

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JUNE 17, 2019
10:30 A.M. – GUILFORD TOWN HALL**

First Selectman Matthew Hoey called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

Present: Board Members: Matthew Hoey, Sandra Ruoff and Susan Renner

Town Officials: Parks and Recreation Director Rick Maynard,
Parks and Recreation Commission Chair Rose Dostert, Golf Commission Chair Brittany Mirles,
Golf Commission Member Chris Hodgson,
Economic Development Coordinator Brian McGlone and Clerk Traci Brinkman

1. Discussion regarding long term plans for the Guilford Lakes Golf Course.

Mr. Hoey said he called this meeting because of some financial concerns the Board of Selectmen has raised regarding the course particularly during budget season. There was discussion about keeping the course open to the public, but trying to improve the revenue opportunity and put in place a more effective management structure. There was also a suggestion about possibly rolling it into Parks and Recreation.

There was discussion about the decreasing revenue gap. Both Mr. Hoey and Ms. Ruoff noted that neither expect the golf course to make money or even have the revenues equal the expenses, however, the increasing losses are concerning.

Mr. Hoey said he wanted to put together this committee to look at options and to determine what realistic revenues they should expect.

There was discussion about the excellent quality of the course and the grounds.

Mr. Hodgson noted that golf is on a downward trend. It is also highly weather dependent.

Mr. McGlone said he is a member of the Clinton Country Club and even they have noted a decrease in play. He added that it is weather dependent. He suggested they take a closer look at the resident demographic versus out of town. Mr. McGlone said the golf pro organized several tournaments last year and the majority of the people that signed up were annual members that didn't want to pay more for the tournament, so it is likely he will not do those again this year. He added that at the Clinton Country Club there is an additional fee for tournaments.

There was discussion about a 9-hole course versus an 18-hole course. There was also discussion about the RFP that was put out a few years ago to find a private

company to manage the course. Mr. Hoey said there was some criticism that the way it was written, it was impossible for someone to make money on it. He added that they should also research and determine if private management is viable.

Ms. Renner said she feels the commission's answer to the goal for the course and how it is used by residents is more important than the revenue gap.

The commission noted that they want to provide golf as a recreational opportunity that appeals to young and old, male and female and make it accessible for everyone to use.

Mr. Maynard suggested they try thinking outside the box. He added that the disc golf tournaments they put on at the course were very successful. In addition there is another activity called soccer golf that is becoming popular. Mr. Maynard said things like this might generate more interest in the course.

There was discussion about Parks and Recreation putting information about golf leagues/camps in their program brochure, which they are currently doing. Mr. Maynard said they are willing to do more to help promote the course on Facebook, etc.

Prior to another anticipated meeting in July, the committee decided to pull together course usage, re-examine the RFP process and take a look at liquor laws to confirm whether or not it is possible to serve alcohol at the course in light of it being town property and near a school. Mr. Hoey added that they need to explore a range of options for the course.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Ms. Ruoff and seconded by Ms. Renner, the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:38 a.m.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Ruoff and Renner
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

Respectfully submitted,

Traci K. Brinkman
Clerk
Board of Selectmen