



WESTPORT CONNECTICUT
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
LONGSHORE CLUB PARK
260 SOUTH COMPO ROAD, WESTPORT, CT 06880

Golf Advisory Committee
Final Minutes
March 2, 2020

The Golf Advisory Committee of the Town of Westport met in Town Hall, Room 309, on Monday, March 2 2020. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Jane Dally at 7:00pm

Members Present: Jane Dally, John Elhi, Marie Gross, Gary Solomon, Judy Domkowski, Jim Harman, Rich Raphael and Mike Durkin.

First Selectman Jim Marpe addressed the committee and congratulated Gary Solomon, who is leaving the Committee following 15 years of service to Westport's golfers. Jim presented a proclamation to Gary for his service.

Mike Durkin was introduced as the newest member of the committee.

1. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the February 3, 2020 meeting were approved as presented

2. Comments from the Public

There were no public comments

3. President's Reports

Representatives from the Women's 18 and 9 Hole groups and the Men's Golf Association each presented updates on their pre season activities, including membership drives. The LWGA is continuing to understand the implications of the new World Handicap System and is sending our regular communications to members on a weekly basis. The LLNHGA is holding its opening meeting in March and the LWGAs on April 7. All are anticipating an early April (or earlier, weather permitting) opening of the course.

4. Administrative Report

Jennifer Fava reported that hole signage for the switch of holes 9 & 14 are ordered and expected soon. She also reported on the small brush fire the previous weekend on the (old) ninth hole bunker. Damage was minimal—likely caused by human contact—and fairly easily fixed by superintendent Todd Salamone and his staff. The bunker will be ready for April season opening play. Jennifer Fava also reported on some tree work done on the course. Trees that were removed (because of blight or disease) will be replaced with new trees.

Opening day date still to be determined and will be driven by weather and lack of snow.

5. Superintendent's Report

Todd Salamone reported that a new assistant superintendent has been hired. Nick Debellis has joined Todd's staff from Doral Arrowood in New York. He reported that most of last year's staff are returning. The course was ahead of schedule on cleaning and preparation for the new season, due to the mild weather.

He also reported that the new control system for the irrigation system has been ordered and its arrival is imminent. Once it arrives it will be installed and programmed in time for the course opening.

Todd is also doing training on course etiquette, rules and usage for his entire maintenance staff. He is also working on determining long term (3 to 5 years) improvements for the course that will be shared with the Committee.

Finally, he reported that new sand for the bunkers will be delivered soon, in time for the course opening.

6. Golf Professional's Report

John Janik reported that new merchandise is arriving daily for the pro shop. Parks and Recreation golf instructional class registration will be open on March 18. He also presented revised scorecards reflecting the change of holes 9 & 14 and slight changes in the handicap rating of two holes (3 & 7). Extensive discussion was held on the use and placement of orange tee markers (the most forward tee markers)—the result of which is to leave the orange markers where they currently are on the tee boxes.

7. GAC Committee Member Comments/Issue

At the February meeting, a request for discussion by Judy Domkowski on the LWGA and LLNHGA practice of charging non-residents the same greens fees as residents during tournaments was raised. Judy feels that non-residents should pay an additional fee since Westport residents are required to purchase a golf handpass. The request was met with vigorous opposition from both resident and non-resident members of the two women's leagues, who contended that a change would significantly deplete the membership rolls of both groups and correspondingly reduced fees that the town would face from the defections. The board of directors for LWGA and LLNHGA strongly oppose changing this policy.

As was noted in last month's minutes, given the timing of the request and the required approval of fees by the Parks and Rec Committee and the Board of Selectmen this potential change could not be implemented until 2021. Therefore, it was agreed to revisit this topic in late summer after Judy Domkowski gathers some benchmarking data from the other Fairfield County leagues.

No motion was presented or voted on. The meeting ended at 8:40pm

Respectfully submitted

Jim Harman, GAC Member