

Deerfield Park District
Golf Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes of March 9, 2022

Call to Order

The meeting of the Golf Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Director of Golf Operations Jason Mannina at the Deerfield Golf Club. The following were in attendance:

Present: Jack Butler, Seth Howard, Paul Franson, Casey Kremer and Sharon Edwards

Staff: Director of Golf Operations Jason Mannina, Clubhouse Operations Supervisor Kris Oldeen, Golf Course Superintendent Mike Bavier, Head Teaching Professional Derek Domaleski

(1) Review of Meeting Minutes

A review of the September 7, 2022, minutes revealed no changes.

(2) Matters from the Public

No members of the public were present.

(3) Staff Reports

(a) Golf Operations

Golf Director Mannina reported that since the Committee last met in September, there is a new roof on the clubhouse as well as new synthetic siding and vinyl flooring in the pro shop and restaurant walkways. It has modernized the space and made it brighter for patrons to enjoy. There are also new carpet tiles in the restaurant area which are easier for staff to clean and overall, staff is pleased with the interior changes. With respect to additional exterior changes, there is no longer a tent but an open-air pavilion. It will have four ceiling fans, eight can lights and two televisions once construction is complete. There is also a Trex Composite Decking System and new railings and stairs on the east and the south stairwells for improved safety. This will lower future maintenance costs as PVC is long lasting and aesthetically pleasing. Staff is hoping construction will complete no later than April 1st.

With respect to operations, range ball pricing and golf ball costs have increased exponentially. A small basket of range balls will be \$8.00 for 25 balls, a medium basket will cost \$11.00 for 50 balls and a large basket will cost \$15.00 for 75 balls. There is a value pass for \$400, worth \$475 and it is a great deal for heavy users that can also be carried over from year to year. One new operational change this year will be the exclusion of range balls on the chipping green in an effort to reduce range ball theft. A Committee member asked how staff intends to monitor the chipping green. Golf Director Mannina advised that the range balls will be an easily identifiable yellow color. In addition, there will be new signage around the club advising of this operational change and e-mail blasts sent out to club users. Another operational change is a new internal online booking software. This software will allow starters and rangers to see real time tee bookings and improve communication between staff and patrons. The new golf carts are now

anticipated to be delivered by the end of July/early August. Summer hiring is underway and there will be slight turnover due to the nature of seasonal employment. Head Teaching Professional Derek Domalesk's team will remain the same as well as the independent contractors and core clubhouse staff.

A Committee member asked for an update with respect to a CDGA (Chicago District Golf Association) rating. Golf Director Mannina advised staff will make a request to the CDGA to re-rate the course this season.

(b) Golf Course Maintenance

Golf Superintendent Bavier provided a brief recap of last year's season and advised staff was fortunate to have accommodating weather in the fall and winter to complete various maintenance and renovation projects. With the assistance of Hollembeak Construction, staff was able to complete the bunker renovation on Holes 11 and 14 by the end of October. All total, there were five bunkers that were completely renovated in 2022 and two bunkers that were removed. Staff followed up the remodeling by laying sod around the fairways and approaches as well as fresh sand in the bunkers. Staff is waiting for warmer weather to begin scalping the areas down that are designated for fairways and approaches. This completes the bunker renovation that was started roughly ten years ago. Staff is pleased with the results of the project and noted it had minimal disruption to operations due to the phased approach.

Staff also completed in house construction on raising silver and bronze tees on Holes 2, 11 and 12. Looking ahead, staff intends to raise the bronze tees on Holes 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12 and 17. In December, staff completed aerification on the greens to help alleviate soil compaction and improve water movement through the soil. This is crucial in the winter months to avoid prolonged periods of ice forming. The aerification is followed by spreading and brushing 75 tons of sand on the greens and tees with the intent of filling in any holes while leaving a blanket of sand to provide insulation over the winter. Staff also installed additional drain lines throughout the course on Holes 1, 6, 2, and 17. The below average snowfall has been positive from a maintenance perspective. Overall, the golf course looks healthy and is in great condition. Once soil temperatures warm up, staff will resume mowing in addition to verticutting tees and fairways. Currently, staff is the process of removing tree branches and other debris throughout the course that developed over the winter months. Additionally, staff is working on landscaping and ash tree removal. Capital equipment purchases this year include two different pieces machinery to help sharper tools and improve maintenance functions. As part of capital projects, staff will be focusing the remainder of 2023 on asphalt and seal coating in the parking lot as well as cart path resurfacing. Most seasonal staff will be returning in April and Superintendent Bavier is pleased with his staff and their longevity.

A Committee member asked if staff has any plans to plant more trees. Superintendent Bavier advised the Ash trees must be removed due to their association with the Emerald Ash Borer bug. There is a plan in place and money budgeted to start replacing some of those trees in select areas.

(c) Learning Center

Summer Classes and Camps:

Head Teaching Professional Domaleski reported that the District's upcoming summer programming goal was to build upon last year's success, grow the game of golf and be inviting for players of all ages and skill levels. Staff considered feedback received and made necessary adjustments to the program schedule. As previously mentioned, the team of instructors and independent contractors will remain the same as last year. Staff is also looking to retain assistants for summer camp programming.

Junior Classes:

There are three junior classes that run in the summer. These include an introduction to golf program for ages 4-5 with a parent that specializes in fine motor skills and fitness, the junior master's program for ages 5-7 with a parent and the advanced masters program for ages 7-9. These younger classes focus on an introduction to the game for children and teach their parents how to interact and be involved with their child's golf development. Overall, there will be nine weeks of Junior Camp this summer and is the Golf Club's most popular golf programming.

Deerfield Feeder Program:

The Deerfield Feeder Program is designed for junior golfers that are ready to take their game to the next level and continue to develop the skills that they have learned in the junior and advanced master's program. Participants are strongly encouraged to play and practice on their own in addition to scheduled class time. Each participant will also receive five buckets of range balls and one 9 Hole Twilight round of golf with a parent.

Deerfield Junior Golf Academy Travel Team:

The Deerfield Feeder Program transitions into the Junior Travel League for more competitive children who anticipate playing in high school and exposes them to tournament experience. It practices twice weekly.

Adult Classes:

There are several Adult Classes for those who wish to improve their golf game. There was moderate success last year with the series offered and staff hopes to continue on this trend with a specific focus on short game, bunker shots and full swing. There are also adult group classes which have become a popular option as well as specialized offerings for women and seniors.

Other Notes:

- Club Fitting Days with vendors have been scheduled for 2023 (Titleist, Callaway and TaylorMade);
- There will be new private training signage throughout the facility to remind users of this club offering.

A Committee member asked for the difference between the Club Fitting Days and Demo Days. Head Teaching Professional Domaleski advised staff can also schedule a club fitting for someone in advance outside of the fitting/demo days if requested. These fittings include both men and women clubs. There was also a brief discussion regarding how the women's program offerings will be promoted.

(d) FORE Restaurant & Bar

Golf Director Mannina reported that staff is working on a spring menu for the restaurant. Due to the typical number of playable days in the spring season, the menu offerings are not as robust compared to the summer/fall menu. The club nets more money Friday-Sunday with the halfway house and the beverage cart than the restaurant Monday-Thursday. The restaurant has been operating without a head chef since September of 2021 in an attempt to be cost effective following the pandemic. All of the current kitchen staff are part time. A Committee member asked staff to consider a few healthier grab and go items. Golf Director Mannina advised that staff is happy to explore new offerings. There was a brief discussion regarding an outdoor grill suggestion and remote work schedules effect on course utilization.

(4) 2023 Upcoming Projects

Golf Director Mannina reported will be replacing three HVAC A/C units that cover the hallway down to the restaurant. In addition to the new deck, there will be new recycled plastic exterior patio furniture as well. As Superintendent Bavier mentioned, due to the rising costs associated with seal coating, the car path project will be phased over the next six years.

(5) 2023 Important Dates and Events

Upcoming important dates and events include:

- April 1st – Final FORE Open (35 Teams Registered, 1 Open Spot)
- April 8th/9th – Permanent Tee Times Begin
- April 24th – Leagues Begin
- May 1st – Chili Open & Deerfield Township Food Pantry Drive
- May 2nd, 9th, 23rd and 30th – Titleist Fitting Days
- May 10th – Wilson Golf Fitting Day
- June 21st – IPGA Illinois Open Qualifier

(6) Other Items for Discussion

Golf Director Mannina thanked outgoing Golf Citizen Advisory members for their service as their term expires in April. He advised all GAC Committee members are invited to an upcoming Park District Volunteer Appreciation Event on April 19th. Executive Director Nehila has also announced his retirement from the Park District in June and there will be new representative from a Director level in the near future.

(7). The next meeting of the Golf Advisory Committee shall be held July 13th at 7:00 p.m. in the Jewett Park Community Center.

(8). There being no further discussion, meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.