



TOWN OF BARNSTABLE BARNSTABLE RECREATION DIVISION

DIVISION MANAGER

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Town of Barnstable Golf Committee Meeting Olde Barnstable Fairgrounds May 11, 2010 – Minutes

Meeting called to order at 5:32 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Attendance: Terry Duenas – Chairperson, Mary Creighton – Vice Chairperson, Richard Aliberti, Jim Lawson, Daniel Ginther.

Minutes from the February 9, 2010 meeting were accepted and approved with the following changes:

*In the last line of the first paragraph under “New Business” add the word **work** after “as we”.*
In the last paragraph under “Old Business” (third line from the bottom), Jim Lawson did not think he stated that he wanted “the town to outsource the golf course to be more like a small business”.

Jim thinks he just brought it up as a question. After comments from Bruce and others, convinced him that it was not a good idea to outsource.

Public Comment:

None.

Old Business:

Richard Aliberti submitted two letters into record (see attached):

- 1.) A letter to David Miller, President of the Member’s Association from TOB Public Schools thanking the Member’s Association for their generous donation.
- 2.) A list to TOB Golf Advisory Committee from Richard Aliberti and David Herlihy – Co-Chairs of the First Tee School Program – indicating contributors to the First Tee School Program that totaled \$15,600 in contributions.

Richard called Town Hall regarding his reappointment papers to the Golf Advisory Committee and was told **Terry Duenas** had the documents for Richard to sign and Richard has not seen them. **Richard** presented copies of his and Jim Lawson’s reappointment papers that have not been completed or submitted. **Terry** will look in his paperwork and see what he can find. **Richard** said he will sign the copy he has and submit it to the Town Council Office. **Mary Creighton** said that she received a letter/form when her term was expiring and the process was for her to bring it to Terry for him to sign as the Chair and then it would be forwarded to the Town Council. **Mary** also stated that the website has not been updated to reflect her new term.

Richard commented in reference to last month's meeting regarding incorporating the Golf Committee with the Recreation Committee, and the Golf Advisory Committee indicated they thought it would not be a good idea. He feels it would weaken their position as a committee. **Richard** wanted it known that he called the Town Manager's office today (May 11, 2010) and left a message with the secretary telling her what was going on regarding First Tee Program and other things and told her it would be a very bad idea to discontinue or eliminate the Golf Advisory Committee. **Terry** stated that all communication with the Town Manager must go through him. **Richard** stated that normally he does this, but a couple of letters were sent directly to Mr. Klimm recently by **Dan and Jim** and Richard thinks these letters "ruffled his feathers" and may be the reason why they are thinking of merging the Golf with the Recreation Committee.

Richard stated that it is encumbered upon the Chairman that all communication goes through Terry.

Jim Lawson commented that Richard did what he is telling other members not to do.

Terry said there is a new procedure that the Chair takes care of the paperwork for reappointments and he will take care of it. **Terry** stated that the letters should have gone through him. As far as Golf merging with Recreation, **Terry** said that the Council had difficulty getting a liaison for the Committee and they also want to get all meetings televised. There is very little room and space at Town Hall. Since Golf does belong under Recreation, maybe there is a situation where the Golf Committee ties in. **Richard** has watched the Recreation Commission meetings and they have at least fifty items on their agenda so there is no way in the world that Golf can be incorporated with Recreation. **Jim** asked Terry what his opinion is. **Terry** stated that we do not want to get folded into the Rec Department and not have a voice. As an enterprise account, the Committee has a very important role in terms of that and making sure policy is right. The Committee wants to make sure they are doing what is right for the Town and not only what is right for the golfers and membership. **Terry** does not think it is a good idea; however, he wants reasons when he meets to discuss this with Mr. Klimm. **Jim Lawson** has a different view – he feels this Committee's responsibility is to do what is best for the Town and for the Golf Course. And, if that involves disagreeing with management or town management then the committee's job is not always to be supportive of management. **Terry** said to look at what is best for the entire town. If it's good for the course then it's good for the town. **Mary Creighton** asked for clarification – is any liaison a volunteer? Terry is not sure. If no one accepts the position, the Town Council president will appoint one. **Mary** stated that except for Leah Curtis, the committee has never had a Council member present at their meetings. **Terry** stated that Gary Blazis attended meetings but Mary said not as much as Leah did. **Bruce McIntyre** wanted it known that "at some point in time, both courses are going to need a huge infusions of capital. Do we want to have a committee that will work with the management of the golf courses as to how the courses proceed in the future or fall into Recreation into a group of people who have absolutely no idea what we have done, what we've been through or where we are going? Do we want to be well represented by like-minded people that know what is best for these courses down the road"?

Dan Ginther asked if anyone has been appointed to fill the position that Jim will be vacating. **Terry** said he his not aware if an appointment has been made. **Dan** questioned about the use of debit cards at the golf course. He asked the manager of his bank if a fee is charged for debit card and the manager said no. **Lisa Peterson** explained that the merchant is charged the fee for processing. The manager told Dan that if a key pad is used, there are no fees charged. **Lisa** explained that if a key pad is provided, she is pretty sure the merchant is obligated to give cash back if the customer requests it.

Jim Lawson had a question to Mike about tee times discussed at last month's meeting. The member tee times on a weekend go from 6 – 8. If a non-resident calls in a week in advance and asks for a 7 a.m. tee time, what would the answer be? Mike said, he would reply that the earliest available would be 8:00.

Jim's opinion is that in the situation that we are in, the course should never turn away outside revenue. He feels the need to educate the members on how vital the outside revenue is. **Dave Miller** explained, from a member's perspective, why should he be paying \$800 if member's times can be taken by non-members? **Jim** said we need the revenue. He feels Mike should use the Chelsea System to book the non-members in the system and then the system can extend the member time by two tee times. **Dave** feels this would be a constant happening. **Mike** said there has never been a lack of non-member play on weekends. **Mary** stated that we have changed our process by allowing members to bring non-members in. **Terry** feels if we start violating our policy then it will cause an uproar. **Mary** explained that people do examine the tee sheet. **Mary** wanted to go back on old business regarding golf carts. Members should be aware that they are liable for any damages to golf carts. A member damaged a cart recently and was upset when he received an invoice for the damages, not knowing he would be liable. In Florida, players sign a form indicating they are responsible if any damages occur. **Mary** asked Mike to look into getting something in place so members are aware of this policy. **Mike** said he will talk to procurement and legal and get back to the Committee.

Mike reported that he received a letter for the defibrillator company stating there are problems with one of the components within they system that requires further investigation. Estimated time of shipping is the week of May 17th.

New Business:

Jim Lawson announced that this will be his last meeting. With that in mind, he had a few thoughts he wanted to convey. At the last meeting, Jim came up with a few different things such as tee times, credit cards, etc. The one thing they had in common is that they were all turned down as things to do – which is fine. It got him thinking of the topic of change vs. status quo. Jim read a statement regarding this:

"There are two very different management styles required for an organization that is struggling vs. an organization that is doing well. The style that appropriate for an organization that is doing well can focus on continuing on the current path in implementing changes cautiously and infrequently. (In other words, remain status quo, don't ruffle any feathers.).The style needed when an organization is not doing well is very different. It needs to embrace change. Not just accept change either. Not be afraid to take risks. Not be afraid to rock the boat. Not shy away from creating controversy. We are heading in a direction that is not good revenue-wise. We need to aggressively pursue changes in everything we do. Have brainstorming sessions. Question everything that we do and justify why we do it the way we do. In the long run, the current path will lead to even lower outside revenues resulting in substantial increases in resident's rates. We are on a downward spiral and we need to take corrective action. Change is not easy. Change is not comfortable. Human nature is to resist change and stay in the comfort zone. Change in this situation is absolutely necessary. These comments apply to golf management and staff as well as the Golf Committee. This Committee needs strong leadership and willingness to challenge the status quo. (Jim asked Terry to take a hard look at his approach given the current environment. He said Terry is a status quo, get-along type of guy). This Committee needs to be more aggressive in pursuing what is needed to make the golf course successful. In the long run, there is not any conflict between what is best for the golf courses and what is best for the Town. It's in the Town's best interest for the golf operation to be successful. But everyone needs to take a long range view and not make decisions based on short-term or political considerations. The golf course members must be educated on the need for changes in the vital importance of outside revenue. Finally, don't make the mistake of thinking that no one in Town Hall listens. Several months ago, out of total frustration, I sent a letter to Fred Chirigotis highlighting some of our problems. Two of the issues

mentioned were the crushing burden of town charges and the “make Hyannis look good accounting” (splitting the membership revenues 50/50 while the town charges are 91 % at OBF and 9% at HGC.) Since that time, the Town charges have been reduced by \$50,000 for next year (Jim is not sure if this is a direct result of his letter) and the charges to the two courses will be phased into a 50/50 split. So, hopefully this means somebody actually does listen. You just need to get to the right person. Final comment – I have really enjoyed the opportunity to serve on this committee. It has been extremely frustrating at times but I have enjoyed the opportunity and I wish you all the best of luck in the challenging times ahead. “

Terry thanked Jim and stated that the Board has not always agreed with him, but Jim always made valid points.

Mary stated the need to get the defibrillator at HGC. She feels we are setting ourselves up for liability. It has been over a year since this was first discussed.

Mike Ghelfi presented the revenue report (see attached). Within a week or two, a new teaching professional (contracted position) should be on board probably based at HGC but available at both courses.

Bruce McIntyre reported that the courses are looking okay. They have been aerated and top-dressed – blue grass seeding. Staff is transitioning – more employees coming on board.

Dan Ginther reported that the green recovery at HGC was outstanding. Hosta has been planted on the 17th hole. He told Bruce to let him know if more benches are needed and he will be happy to build and install them.

Public Comment:

Dave Miller asked when new flags will be purchased. Bruce said they will be purchased with FY11 funds. Flags have to be purchased in sets of three which is very costly. Dave said the Member’s Association will purchase them now if the Town will reimburse the association. Terry asked Lisa Peterson to check to see if reimbursement would be approved.

Dan told Jim that it was a pleasure working with him. Although they did not always agree, especially on the rates. He tends to agree that as a member of the marketing committee, not a lot of the changes he suggested were ever implemented. Need for incremental things. Agrees with Jim to not live in the status quo. He thanked Jim for being a committee member. **Mary** commented on the Jim Lawson sitting on the public side of the meeting and the Jim Lawson sitting on the Board. She said it was quite a transformation on certain subjects. And it has been a pleasure working with him. **Terry** thanked Jim for his services.

Terry Duenas made a motion to adjourn, seconded by **Jim Lawson**, the committee voted and it was passed unanimously at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Trisha Otto

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