

VILLAGE OF GLENCOE  
GOLF ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Meeting Minutes  
January 13, 2014

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Golf Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:06 p.m. at Village Hall. The following members were present:

Dale Thomas, Chairman  
Joe Keefe  
John Nesbitt  
Scott Shore  
Ron Schmidt  
Jim Hirsch  
Mitch Melamed

Village Manager Phil Kiraly, Head Golf Professional Matt Radde and Assistant Golf Professional Caesar Noriega were also in attendance.

2. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER MINUTES

The December Golf Advisory Committee meeting minutes were approved as amended to reflect the following changes:

- Approval of 'May' minutes was changed to 'December.'
- The "trees on the 12<sup>th</sup> tee will not have been removed" was changed to the trees on the 12<sup>th</sup> tee will not be removed.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

None.

4. MANAGERS MONTHLY REPORT

- Snow fell on December 8<sup>th</sup> and prevented any additional rounds for the season.
- A new teaching instructor, Geoff Lound, has been hired for the golf academy. Geoff will be the lead instructor for the junior camps as well as an instructor for private lessons.
- Dale Thomas asked why we needed to bring on additional instructors. Stella replied that we lost a full time instructor last season and Geoff has extensive junior camp as well as individual lesson experience and is eager to help us grow the programs.
- Dale asked if we are building in indoor space in the new clubhouse. Stella answered that an indoor teaching facility is included in the space plan.
- The capital reserve fund is projected to be \$400,000 for FY2014, this number is similar to last year's total and reflects a very strong business model.
- Glenview's public golf course will be closed next year for a renovation and we have been contacted by league members and golfers from Glenview to

set up tee times for the 2014 season. Stella informed the committee that the Glenview residents will be welcome and may take advantage of the senior membership; no additional special discounts will be given.

- Stella informed the committee that this year we had 52 fewer days of operation compared to last year. March 2012 had 19 more days of operation than March 2013.
- There were 500 fewer rounds than last year, the majority of the decrease occurring in the off season months.
- Joe Keefe suggested that staff collect financial data from its competitors in order to show that the Glencoe Golf Club is solvent and successful while others are struggling. This could be a valuable tool when it comes time to sell the new clubhouse idea. Dale added that this will be important from a financing point of view as well as selling the quality of the management team at the course.

#### 5. 2014 BUDGET PREVIEW: RATES, COMPETITION AND ROUNDS

- Stella presented the competition's rates by player type including weekend/weekday, and power cart rates. The review included the rates/fees of Sportsman, Winnetka, Wilmette, Highland Park, Deerfield and Sunset Valley.
- Stella commented that Club is one of the only public courses not to offer resident / non-resident memberships.
- Stella stated that the surrounding clubs offer memberships that bring the dollar per round down to \$17.00 per round for prime time. Stella added that we will never be able to compete with the resident memberships sold by other golf courses and it wouldn't be financially beneficial to do so.
- Dale asked what the reasons are for other courses doing worse than Glencoe financially. Stella answered that most courses are managed by their respective park districts and sell a great deal of resident memberships. Their management and pricing structures are set up more as a service to their residents than as a business. Many facilities look to just break even at the end of the year versus our strategy of maximizing potential capital funds.
- Dale asked Stella what she thought attracts golfers to the Glencoe Golf Club. Stella answered that we have concentrated on improving our product, the golf course, over the last 7 years. We have invested over \$1.8 million on the golf course through capital projects and purchasing necessary equipment and the results are superior conditioning. Customer service and having a professional staff in place also adds to the experience we deliver.
- Mitch Melamed asked if there is any way to find out how many Glencoe residents purchase memberships at competitor's courses. Stella replied she has no way of finding out but has not heard from any Glencoe residents that they purchase playing memberships elsewhere.
- John Nesbitt added that municipalities such as Winnetka support their park district facilities through tax dollars, including the golf course, in order to keep prices low for their residents. Municipalities also cover any shortfall at the end of the year from the Park District's general fund.

- Stella explained why we have stayed away from the third party discount sites such as GolfNow. Any facility that uses these sites gives up control over their tee sheet and will eventually see their dollar per round drop considerably. The golfers using these sites are also transient golfers that are following the deals and are very unlikely to be a repeat golfer at regular rates.
- Joe added that his experience using GolfNow was frustrating including poor customer service, starting times, and an unorganized staff.
- Stella reviewed the current rates as well as the 9 year rate history for all greens fees, golf cart rates and pull cart rates.
- Comparable rates for competitors were all presented. Stella reviewed the proposed increases for 2014 it was recommended that prime time weekday, prime time weekend, weekend twilight, and senior weekday and weekend rates be increased by \$1.00.
- Stella presented the budgeted rounds breakdown for the year as well as a historical rate analysis to the committee.
- Dale asked if the idea of starting our discounted times earlier than our competitors is to fill otherwise unsold spots. Stella answered that the strategy was to start our twilight times earlier than our competition in order to attract golfers to weak times on the tee sheet.
- Dale asked how much junior play we have. Stella told him that since Green To Tee left a couple years ago junior play has been decreasing. The Club does see a lot of junior play from surrounding high schools in the fall and we hope to grow the junior rounds in conjunction with the junior camp.
- Stella reviewed the senior membership program with the committee. This year we sold over 900 membership cards and the program has been extremely successful.
- The permanent tee time program was very successful in 2013. This program is an important segment of our rounds mix as the permanent tee times are paid for in March and it is guaranteed revenue for the season.
- August experienced the highest round count the Glencoe Golf Club has ever had and it's directly related to Wilmette being closed. While we hope to attract Wilmette players for a few rounds annually we can't compete with the resident rate they receive. Rounds will be budgeted lower next year, especially in August, due to Wilmette re-opening.
- Stella presented a zip code study of current Glencoe Golf Club customers. Mitch pointed out that Skokie's participation seemed very low compared to their proximity to Glencoe and added that there may be an opportunity to market towards Skokie residents. Dale added that for Chicago residents we are one of the easiest courses to get to and it doesn't surprise him how many Chicago residents we get.
- Stella updated the committee on the new golf course app that was introduced this last season. The app was downloaded over 100 times and 660 rounds were booked through the app which resulted in \$25,000 in revenue and 63% were repeat bookings. The GPS feature was very popular as well.

#### 6. CLUBHOUSE TASK FORCE UPDATE

- An agreement with W.B. Olson has been signed to review the feasibility study and present a more realistic budget number. Our expectation is to have Olson's report in the next two months so we can begin negotiations with Partners and Sirny Architects.
- Mitch asked Dale if there are any other big projects on the horizon that may affect the bond issue for the clubhouse. Dale answered that the water plant is the most visual and controversial but isn't sure of the time frame of that project.
- Joe asked if it was possible to set a schedule of meetings for the Clubhouse Task Force. Stella replied that at this point there is nothing new to report. There will be information to report after the negotiation with the Architect is complete.
- Joe asked if the clubhouse Task Force was charged with financing and fundraising options. Stella replied that the financing will be generally handled by staff but fundraising options may become an element that staff will look to the Task Force for assistance.
- Dale requested that the plans for the new clubhouse include designs for a new croquet court. Stella said that the croquet court is included in the list of requests for the architect in the event that the expense will be funded by an outside source.
- The next meeting will be held on Monday, February 17<sup>th</sup>.

#### 7. OTHER BUSINESS

- The March 2014 meeting date was changed to Monday, March 24<sup>th</sup>. Stella will send out a meeting schedule for the year to all the members.

#### 8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.