



City of Helena

GOLF ADVISORY BOARD SUMMARY September 8, 2015



- Jon Pallister, Chair
- Dave Bauer
- Kelly Casey
- Andy Cottrell *excused*

- Christopher DeVerniero
- Arthur Pembroke
- Lynn Staley

Ex-Officio Members

- Larry Kurokawa, Golf Course Superintendent
- Scott Longenecker, Head Golf Pro
- Amy Teegarden, Parks and Recreation Director
- Jennifer Schade, Recorder

LOCATION: Bill Roberts Golf Course – Clubhouse

TIME: 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Visitor(s): None

1. Call to order/establish quorum/review agenda

Chairman Jon Pallister called the City of Helena Golf Course Advisory Board Meeting to order at 11:38 am. A quorum was present.

2. Approval of minutes: August 18, 2015

After review of the minutes, Lynn moved to approve the August 18, 2015 minutes as presented. Scott seconded. Motion carried.

3. Unfinished business

Update on Business Management Plan / Consultant Research - Amy

- Amy provided the committee with an update. At last month’s meeting, the group reviewed accomplishments. In discussing them, it was asked “where do we go from here?” Amy made a recommendation that we contact a consultant to come in, research our program, and assist with a business management plan (handout available).

ACTION ITEM: Amy will resend list of accomplishments that were discussed at last meeting.

- **Purpose of updating our business plan:** Conduct a business planning effort to maximize potential efficiency, profitability, and future success of BRGC. Hire a consultant to assist in identifying revenue enhancement projects and to assist in the preparation of a workable business plant that will maximize profits and efficiencies.

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- After researching some golf course consultants, Amy was able to get a better feel for services they provide. The services vary from one-day assessments to multiple week visits. Some of the items consultants typically review include:
 - Operational Reviews (ProShop, Driving Range, Carts, food, fee structures, etc.)
 - Marketing Review
 - New Business Development
 - Renovation
 - Golf Club Food and Beverage
 - Clubhouse operations
 - Market Analyses and Financial Projections
 - Market Strategies
 - Market Demand and Feasibility Study
 - Revenue Enhancement Programs
- After discussion of services, the next steps in the process include:
 1. Define the purpose of the project and the consultant scope of services
 2. Establish timeframes
 3. Prepare a budget and get necessary approval
 4. Develop a Request for Proposal (RFP)
- Amy discussed the hiring of a consultant with the City Manager. He stated he would like to see what the committee is looking for. We need to look at the feasibility of expanding current facilities. She has a list of potential consultants we can send our proposal to; however, we want to make certain we tie our objectives in Larry and Scott's network. Amy then recommended we obtain a membership to the National Golf Foundation. They have consulting services for their network. Lynn stated that sounds like a good resource. Dave – what is the cost of their membership? Amy will research the cost of a membership. She added that we should create the RFP and then based on the findings, determine the budget.
- Committee members discussed what it is we want – ideas included:
 - Jon would like to see if we are efficient in what we are currently doing.
 - Expansion
 - Upgrading would be good – we need to draw in outside resources that are not necessarily golfers. Perhaps offer the opportunity for community members to utilize a conference room or banquet room.
 - Additional equipment such as additional simulators.
- We need to look at ways to enhance revenue that is not always on the back of the golfer. Look for alternative sources. Expand the facility that helps the golf course as a whole. Maybe our focus should be very specific to revenue enhancement programs (and not necessarily operations).
- Chris suggested maybe we should send out an RFI (Request for Information) instead of the proposal. This would give us the opportunity to look at the companies qualifications. He was also curious about the costs for a consultant. Scott stated that ten years ago, Great Falls paid \$70,000 for a consultant to come in. Larry added that Great Falls did a complete consultation to include demographics in the community – theirs was fairly extensive. Lynn asked how we pay for something like this. A consultant would be paid for by the revenue over expenses for capital projects.

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- Per Jon – we need to establish what it is that we want.
 - Be very specific in what we are targeting.
 - Define what works and what doesn't. If we determine something is working, weed that item out.
 - Expansion – list these out and have consultants focus on this.
 - Do we have resources and skills to do in house?
 - Chris added that we should also look at demographic trends and a growth plan.
- Amy – remember that we need to generate revenue. We have had great success with the programs Scott has implemented. We have recognized limitations and continue generating revenue. Jon agreed and added that the simulator is big deal. He would like to see room for more. How can we manage? Scott said it would not be possible in our current facilities. Jon said we need to have a major expansion of the pro shop. The simulator is a revenue generator. We will have to have a consultant prove cost benefit.
- Lynn would like to visit with the National Golf Foundation about their consulting services. Per Scott – we already have the staff, merchandise, and are not paying rent. We won't have extra overhead costs. The study of utilization and expansion of our current facilities should be a major focus.
- In late October, Amy will have a report of our ADA audit. Perhaps we can leverage this to our advantage – ADA regulations will require us to come into compliance. We will be unable to without expansion. ADA compliance will become our major focus. As part of our business statement, we must add that we are not currently in compliance nor can we be with our current facility.
- Amy made a recommendation that we turn our focus on the following items:
 - **Market demand and feasibility study** – economic impact analysis to understand and clearly quantify the expected economic impact derived from the construction and long-term operation of a development project.
 - **Revenue enhancement programs** – look for options available that will give the owner the best opportunity to manage expenses and boost traffic or new business generation.
 - These options could range from something as simple as a new marketing program to a major step such as a facility renovation or addition. (Items such as expanding concessions and beverages, adding additional simulators, building a conference room – the first two items would cover such things).
- Chris suggested we create the business statement and then send a RFI. **Amy volunteered to prepare the business statement.** She also recommended we become members of the National Golf Foundation so we get member benefits which in turn will open up whole new network opportunities.

ACTION ITEM: Art made a motion that the City (BRGC) becomes a member of the National Golf Foundation. Lynn seconded. Motion carried. Amy will proceed with the membership and report back at the next meeting.

- Per Jon – Larry and Scott are the two that really know what will work and what we need. They will make recommendations to Amy and we will include that information in our RFI proposal.

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ACTION ITEM: Larry and Scott will make recommendations to Amy and we will include that information in our RFI proposal.

4. New business

5. Reports

- Parks and Recreation Director's Report
 - As Amy mentioned, the ADA reports will be available towards the end of October.
 - She reminded everyone that it is that time of year to look at fee structures. This information will need be available at the commission meeting the 1st of November. Scott, Larry, and Amy will meet next week (9.15.2015) to discuss the 2016 fee schedule. Last year we did not raise fees.
 - By the November GAB meeting, we will need recommendations. We will confirm meeting dates and include in the summary (see below).

ACTION ITEM: **Golf Fee Meeting Dates:**
10.13.2015: GAB – Staff Golf Fee Memo – Need GAB Decision
11.02.2015: City Commission Meeting – Resolution of Intention
11.23.2015: City Commission Meeting Public Hearing

- Golf Superintendent Report
 - Scott stated this was a big week for golfers. They will be aerating the greens on Wednesday and Thursday (start with front nine). The high school will be utilizing the back nine.
 - Carroll College has a cross-country race on Friday.
 - Are we charging Carroll? And Helena School District?
 - Dave thinks it might be too much with a freshly aerated course. Larry stated that we always aerate same time each year and the schools are aware of that. We currently charge only \$10 per player.
 - We have not yet seen an agreement from Carroll College.
 - The landscaping project looks very nice.
- Golf Professional Report
 - We are ordering secure lockers this week which golfers can rent out for an entire year.
 - We are currently holding winter league sign-ups.
 - High school state tournaments will run October 1st and 2nd. Scott will be sending an e-blast for scorers. Please let him know if you know someone who may be interested.
 - The Snowball Classic is scheduled for Saturday, September 26th, 2015. Coors Light will be giving out \$650 in prizes.
 - The Jude Gleason Memorial Golf Tournament will be held September 20th, 2015 beginning at 9:00 am. This is a 4 person scramble format.
 - Scott also mentioned that we currently have over \$30,000 in merchandise credit on books that people need to use.

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- Men's League Report
 - Per Dave - men's league wrapped up last week.
- Ladies League Report
 - Ladies – the Wednesday night league finished up last Wednesday.
 - The Thursday derby was held last Thursday.
 - Lynn thanked Scott, Larry, and the entire staff for being so accommodating this year.

Other

- Financials look good. Chris asked if there was a tracking system in place to see if we are at 100% utilization. Scott stated he does have a process in place.
- Lynn asked about course utilization on the weekends doing. Scott stated Saturday afternoon seems to be a slower time. Sunday's have picked up. Monday's and Friday's are still the busiest days of week. The slowest days are Tuesday's and Thursday's.
- Dave – regarding the cart maintenance program – is there a set day of year that you renew? Now might be good time to do some type of notification. Per Larry – we send an e-blast out in the spring.

6. Public comment

- None

7. Next meeting date – October 13, 2015

8. Future agenda items

- Election of New Officers
- 2016 Golf Fee Discussion
- Draft "Business Statement" for Consultant Services

Adjournment

With no further business, the Bill Roberts Golf Advisory Board adjourned at 12:38 pm.

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(406) 447- 8490
 TTY Relay Service [1-800-253-4091](tel:1-800-253-4091) or 711
citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov
 316 North Park, Avenue, Room 440, Helena, MT 59623

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