

**Town of Westport
Golf Advisory Committee
Minutes
July 7, 2015**

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

Members present were: Fred Hunter, Jean Murdoch, Gary Solomon, Jim Harman and Lura Paschal. John Ehli was absent.

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes were approved as submitted.

2. Rounds Report

Chairman Hunter provided that Rounds Report that showed rounds for the month of June was up a total of 5% versus June, 2014. The total number of rounds played for the month was 5,553. Hunter added the challenge will be to continue to see growth in August as that was when the course began to get back in shape last year. Gary Solomon mentioned that Longshore should look to charge no shows, as there were many during the rainy weather last weekend. John Cooper, Club Professional, added that he does not have the capability to store credit card information and therefore cannot charge no shows. He did say that they flag flagrant violators and prevent them from making a tee time on the Chelsea system. Chairman Hunter reported that the fiscal year rounds totaled 34,214 as the year ended June 30. Hunter recapped the total financial loss from the deterioration of the course was approximately \$240,000 in terms of rounds lost.

3. Superintendent's Report

Mike Golden, Superintendent, reported that the weather has changed significantly from a fairly dry spring with 1.3 inches of rain in May to a hot and wet June with 5.5 inches of rain. Greens on 1, 3, 4 and 8 have shown drainage problems as a result of the rain. The green on 1 is flat but 3, 4 and 8 are bowl shaped with the water settling in the middle of the green. Mike pointed out that drainage was installed on greens 2 and 6 last year and the benefits are obvious. Mike recommended doing deep tine drainage now to help drain all greens with additional needle tining to be done on 1, 3, 4 and 8. Mike mentioned that the maintenance schedule will be adjusted to accommodate more attention to these greens. He suggested, for the long term, that these greens be improved with built in drainage. Gary Solomon asked about possibly reprioritizing capital expenditures for the course to move this item to a higher priority. Chairman Hunter added that it cost \$26,000 last year to build drainage on greens 2 and 6 and that there are

definite economies of scale in doing the work on more than one green at a time. Regina Masterson, President of the LWGA asked Mike Golden if he could create an official drop zone on holes 12 and 13 in preparation for the LWGA's Member Guest Tournament. Mike agreed to do so. Chairman Hunter asked those in attendance if they have noticed all the small positive changes that have taken place all over the course including the new boxes for broken tees. Hunter commended Mike for all his hard work. Mike will be selecting 2 bunkers on the course to make some improvements. One bunker will have all the sand taken out and replaced with new sand and the other will simply have a new layer of sand placed on top. Hunter asked Mike for the proper instructions for repairing ball marks so the info can be distributed to golfers through the association presidents.

4. Golf Association Presidents' Reports

Regina Masterson, President of the LWGA said that her members had complained about slow play the prior week. They are expecting 96 golfers for their annual Member Guest Tournament next week. Ellen Ehli, Co-President of the LLNGHA said the group had no complaints. She added that the Co-Presidents have been diligent about forwarding course information along to the membership. Chairman Hunter added that due to the revised course maintenance schedule every fourth Monday will have the first tee time starting at 9am versus 8am. The changes have been built-in to the on line tee time taking system.

5. Golf Professional's Report

John Cooper reported that 988 rounds had been played in the last four days. He added that he has seen players coming out to play that he has never seen before. The junior program has kicked off and is going well as well as the pee wee program with the youngest players starting 150 yards away from the hole. All the golf clinics offered through Parks & Recreation are booked. There will be a Metropolitan PGA Junior Tournament being played at Longshore on July 13. Cooper added that college scholarships were awarded to Staples High School golfers Peter Richards and Mary Bennewitz. Cooper also mentioned that he would like to make the dress code for Longshore more specific and therefore more enforceable. He read the current dress code and asked that it be adapted to reflect the dress code at Tashua Knolls, specifying collared shirts for all. Chairman Hunter agreed to take the Tashua Knolls dress code wording to Charlie Haberstroh for further review.

6. Discussion – Follow up of survey results

Chairman Hunter mentioned an article that was printed in the Westport News reporting Hunters' presentation of the golf survey results to Parks & Recreation. Charlie Haberstroh has asked that now we dig deeper to get behind the initial survey responses. Three areas were highlighted: communications, driving range and bunkers. As a result, Hunter has formed subcommittees within the GAC to address each of these areas. The issue of

how to communicate better with the golf community will be researched by Jean Murdoch and Gary Solomon. Jim Harman and John Ehli will research improvements for the driving range. Fred Hunter and Lura Paschal will work on researching alternatives for bunker improvement. In order for the town to move forward more information is needed in these priority areas. Findings and recommendations will be reported to the Parks & Recreation Commission in the next few months. Hunter added that a new email address has been set up for the GAC to help in the process of information gathering and it is westportgac@gmail.com. Hunter added that he met with the course architect John Harvey to discuss bunker options and he will ask John to do a formal evaluation of the bunkers giving recommendations for what could be done. Jim Harman asked about the trash odor and Hunter added that Charlie Haberstroh has asked to be notified when the odor is particularly pungent so it can be addressed. In addition, Hunter said that an agreement has just been reached with the coming new restaurant The Pearl to provide food on the patio behind the inn for golfers. Food should be available in the very short term. Gary Solomon recommended that a link be added to the Longshore website outlining the current major issues such as repairing ball marks, dress code, and raking bunkers.

7. Old Business

Chairman Hunter announced that the new tee signs should arrive next week and will be installed by the town. He also reported that a press release, written by Jim Harman, will be going out in this weeks newspaper giving the survey results, rounds report, etc. Lee Feldman, attendee, asked about the possibility of installing club washers on more holes throughout the course. Hunter agreed to inquire further on this matter.

8. New Business

There was no new business.

Chairman Hunter asked for a motion to adjourn and it was so motioned and passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lura Paschal
GAC Secretary