



Bill Roberts Golf Course Advisory Board
Time Stamped Summary: July 15, 2025 - 12:00 PM
City County Building 316 N Park Ave Room 426

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/KMwt1RYYJmeicxzFWUbZoW8tYXOB5AB1Hln9lePMAYJExLQQRn4q1Peiw99C0ly8.q8yrrXg2G8dl2hC8?startTime=1744739823000>

Jim made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 15, 2025 meeting, Jack seconded, all in favor, motion passed.

New Business

A. Letter received

Jack read a letter submitted by Adam Clinch requesting the adoption of a trail fee policy that distinguishes between golf carts and single-rider devices (e.g., Finn Cycle and e-bikes). Discussion followed – Steve mentioned concerns for Finn Cycles usage as he is seeing them drive through bunkers, ride through areas near greens that are marked off for carts, and in general just go where they want. He doubts there is much difference in turf impact between a Finn Cycle and a golf cart. Doug mentioned that the golf course is a city park and therefore, e-bike usage is not allowed in city parks. Rob expressed concerns for wear and tear to the course by Finn Cycle users. Jim shared that a fleet of about a dozen Finn Cycles are available to rent at Canyon River. Whether a foursome is made up of two carts or four Finn Cycles it is still 8 wheels on the ground. Tod pointed out that fee policies are submitted to the city commission for approval. He will research what area golf courses are offering as far as trail fee policies regarding Finn Cycles.

- B. Jack expressed concerns from golfers that some collar areas around greens have holes or clumps of grass. These are the areas hit hard by the winter kill of 2023-24. Steve explained these aren't really holes but different types of grass, three types actually, that may grow at different rates. One of the grass types that is prolific and sometimes considered a weed is poa annua.

Unfinished Business

- A. Water Stations. The bid received by 3Brothers to install two water stations is approximately \$15,000. Jim is just waiting for board direction and he will contact sponsors to fund these stations. There are three different levels of sponsorship with incentives available in the packet that Jim and Jeremy developed. The length of terms for sponsorship and flexibility were discussed. Jack made a motion for Jim to pursue sponsorships for water stations with latitude. Susan seconded. All in favor.
- B. Public Comment - none

Reports

- A. Parks Director Doug Smith did not have a report. He did mention that in his three years in Helena he has witnessed many good things with the golf course, the pro shop, and Munis. Kudos to the golf staff.
- B. Golf Course Superintendent Steve Link started out with congratulations to Bryce Wideen and new baby boy, Bennett Charles. Bryce worked right up until her due date as course assistant superintendent. The solar panels are up and completed however are not operating yet. This project was funded by a public works grant. Three water pumps are running this year for course irrigation. One pump has parts that are supposed to be delivered in October. On the first Monday of every month, the greens are being verticut to promote more constant and evenly distributed grass texture on the greens. Steve has received a couple concerns from neighbors – one who wants more trees to keep balls from entering his yard (#14) and one who wants less trees/tree roots in his lawn to the side of #12 green.
- C. Golf Course Operations Manager Tod Fitterer reported on the golf simulator refurbish. He also shared that the online tee system is not working; an online tee time might be made but the reservation is not showing up on the tee sheet in the pro shop, leading to overbooking; season pass holders being charged on credit cards, etc. Tod spoke to the many challenges with food service equipment breakdowns in Muni's.
- D. Leagues
Due to time limitations, Jack reported that leagues are running good.

Public Comment (Items not on this agenda)

Steve and Amy Renshaw came with an ask to make the golf course more family friendly (e.g., green fees more affordable) and less like a country club (e.g, fewer tournaments) as they would like to see future golfers able to play more frequently. They expressed it is often hard to get a tee time, and that tee time openings are later in the day when it is hot or at a reduced rate on Sundays. Tod shared the procedures for setting golf course green fees, city commission approval, and the rationale for discounted rates during non-peak hours.

Member Communications-Announcements / Proposals for next Agenda – (August 19, 2025)

Adjournment

Jim moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Susan, all in favor, motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 1:34 PM.

ADA NOTICE: The City of Helena is committed to providing access to persons with disabilities for its meetings, in compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Montana Human Rights Act. The city will not exclude persons with disabilities from participation at its meetings or otherwise deny them the City's services, programs, or activities. Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in the city's meetings, services, programs, or activities should contact The Community Development Director, as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to arrange for the requested accommodation, at any of the following: Phone: (406) 447- 8490; TTY Relay Service 1-800-253-4091 or 711 Email: citycommunitydevelopment@helenamt.gov, Mailing address & physical location: 316 North Park, Avenue, Room 445, Helena, MT 59623.