



Westport Golf Advisory Committee
FINAL Meeting Minutes
Oct. 4, 2021

The Golf Advisory Committee of the Town of Westport conducted a Zoom meeting on Monday, Oct. 4, 2021. The meeting was called to order by GAC chairperson, Jane Dally, at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Jane Dally, Marie Gross, Judy Domkowski, Rich Raphael, Mike Durkin, and John Ehli.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the June 8, 2021 meeting were approved as presented and passed by a unanimous vote.

Comments from the Public

David Browne said that his son, Harrison, is a member of the Staples Golf Team. Harrison would be interested in representing junior golfers on the GAC. Jen explained that we are in an election year and therefore there no empty seats on the GAC filled until the elections are over. That said, Jen indicated that Harrison can sit in on any GAC meeting he would like as a member of the Westport public.

President's Reports

LWGA: Winnie Hamilton reported the association had 45 golfers participate in their major tournament, the Fall Cup, a two-round event. The league was rained out for its final Trophy Tuesday on Sept. 28. The LWGA presented a slate of officers for the 2022 season which was voted in by a majority of members. Marie Gross will become president in 2022. Winnie reported that the Member-Member team event tournament will be held this week, and the closing banquet is scheduled for Oct. 12. Winnie acknowledged that this was her last GAC meeting as the LWGA president, and thanked the GAC for its work in representing the golfers of Westport.

LMGA: Jon Lieber reported they held the Healy Cup and Minute Man Cup with two teams headed by golf pros Jon Janik and Chris Davies. They will host three more events this season and will be holding a closing dinner during the holidays.

LLNHGA: There was no representation from this association.

Administrative Report

- Rounds report at the end of September are 5,000 ahead of 2020.
- The work for tee leveling and green drainage funding will be addressed at a special meeting this week. The work would be done in 2022 if the funding is approved.

- Jen explained an ordinance supported by the RTM to ban the use leaf blowers is still being worked. This could have a negative affect on the golf course and Jen is following this closely.
- Longshore Park 5-year site plan contracts are being finalized and reviewed by the Board of Selectmen. Work is expected begin in November, 2021.
- The halfway house, managed by Hookd, is experiencing staffing issues, both at Longshore and the beach. Members of the committee expressed dissatisfaction with the offerings at the halfway house – mostly just snacks.
- Jon Janik will remain the golf pro at Longshore, having won the RFP.

Superintendent's Report

We were introduced to the new golf course superintendent, Brad Brown. Brad was the assistant superintendent at the Stanwich Club in Greenwich. He was welcomed by the GAC. Brad feels that the current condition of the course is the worse it can get, and from here there will only be improvements.

- Brad reviewed his fall maintenance plan.
- Brad is working to restore the 1st and 18th fairways, as well as restricting traffic on most fairways to allow the new growth of the perennial ryegrass.
- Next week begins aeration of fairways and greens.
- Brad will redistribute sand in bunkers to address the liners coming up.
- Brad will be educating his team on tee rotation. This is important to manage the wear and team of the tee boxes as well as giving golfers a different experience, especially on Par 3s.
- Brad will be posting Superintendent's report regularly on the Longshore website.
- Dr. Brunnel, the BrightView agronomist, will be visiting the course to help develop a work plan over the winter.
- Brad reported that they are currently understaffed. Members of the GAC encouraged Brad to report if he feels like he isn't receiving the needed staffing or support from BrightView.

Golf Professional's Report

- Jon Janik reported that the course is busy.
- Despite the condition of the fairways, Jon reported that he is very happy with the way the greens are rolling.
- The Chelsea reservation system was discussed and members indicated they are still getting error message of 'not enough places for the selected tee time' while immediately receiving an email confirmation of the desired tee time. Three options were discussed as an alternative to consider. Jon believes that the ForeUp system used by Tashua Knolls would be the best alternative. He will present the pros/cons at the next GAC meeting for ForeUp.
- Twilight times will begin at 3:00 p.m. this week.
- Jr. golf classes are completed for the season.

- They hosted the Staples LaCrosse tournament with 96 players last week. Hosted the CCDC tournament with 60 players.
- Pro shop is holding an end of season sale. Jon is awaiting shipments of balls and gloves.
- All pro shop credits must be used before the course closes for the season. They don't carry over.

Cart Path Discussion

A discussion ensued about the pros and cons of having cart paths at Longshore. The consensus is that while they might help with minimizing fairway damage, the esthetics of Longshore will be compromised. That said, the GAC agreed that it would be helpful to have a professional opinion. Jen will ask BrightView to review the pros and cons of installing cart paths fully throughout the course, or a plan to have paths in certain areas.

GAC Committee Member Comments/Issue

Judy asked Brad what, in his professional opinion, happened to cause our fairways to fail so dramatically and quickly. Was part of the cause the proximity to the L. I. Sound and salt water? Brad said it was most like a combination of circumstances, including excessive rain and heat. He doesn't believe that proximity of salt water contributed to this. If this were the case, Shore Haven and Fairfield Country Club would experience the same symptoms and they have not. A soil test detected Gray Leaf Spot, a fungus, and their maintenance plan includes chemical applications to address.

Again, the question of how to address the pooling water between the 4 and 5th holes came up. Brad said there is no way to direct the water away from the areas. Jen will ask BrightView to provide a potential solution to this problem.

The Zoom meeting ended at 8:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Gross, GAC Member