



Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
July 29, 2016 meeting

**Attendees**

Greg Christovich, Joe Carpenter, Tom Newgent, Sheila Bowman, Dale Huffman, Brenda Scruton, Denny Wood, Dave Pfiester, Gordy Carlson

**Out of town or not in attendance**

Lucille Ferrigan Evelyn Seeley, Deb Hunter, Nina Greene, Martha Killoran, Kim Lathwell, Bruce Martens, Dave Wucher

Minutes from the June meeting were reviewed and approved

**Club Operations / Feedback**

- 3rd quarter financial results and outlook were discussed; rounds and revenues trended as expected in June and July; with the usual soft play volumes for this time of year. Majority of our play is members and residents, with small (8-12 players each) turnouts continuing from Tanglewood, Red Shirts, Rainbow Group, and some small hotel groups. Expense efficiency measures continue to have a significant impact in terms of cost savings. Greg emphasized that the golf course maintenance budgets have not been reduced, in an effort to keep the courses in as good a shape as possible.
- The subject of closing the North clubhouse on Sundays in August due to very low volumes was introduced. The board recommended that the course be open for 'member only play' and a ranger be staffed to control any non-member activity.
- Greg opened up discussions on operations and staffing for the Fall/Winter season, indicating that at least two of our golf assistants from last season (Ethan and Ian) would be returning this coming season.
- As for operations, the south golf shop will re-open and be fully staffed for the high-season. prepared sandwiches, hot dogs and beverages will be served out of the golf shop. The Paradise Grill will very likely not be opened for the High Season due to the high cost of operations. Lunch service and limited dinner service (two nights per week in season) will continue at the North Course Tavern.
- Greg proposed appointing a social committee of residents to assist in planning live entertainment (previously booked at Paradise Grille in the past) and other events, to be hosted at Founders Hall to better utilize that facility. Shelia Bowman agreed to assist along with some of the members of the Residents Council.

- 2017 memberships were brought up, specifically as to how these would be handled in light of the courses being for sale. Greg indicated that we will make it clear when we launch to 2017 memberships that if the golf courses sell during the course of the year, members will maintain their unlimited golf privileges through year-end. If for some reason a buyer of the courses does not wish to assume these obligations, the members would receive a pro-rata refund of their fees paid. Question was also raised about the pricing for memberships; Greg indicated that any increase would likely be nominal (last year prices were increased 5%).
- Greg updated the group on the Citrus Golf Trail marketing program, highlighting that several regional and national golf writers will be making their way through the area in the coming months to promote Highlands County Golf outside our area.

### **Golf Operations**

- Gordy Carlson distributed copies of the proposed new golf scorecards for each course, including the 'blended tees' he worked through with the help of the handicap committee. The group thanked Gordy for the effort and the new cards will be ordered in the coming weeks. Gordy indicated that the blended tee concept has become a national movement in the industry to help keep the game interesting and fun for players of all abilities.
- Gordy also brought up some of the thinking relative to tee time priority for the peak season, particularly as it relates to members versus residents versus public play. First, blocks of tee times will be reserved well in advance for members only. Members would receive 7 day priority tee time access, residents 5 days, and public (not hotel and league play, which can be booked further in advance) 3 days. ONLY members will receive 7 day priority, so NON MEMBER RESIDENTS will not be booked at the same time as members, *even if they are on the same tee time request form*. This concept would truly make members a priority on the tee sheets; if space is still available in the 5-day window then residents would then be booked on the tee sheet at their preferred time. One other concept discussed is if a non-member wants to reserve a tee time 7 days in advance to play with a member they could do so but they would pay the full rate for golf (no discounts and no ten play pass usage). The Board members were asked to poll some of their fellow residents and players between now and the next meeting to gather some feedback.
- There was no handicap committee update since most of the committee members are out of area for the Summer.

### **Golf Maintenance**

- Greg introduced Tom Newgent and Joe Carpenter, the superintendents for the South and North courses respectively, and complimented them on the work they are doing on the golf courses.

- Tom and Joe discussed the ongoing and upcoming maintenance practices relative to aerifications, weed control, and fertilizer applications, including the plans to continue to try and grow in some of the poor tees at the south course. Greg reminded the group once again that many of the south tees are too small, poorly constructed, and have shade and irrigation issues. The south tees in general will require a significant amount of capital to be permanently fixed and funds are simply not available to do any more than we are doing at this time. That said, we do plan to redo the forward tee on 13, and the main tee on 1, prior to opening the south course on August 29<sup>th</sup> (while the north course greens are aerified for the final time this year), ***weather permitting and depending on the condition of our sod nursery.***
- The subject of overseeding the fairways this Fall was discussed, and the group seemed to be in favor of utilizing the dollars we spend on overseeding (the seed alone costs \$25,000) for continued weed programs and other projects. Greg indicated that if we can maintain some color in the fairways (barring an extremely cold winter) that our visitor play would likely not notice much difference aesthetically in course conditions. We will consult with our agronomy experts between now and next meeting and come up with a final recommendation.

Next Meeting: August 26<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am at the North course Tavern