

Town of Westport  
Golf Advisory Committee  
Minutes  
May 4, 2015

The Golf Advisory Committee of the Town of Westport met in Town Hall in Room #201 on Monday, May 4, 2015. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Fred Hunter at 7:30pm.

Members present: Fred Hunter, Jean Murdoch, Gary Solomon, Jim Harman, John Ehli, Mark Holod and Lura Paschal.

**1. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the April 6, 2015 meeting were approved as stated with no changes.

**2. Rounds Report**

Chairman Hunter reported that Longshore was off to a great start in the opening month of April as rounds for the month were up 108% versus last year. April 8 was opening day and the weather in the first part of the month was not great so results are even more impressive.

**3. Superintendent's Report**

Mike Golden, Superintendent reported that the greens are coming around but there are still places on the course that are weak, mostly in low lying areas on 9, 10 and 11 where water accumulated and froze over the winter. Working on improving the thin areas. Mike said one of the most bothersome issues is finding rocks on the greens. Players hit the rocks onto the green hitting out of the bunker but then do not take the time to remove the rocks from the green. In addition, players are not doing a good job of repairing their ball marks. The greens are firm and people might have a harder time seeing their marks but they still need to be repaired. Mike asked that we make players more aware of the need to pick up the rocks from the green and repair ball markers. Gary Solomon added that perhaps the starter could remind players as they tee off. Mike added that perhaps the rangers could focus on this issue as well as pace of play seems to be less of a problem. The question was raised about the possibility of bunker liners. Chairman Hunter said that about 9 years ago when Longshore was redone bunker liners were considered but at a cost of \$280,000, found to be cost prohibitive. Mike then explained a new bunker lining method being installed at Stanwich golf club called billy bunker which lines the bunker with larger rocks and then coats them with a solution that seals them without preventing moisture from passing through. Mike did explain that the bunkers on holes 9-14 have been stripped and his crew will be laying fine fescue sod around the edge of these bunkers and then they will be sprayed with hydro seed. Mike added that he

has also stripped fairway sod from the right edge of the 6<sup>th</sup> hole and used it to replace thinner areas along 7, 3, 15 and 16. Jean Murdoch asked about the water faucet on the 7<sup>th</sup> hole, as it not operational. Mike said it was leaking and he is waiting for the right parts to fix it. Mike also mentioned that he is aware that the ball washers are leaking as well and he has ordered new drain caps to fix them. Gary Solomon asked about the best way to communicate course issues and Mike said via email to him at [mgolden@valleycrest.com](mailto:mgolden@valleycrest.com). Mike said he hoped to have the new hole signage in about 2 weeks. John Ehli asked about potential new plantings and Mike said there will be some annuals planted in the next week to add some color. Mike mentioned that he has put out new pins and target signs on the driving range and sprayed to reduce crabgrass on the range. He will put seed down later in the season timed with rain for watering. Chairman Hunter added that he has gotten positive comments about the new tee markers but he has requested that they be painted on the sides as well as the top so players can see what color they are from farther away.

Stuart McCarthy then entered the meeting and Chairman Hunter thanked him for his support of the Golf Advisory Committee. Hunter pointed out Stuart's major accomplishments during his tenure at Parks & Recreation, namely the irrigation plan, the course improvement and the addition of Valley Crest to manage the course. Stuart expressed his appreciation to the committee for their support as he moves on to other opportunities. Hunter congratulated Stuart and thanked him so much for his service to the committee and to the town wishing him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

#### **4. Golf Association Presidents' Report**

Regina Masterson, President of the LLWGA reported that their opening day would take place on May 5, 2015. The group currently has 87 members, up from last year, noting that quite a few are from Smith Richardson. Regina added that this could be due to the fact that Longshore is in better shape than Smith Richardson at present. Ellen Ehli, Co-President of the LLNHGA reported that the group had their opening day a few weeks ago and the roster count currently stands at 65 with 5 out of town members, a new feature for this year. Ellen explained that typically the membership number grows as we get further into the season. Michael Fox, President of the LMGA, reported that their group had 80 members on opening day and all were quite pleased with the shape of the course. Michael also mentioned that their next two tournaments are sold out. Chairman Hunter asked the club presidents to send an email to their members to encourage them to pick up rocks off the greens and repair ball marks. Jean Murdoch asked a question about potentially installing stairs to go from the 17<sup>th</sup> green to the 18<sup>th</sup> tee as there is a steep rise between the two if you go around one particular side of the green. Chairman Hunter responded that the town is not interested in putting stairs anywhere on the course due to potential liability. He added

that Valley Crest has recommended the installation of some type of stair for certain bunkers to facilitate the upkeep of those bunkers and that request will be taken into consideration.

**5. Golf Professional's Report**

John Cooper was not able to attend the meeting and provided no report.

**6. Discussion – Golfer Survey**

Chairman Hunter provided the committee with a finalized version of the Golfer Survey. He added that Mike Durkin worked with Jim Harman and Chairman Hunter in creating this final version. Jim Harman explained once again that the purpose of the survey is to work toward completing Charlie Haberstroh's goal of a long term plan for Longshore. He went on to explain that the survey is quite manageable taking only 9-10 minutes to complete. Chairman Hunter added that this version of the survey has gone through all the various necessary approvals and will be sent out via email to all current golf and regular handpass holders in the next week or so. Sean Doyle, attendee, pointed out a typo on one of the questions "In the last 12 months have you purchased golf equipment other than at Longshore?" and then the following question "If the answer to the question above is NO, why do you go elsewhere?" saying that shouldn't the second question read "If the answer to the question above is YES". Chairman Hunter acknowledged the error and said the appropriate correction will be made. Sean Doyle also asked that perhaps there should be a question about the driving range, saying if it were improved would you use it more. Hunter agreed to consider the question. Ellen Ehli, Co-President LLNHGA added that perhaps the golf groups should give their members a heads up about the survey and encourage participation.

**7. Old Business**

Gary Solomon asked Chairman Hunter if any of the smaller ticket items on the improvements list were being considered. Chairman Hunter said perhaps but that the approval process was slow.

Chairman Hunter marked the evening as the 13 year anniversary of the GAC and then took the opportunity to thank Mark Holod for his 6 years of service to the GAC and thanked him for his tremendous contribution as this will be Mark's last meeting. He presented Mark with a certificate and wished him well. Mark thanked Chairman Hunter for allowing him to participate on the GAC and he also thanked Charlie and his predecessors for their support of the committee.

**8. New Business**

There was no new business.

Motion was made to adjourn meeting and passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 8:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lura Paschal  
GAC Secretary