

**Deerfield Park District  
Golf Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Minutes of July 13, 2023**

**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 Jewett Park Community Center. The following were in attendance:

Present: Brian Bradford, Lucia Liu, Jack Butler, Seth Howard, Robert Klein and Paul Franson

Absent: Joe Cohen, Board Liaison, and Faye Solomon

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

**(1) Review of Meeting Minutes**

A review of the March 9, 2023, minutes revealed no changes. The minutes were approved as circulated.

**(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 March, the exterior renovation of the clubhouse is mostly complete. Staff is waiting on the final punch list to be completed by the construction company which includes minor repair work. Overall, staff is pleased with the finished product. This project was the result of a larger Districtwide bond reissuance.

With respect to play, the course is currently averaging 287 rounds per day with a high of 320 in May and June. New golf carts are anticipated to be delivered by September 15<sup>th</sup>. The range is 40% over last year through June, although range ball theft remains an ongoing issue. Staff estimates the course is down 35% of \$15,000 worth of range balls for the season despite new operational changes such as the exclusion of range balls on the chipping green in an effort to reduce range ball theft.

Staff is still anticipating a CDGA (Chicago District Golf Association) course rerating. The most current ratings are the green tees on the new score card. Other topics of discussion include tee marker alternatives, warm up range balls for pass holders, the front of the clubhouse exterior, the clubhouse interior and existing landscaping around the maintenance shed. There was also a brief discussion regarding the placement of the gold tees adjacent to the black tees on Hole 2.

### **(b) Golf Course Maintenance**

Golf Superintendent Bavier provided a brief overview of current course conditions. Weather has played a significant role in course upkeep. Throughout periods of April, May and June, maintenance practices consisted of extensive hand watering and sprinklers. Rainfall has been fairly steady throughout July and staff has done an excellent job removing as much water from the greens as possible. Grass measurements are taken every week and despite the weather, turf grass has remained strong with good root depths of around 8-9 inches. Staff will continue to monitor this as temperatures begin to climb.

Between improvements to the drainage system and renovated bunkers, pumping water from the bunkers has been nearly eliminated. Staff is planning on flushing drain lines in the fairway, cleaning out existing drain lines and installing new lines where needed. There has been a reported four inches of rain the first two weeks of July and staff has yet to have any cart path only restrictions which is a testament to the success of the drainage system.

Spraying has consisted of controlling numerous diseases from infecting the grass. Consistent ball roll on the greens is the result of growth regulators, verticutting and sand top dressing. Grow in for Holes 11 and 14 has taken well. Staff is now focused on out of bounds trim work which helps define holes on the course.

Featured plant material include select annuals and perennials near the front entrance, the driveway, the first tee area and in pots in front of the clubhouse and deck. Staff also seeded a wildflower area on Hole 17 to attract butterflies and other pollen feeders. With respect to the District's tree replacement program, staff has planted six new trees this year to date. The program started as a result of significant tree loss attributed to the Emerald Ash Borer bug.

In regard to upcoming maintenance, the greens will be aerified on August 1<sup>st</sup> followed by a sand top dressing. Also on August 1<sup>st</sup>, the parking lots and driveways will be seal coated and striped. The course and facility will be closed this day to accommodate the two simultaneous largescale projects with the exception of those in a junior golf summer camp program.

Looking ahead to fall, staff will continue its in-house tee construction project. So far, seven silver and bronze tees have been raised. As part of ongoing capital projects, staff will be focusing the remainder of 2023 on cart path resurfacing.

A Committee member requested that staff consider cutting walking paths from the tees to the fairways. Superintendent Bavier advised that staff only has access to one mower due to mechanical issues on the other but is hopeful both mowers can be fully utilized soon.

### **(c) Learning Center**

#### **Spring/Summer Classes and Summer Camps:**

Head Teaching Professional Domaleski reported that the District's spring programming and current summer classes/camps have been going well, in large part due to good weather conditions and excellent staff.

**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 are nine weeks of Junior Camp this summer and is it the Golf Club's most popular golf programming. Programming is roughly 70% full.

**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 advances 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 Entry Level Classes:**

There are several Adult Classes for those who wish to improve their golf game or are at beginner level. Classes are currently sold out. Staff is also offering a condensed class with a focus on short game, bunker shots and full swing which has achieved moderate success. There were requests for specialized offerings for women and seniors The women's program had enough participants to run its first section, but the senior offering was cancelled due to a lack of participants.

There was a brief discussion regarding how to best promote classes for seniors. Consensus was that senior group classes may be a more agreeable option as it allows seniors the flexibility to schedule their own class at the time they prefer. A Committee member suggested that the new offerings for women be held a different day other than their league day as most women are tired from already playing. Golf Operations Director agreed and advised he will investigate an alternate day.

**Other Notes:**

- The Learning Center is up 35% in revenue for programming.

**(d) FORE Restaurant & Bar**

Golf Director Mannina reviewed the summer menu for the restaurant. Healthier options include hummus and chips, avocado toast, salads, wraps and broiled salmon. The fish fry continues to be well received. There was a brief discussion regarding how the interior restaurant space will be utilized once the season is over. Staff are still contemplating their options and will make that decision in the near future. Special events within the restaurant can currently not be accommodated as staff must prioritize golfers in the event of inclement weather. A Committee member noted that Director Mannina and Supervisor Oldeen spend a significant amount of time

in the kitchen. Director Mannina advised there is money in the budget to hire a full-time chef but that he would rather invest in part-time kitchen staff to lower costs and keep the restaurant profitable.

#### **(4) Capital Improvement Projects**

Golf Director Mannina reviewed the District's current 7-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) as it relates to the DGC. As previously mentioned, the cart path project will be phased over the next six years and the District will seal coat the parking lot in August. As a part of the District's green initiatives, an additional electric utility vehicle is slated to be purchased. In 2024, the DGC will purchase a ball field aerator in conjunction with the Parks Department to offset costs associated with hiring an outside contractor to aerate the greens. A Committee member suggested the District consider a cart barn to the CIP.

#### **(5) 2023 Important Dates and Events**

Upcoming important dates and events include:

- Cart Path Replacement (Partial) – Ongoing
- Club Championship Weekend – September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup>
- ProAm Scramble – Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>
- Chili Open & West Deerfield Township Food Pantry Drive – Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup>

#### **(6) Other Items for Discussion**

Director Mannina advised the next meeting will include an annual competitive market analysis of the DCG. At this time, the Committee will review proposed rates for FY2024.

Prior to adjournment, a Committee member expressed his upmost gratitude towards the grounds staff for keeping the course in pristine condition and the hard work the operational staff put in to make the programs successful and keep the restaurant profitable.

**(7). The next meeting of the Golf Advisory Committee shall be held September 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Jewett Park Community Center.**

**(8). There being no further discussion, meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

*Catherine A. Serbin*

Catherine Serbin  
Executive Administrative Assistant