

**Deerfield Park District  
Golf Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes  
September 30, 2021**

Meeting came to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Brian Bradford\*, Kevin Butler, Dan Mazur, Bob Neary, Jason Mannina, Mike Bavier,  
Kris Oldeen, Derek Domaleski, Jeff Nehila

Absent: Sharon Edwards, Paul Franson, Casey Kremer, Terry Levy, Joe Cohen

\*entered meeting late

**Review of Meeting Minutes**

A review of the July 8, 2021 minutes revealed no changes. Follow-up from the last meeting: Jason spoke with the CDGA about getting the course re-rated. They are currently on a 10-year rotation. They told him that with tree removals and bunker renovations there wouldn't be much of a change to the course rating but moving tee locations would allow for a new course rating. They told staff to send them the information when the tees are realigned, and they can rate the course without coming out. Also from the last meeting, staff added the yardage stripes on the course and more vegan options have been added to the menu.

**Matters from the Public**

No public comment was received prior to the meeting.

**Staff Reports**

**Golf Operations & FORE**

Jason reported that Chef Joe left recently to pursue new endeavors.

The course is starting to wind down, but we are still seeing 200-235 golfers per day. The driving range is still extremely busy. We are seeing more small groups and outings. The challenge right now is that the course is so busy it's hard to get a shotgun outing off. IJGA events have returned to the course. This is a great group to support. The DBR Chamber monthly Networking Breakfasts have returned. We have also hosted a few lunches and banquets as well.

We plan to have one simulator up by the fourth week of October and the second by mid-November. Staff will start marketing these soon. Staff hopes the simulators help to provide some off-season food and beverage revenue.

The Fish Fry will not be held on October 1 due to Moonlight Golf but will continue on October 8. This will be the final Fish Fry of the season. People definitely prefer to sit outside under the tent rather than indoors.

Rounds are comparable to last year. We certainly saw a change this fall when school started with an increase in later afternoon play. Staff is hoping to get some of our afternoon leagues back next season from the companies that had the majority of their employees working from home. Our in-house leagues were phenomenal this year. Leagues were very supportive of the food & beverage service.

We continue to see new players learning the game. We wish we could get more clubs, but golf clubs are still a challenge to get.

Bob asked what staff is doing about a replacement for Chef Joe. Jason responded that our line cooks are very strong and have done a great job picking up in his absence. Interviews will take place during the off-season.

### **Learning Center**

Derek reported that he hears from so many people what a great range we have and how wonderful the conditions of the course are.

We are seeing a lot of new golfers in juniors and adults. We are also seeing a lot of families coming out which is great for growing the game.

In the adult classes, we had over 250 people participate in 8 classes throughout the season. Most of these are brand new golfers. Next year we will be adding weekend classes to our offerings.

Our goal continues to be to offer instruction to all age groups and ability level of golfers. We continue to build on our curriculum so that they are easy to see what the next step is. Our goal is to make sure we offer something for everyone.

We had 132 kids go through the Junior Camps. We were able to keep our 4 to 1 ratio by adding instructors as needed. We will continue with this model going forward. The junior camps generated over \$61,000 in revenue.

### **Golf Course Maintenance**

Mike reported that the golf course is in excellent condition heading into the fall season considering the challenging weather extremes experienced this summer including periods of deficient rainfall resulting in extensive drought and periods of hot and humid weather causing high disease pressure. Our daily and preventative maintenance practices are paying off with healthy soils and resilient turf. The greens are smooth and rolling at projected speeds due to reduced fertilizer applications along with aggressive growth regulator applications. Other maintenance practices completed include aerification and verti-cutting of the greens, drainage improvements, and preventative fungicide applications to the greens, tees, fairways and driving range. These practices combined help relieve stress to the turf during extreme weather challenges.

Looking ahead, fall projects will include deep-tine aerification of greens, tees and fairways, vert-cutting and overseeding fairways, additional drainage improvements, natural habitat restoration in out-of-play areas and along lake edges, fungicide applications to greens, tees and fairways for the prevention of snow mold, dormant fertilizer application to the greens, heavy topdressing of sand to the greens, and winterizing the irrigation system and pumphouse. We also will be performing "in-house" construction projects on various golf course holes this fall. Projects include tee expansions and leveling on holes 6, 8 and 11 along with the renovation project on hole 3 including removal of the right green-side bunker and remodeling the left green-side bunker. Only holes 11 and 14 remain for next year.

Dan asked if work to hole 6 silver tee box that is slanted is planned for the future. Jason responded that hole 6 leveling work is on the list to be completed this fall. Dan also mentioned that on hole 12 silver tee box there are some branches that hang low and get in the way of the taller golfers. Jason will let Mike know.

Dan praised Mike and the entire maintenance crew for keeping the course in such great shape.

### **2021-2022 Competitive Market Analysis and Review of 2022 Proposed Rates**

The CMA data was compiled from 11 area courses and allowed staff to see where the DGC rates and daily play polices fell as planned for the 2021 season. In 2021, DGC staff once again reduced its online sku offerings to coincide with an online pre-payment model. For 2022, staff is reverting to a pre-COVID model of in-person payment for all green / cart fees with the caveat of all tee-times continuing to be booked online with a credit card "hold". This model will promote players to adjust or cancel their tee-times prior to play. Required online bookings will also allow for a guaranteed increase in player data (email addresses) for future outgoing email marketing campaigns. Staff is also recommending the elimination of select non-resident seasonal pass types that are averaging extremely unprofitable daily fees. This will allow for better access to the course for residents and a high dollar per round average for non-resident fees. The CMA is included as part of these minutes. Select pass types noted in the highlighted areas are being recommended to proceed with a 4% increase.

For 2022, we will have a 3-bucket tier for range balls. The Range Value Pass is returning in 2022. The pass is \$350 for \$400 worth of range balls. Permanent tee time fees, the Unlimited Cart Pass and the Handicap fees will remain the same for 2022.

Dan asked if Deerfield has any reciprocal arrangements at any area courses. Jason responded that we do not have any reciprocal agreements.

Dan asked if we are getting new carts next year. Jason responded that we are getting a new fleet of the same model.

Director Nehila mentioned that we are trying to establish a target price range that is appealing to anyone that looks at our rates and to continually keep the course busy.

Brian asked what the impact for non-residents will be next year. Jason responded that we are proposing eliminating the weekday non-resident passes but lowering the non-resident daily rate.

Kevin asked if we track the number of rounds used per pass. Jason responded that we track the number of rounds for all passes.

Fee recommendations will be discussed and approved at the Park Board's October 7, 2021 Special Meeting.

### **2021 Important Dates and Events**

Upcoming important dates and events include:

- Moonlight Golf – Friday, October 1
- Club Championship Weekend – Saturday, October 9 & Sunday, October 10
- Bunker Renovation – October 11 (Tentative)
- Chili Open & Deerfield Township Food Pantry Drive – Saturday, October 23

### **Other Items for Discussion**

#### **Thank You**

Jason thanked Kris for all that he does to make the golf course a success. Jason also thanked the pro shop staff and the food & beverage staff for a great season.

#### **Bunker Renovation**

Director Nehila reported that the bunker renovations have been funded by the park district's Corporate fund, or General fund, which allows for the golf course to purchase equipment, etc. from the golf course operating budget. After the bunkers are completed the district will start looking at cart path renovations and irrigation upgrades. Those are large ticket items that will be spread out over a number of years.

#### **Capital Project Funding**

Director Nehila informed the committee that the district's financial conditions are very strong. Our current bonds are going to be paid off soon and the district is looking to take out bonds to complete some capital projects throughout the district including new siding and new roof for the clubhouse and possibly adding a covered patio to replace the tent on the deck.

The next meeting is scheduled for TBD January, 2022 at 7 p.m.

There being no further discussion, meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.