOTED: 2-0-1 (abstention: Blois).

Budget/Membership: Mr. Blois noted that the article the Country Club had in the warrant for improvements to the golf course passed at the Annual Town Meeting on March 14th. He pointed out that the \$51,000 needs to be added to the budget sheets. There was discussion about the cart paths and getting that work done before the course opens for the season. Mr. Arnold will work with Mr. Storey and Mr. Hightower on obtaining quotes for the job. Mr. Hightower requested that the work be completed to the point where he just needs to loam and sod the area. Membership figures were reviewed. It was mentioned that memberships are slightly down from this time last year. Leave of absence requests were discussed. Mr. Blois made a motion to approve the leave of absence requests received as of March 18th, with one correction that the leave of absence request for Brad Flint be changed to Judy Flint. Mr. Storey seconded the motion. VOTED: 3-0-0.

Greens/Superintendent: Mr. Hightower mentioned that he covered the greens right before we received the first snow storm. He has been checking them for damage and said that ice has been forming but it is cloudy and porous so the grass isn't oxygen deprived. Mr. Hightower said that as the weather warms up and we get melting, he'll build channels to aid in the melting process. He felt there shouldn't be any damage to the greens as long as the ice didn't get slushy and then re-freeze. Mr. Hightower reported that he cut down the trees that were designated to come down and ground the stumps. He rented a grinder and ground down to 5-6 inches underground. He also had JB Sawmill remove the logs from the course, so everything is done. Mr. Hightower said that he has been servicing the equipment over the winter season. Mr. Arnold asked if Mr. Hightower saw any problems with the equipment. Mr. Hightower said he did not – just routine maintenance. The rough mower was mentioned and Mr. Hightower said he would continue to monitor what was for sale in the event we needed to purchase a new one.

Golf Professional: Mr. Negoshian reported on the golf simulator. He said that usage hasn't been quite what he expected. He has had a few regulars and a Wednesday night group. However, Mr. Negoshian said that he has received more calls about the simulator recently as people are anxious to start playing golf again. Mr. Negoshian said that he will take down the simulator when the course opens and he plans on moving the putting net from the Pro Shop to the putting green where he will tie it down. Mr. Negoshian reported that the girl's high school golf team has their

first golf match scheduled for April 8th but he's not sure we will be open. He mentioned that he will be attending a handicap seminar next week. Mr. Negoshian also mentioned that the ladies and senior men usually start their leagues in mid-April and he has a couple's tournament scheduled for April 26th. Mr. Negoshian informed the Committee that he has 24 brand new Yamaha carts coming in. He has also hired a second assistant, Andy Parillo, and Mr. Aquilino expressed interest in working at the course. Mr. Blois asked if Mr. Negoshian could have the defibrillator tested.

There was discussion about a golf tournament scheduled for August 29th to be held in memory of John Petersen with voluntary donations going directly to the Peace Corps. Since the late Mr. Petersen is Mr. Blois' nephew, Mr. Blois wanted to disclose that neither he, nor his sister or brother-in-law, have any financial interest in this tournament whatsoever so there is no conflict of interest. Terry O'Day is organizing the tournament and they are hoping to fill the course with about 72 players. They are looking at a shot gun start around 2:00-3:00 in the afternoon, with a cookout afterwards. Mr. Negoshian suggested starting the tournament around 1:30-2:00 p.m. since morning play is usually done by 1 p.m. Mr. Hightower will reach out to Terry O'Day regarding the logistics of the tournament. Mr. Hightower also said he would check with his accountant about collecting the fees for the tournament and then covering any costs incurred by the Country Club, Mr. Negoshian, and The Grille, with the remainder of what's collected going to the charity. Mr. Blois made a motion to allow the O'Day group of organizers to hold a golf tournament on August 29, 2015 in memory of John Petersen with donations going to the Peace Corps., and Mr. Storey seconded. VOTED: 3-0-0.

Old Business: Mr. Blois informed the Committee that he has not heard back from Ms. Schwarz regarding the purchase of the domain name for the website. He sent her paperwork that needed to be signed, along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope, but hasn't received it back yet. Once he receives the paperwork, he will give her the check and we can start updating the website. Until then, Mr. Blois said to use the Country Club Pro Shop phone number on the billboard advertising.

New Business: Mr. Hightower spoke with a gentleman from the Worcester Telegram & Gazette about different advertising programs. He is waiting for quotes and will share with the Committee once he receives this information.

Increasing the width of the golf holes from standard width to anywhere from 8 to 15 inches was discussed. Mr. Negoshian said that some programs such as Frisbee Golf and Soccer Golf require the larger holes. Mr. Hightower noted that there are lots of different ideas that golf courses are using to attract new business. Mr. Negoshian mentioned that wider holes help beginners learn the game by allowing more putts, and also that the game can be played faster. However, he also mentioned that there are the traditional golf players, so he felt a separate course would need to be created for recreational use and those new to the game.

Mr. Hightower informed the Committee that he was approached about hosting a Hole-in-One contest at the course. This event would be for Westborough residents and it is aimed at families. There will be a bouncy house for kids and a cookout to be held after the contest. Participants will have one shot – and Mr. Hightower suggested holding it on the 9th green. They are looking to have the contest on a Saturday evening in late May starting around 5 p.m. The woman organizing the event from the Rotary Club of Westborough has a Jeep being donated by Dan's Jeep for the

contest. She is also speaking with the Westborough Buick dealer about having high end cars parked in the lot for test drives. The Committee was concerned about lost revenue on a Saturday evening, since holes 8 and 9 would need to be closed, and asked Mr. Negoshian how many golfers he typically gets. He said that tee times from 3-4:30 p.m. are usually full. Mr. Hightower suggested passing on any costs for lost fees to the event director. Mr. Hightower felt this event would provide good public relations and offer free advertising. The Committee was interested in hosting the event but wanted more details. Mr. Hightower will follow up with the event director regarding parking, who will be running the event, and liability insurance.

Mr. Negoshian was asked if he will honor out of state handicaps and he said he would as long as the player could present proof. Mr. Blois said that he would like to see handicap fees revert back to \$30 for members. Currently the handicap fee is \$35 for members. Mr. Blois pointed out that the Massachusetts Golf Association hasn't increased handicap fees in a long time so he felt the fee went from \$30 to \$35 without justification. Mr. Negoshian mentioned that he, along with his assistant, Jon Gremo, enter the majority of handicaps. Some courses require members to go online and enter their own handicaps. Mr. Negoshian said that they do allow players to enter their own, but they also enter them for members. Mr. Negoshian said that, according to his contract, he is responsible for making sure the handicaps are entered. Mr. Arnold made a motion to change the handicap fee for members from \$35 to \$30, and leave the non-member handicap fee at \$45 and Mr. Blois seconded. VOTED: 2-1-0.

The procedure for donation requests was reviewed. Mr. Hightower would like a more streamlined approach so that a "package" could be given which would include golf for a foursome, carts, and either lunch or dinner at The Grille. It was noted that Mr. Blois is the contact for donation requests for the Country Club. He makes up the gift certificate, assigns a number, and Mr. Negoshian keeps track of when certificates are redeemed, since Mr. Blois sends Mr. Negoshian a log of donations given. Mr. Blois said that he mails the gift certificate directly to the person or group making the request. Mr. Blois said he would send a copy of the certificate he uses to Mr. Hightower. He also mentioned that Mr. Negoshian should make up gift certificates for the carts. The Committee members felt that Mr. Blois should continue to be the contact person for donation requests since he is already handling what comes in.

Mr. Storey mentioned that there are some shingles that have lifted on the peak of the roof. He called Buildings & Grounds Director, Frank Cornine, and Mr. Cornine called roofer, Clay Borglund, to replace the shingles. Mr. Negoshian said that he has green shingles in the basement that can be used for the repair. Mr. Storey noted that this repair will be done with no expense to the club. Mr. Hightower informed the Committee that Selectman, Denny Drewry, called asking if there were any jobs that could be done for an Eagle Scout project. The Committee agreed that repairing and reinstalling birdhouses out on the course would be a great project for a Scout.

Adjournment: Having no further business Mr. Blois made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 p.m. VOTED: 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved:

Jessica Thomas, Administrative Assistant

John Arnold, Chairman