

**THE GUILFORD LAKES GOLF COURSE COMMISSION**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2020 at 6:00 pm**  
**CALL IN ONLY**

Attendees: Chair Brittany Mirles, Patrick Pascale, Chris Hodgson, Eric Hedberg, Laura Hartmann, Phil Maltese, Robert Cuzzo Steve Berry  
Absent: Cathy Provencher  
Others: Ted Tighe, GLGC Superintendent, Brian McGlone, Economic Development Coordinator for the Town of Guilford.

**Chair Brittany Mirles opened the meeting at 6:00 pm.**

**1. Public Forum**

None.

**2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes**

**a. March 26, 2020**

*Motion made by Patrick Pascale to approve the March 26, 2020 Meeting Minutes as written. Seconded by Laura Hartmann.*

*In Favor: Patrick Pascale, Chris Hodgson, Phil Maltese, Brittany Mirles, Laura Hartmann*

*Abstain: Robert Cuzzo, Steve Berry*

*Opposed: None*

**3. Superintendent Report**

- Sold 3 memberships for a total sold this season of 10
- Eric Hedberg's company donated 6 gallons of paint to the course. Painting of the basement walls and ceiling are complete. Ted additionally purchased and installed window and door trim.
- Fertilized and started mulching the beds
- General spring cleanup is underway
- Have started mowing
- Fairways have been aerated and seeded
- 95% of the equipment has been serviced.
- The course is ready to open

Chair Brittany Mirles asked Ted how we are doing from a spend to budget perspective. Ted replied that we are 63% of the total budget to date.

Commissioner Maltese asked if we could get a jump start on aerating and seeding the greens while the course is closed. Ted responded yes, he usually schedules that for June, but it could be moved up.

Commissioner Maltese inquired as to how we would manage the clubhouse interaction within the state mandates. This would need to be discussed in more detail. There is a window behind the counter of the clubhouse which could be utilized. Commissioner Hedberg commented that other courses that are open do not allow golfers to enter the clubhouse and one course requires payment by credit card over the phone.

Commissioner Hodgson stated that he has been in conversations with Mitch Goldblatt, Director of Human Resources and the 1<sup>st</sup> Selectman, Matt Hoey regarding opening of the course. They are in favor of keeping the course closed for now adhering to the Governor's mandate to keep social distancing.

Chair Brittany Mirles commented that with the peak of the virus anticipated within the next 2 weeks, she suggests that the Commission meet again on April 21, 2020 to evaluate opening at that time. There was discussion that followed on implementation strategies of other open courses. A cleaning plan and schedule once open was suggested. Commissioner Cuzzo commented that the tournament scheduled for May 14 at Quinnipiac has been postponed indefinitely. Commissioner Hartmann cautioned the Commission to be wary of public opinion.

A discussion of prorating season pass holders was brought up, depending on how long the course remains closed.

Opening date and implementation plan was discussed. Also, the ability to enforce these plans with a limited staff was brought up as a concern by Chair Brittany Mirles. Chair Brittany Mirles was asked that when we open the course, can we open to members only first for a specific period of time.

A poll of the Commission members was taken as to whether the course should open this weekend. Unanimously the vote was No.

*Motion made by Patrick Pascale to postpone the course opening until after the Commission meets again on April 21, 2020 with a target date of May 1, 2020 to be evaluated. Seconded by Steve Berry and was unanimously approved.*

Commissioner Pascale stated that he will be meeting with the Rotary tomorrow to discuss a donation for the parking lot paving. He left the meeting at 6:33 pm.

#### **4. Finances**

##### **a. Approval of warrants**

*Motion made by Robert Cuzzo to approve the Warrants in the amount of \$9,176.68. Seconded by Steve Berry and unanimously approved.*

##### **b. Approval of Invoices**

*Motion made by Robert Cuzzo to approve the Secretarial Invoice of \$52.50 Seconded by Steve Berry and unanimously approved.*

#### **5. New Business**

##### **a. Revised Opening Day Plan Update**

Previously discussed under Superintends report.

##### **b. Painting of the Basement**

Previously discussed under Superintends report.

#### **6. Old Business**

##### **a. Paving of Parking lot Update – Pascale**

Previously discussed under Superintends report.

**b. Liquor License Update – Hodgson/Hartmann**

Commissioner Hodgson reported that the cost of an insurance rider to serve liquor would be \$3K a year. He did the cost analysis and based on the cost and projected revenue the results were not favorable. Chair Mirles asked about instead charging a corking fee. That would also require the insurance rider. Chair Mirles suggested that this item be placed on the back burner but not dismissed totally. Commissioner Hodgson expressed his appreciation to the Chair's innovative ideas to drive revenue.

**c. Food Service Update – Hartmann**

Commissioner Hartmann has spoken to a licensed profession food server who has offered to evaluate the space and recommend what would be needed improvements to meet code. Commissioner Hartmann has suggested starting slow by providing hot and cold beverages as well and buns and pastries to start. Then expand to grilled food. She has a contact request into the Health Director, Dennis Johnson to discuss the requirements as well. Chair Brittany Mirles expressed that when she previously inquired of Dennis Johnson she was told that a soil test would be required as well as food handling certifications. She offered the services of her family business to do the soil test digging if required. Commissioner Hartmann stated that she is still working on the logistics.

Superintendent Tighe reviewed some history on the previous attempts to provide food service at the course. They included a contract with the Little Store 2 years ago where the course purchased bagels and muffins from them to sell at the course. There wasn't enough sold to be profitable for the Little Store, so it was never pursued further. Superintendent Tighe further said that Thursday night's league the players bring in dinner after play and eat on the deck. The course offered to provide them with wraps and sandwiches to purchase and they declined.

Commissioner Hartmann would like to approach it again a little differently. She stressed the need to market the idea to players. She commented that the offering of sale of the food is not just about the profit from the food itself, but also to draw more players and families in.

Chair Mirles suggested that now that the course is more open about its financial issues, perhaps the players would take advantage of additional services being provided.

Commissioner Hartmann said that staffing would need to be addressed. She suggested that we initially staff with volunteers on specific times, perhaps after league play or on a weekend day.

**d. Increased Green Fees/Membership Update – Berry**

In addition to the fees approved at the last meeting, Commissioner Berry proposed the following specials or bundle rates:

- Purchase 8 rounds for \$135.00 and get 1 round free (equal to \$15/round)
- Purchase 15 rounds for \$245.00 and get 2 rounds free (equal to \$14.40/round)

The question was asked if we should have separate bundle rates for non-residents. Commissioner Berry to evaluate numbers for the next meeting.

The current passes are good for an indefinite period of time. Commissioner Berry suggested that a time period be specified for the current season only with an expiration date. It was discussed that this might impact sales due to the shortened season.

*Motion made by Robert Cuozzo to approve the special/bundle rates as proposed by Steve Berry as well as to limit the valid use to the current season only. Seconded by Chris Hodgson and unanimously approved.*

Chair Brittany Mirles thanked Commissioner Berry for all his work on the subject.

**e. Partner with Fairways Driving Range Update – Cuozzo**

Commissioner Cuozzo sent an email to Mark Erwin after our last meeting outlining the agreed upon option. He has yet to receive a response. However, Brian McGlone had a conversation with Mark, on a different subject, and the topic of the golf course proposal was discussed. Mark outlined what he is looking for as follows:

- Mark is certainly interested/willing to hang GLGC banner(s) at Fairways and at his other location in Lyme.
  - He is envisioning something like 3' X 6'. (standard, common size)
  - He assumes copy would be the same at each location, but he strongly believes a "promotion" needs to be included (like \$1 or \$2 OFF normal rate or something else we want).
  - He suggests we print a business card size "promotional card" including whatever our deal/promotion is. (Start with a box of 250 cards per range).
  - He would have these at each range and hand out to customers who want to take advantage of GLGC deal.
  - He suggested we consider printing the promotional cards in different colors or a marking, so we know where golfer customer came from (Branford or Old Lyme).
  - He has this type of banner printed by Vista Print, at a cost of about \$75 (I would still try to source locally before going to Vista Print) but the Commission can decide that issue.
  - Mark would create a banner to be hung at GLGC to promote his driving ranges in return.
  - He has an extensive email listing and would work with us to do periodic eBlasts if we give him the content.

Chair Mirles commented that she used Vistaprint for the banners at our last tournament. They were 2.5 x 4 at a cost of \$32 each. Brian McGlone commented that Mark has other banners displayed at his business and is trying to keep them uniform in size. Chair to send the detail note from Brian to the Commission for review. The discussion of whether we require to know where the promotion location was and the need for 2 different cards. It was decided that this is not necessary.

The discussion then moved to a consistent logo to be used for the Golf Course. The Little Red Shack of Grass Island had previously been designed and used by the course for the last 2 years. It was decided to continue to use that logo. It is on the current score cards and will be used on the banners, Facebook and constant contact.

*Motion made by Robert Cuozzo to off a \$2 discounted rate as the promotion for the partnership with Fairways Driving Range. Seconded by Steve Berry and unanimously approved.*

**g. Build a Driving Range at the course – Hodgson**

Commissioner Hodgson reported that there is no known land to put it on and would require reconfiguration of the course to move holes 1 & 9 into the woods and build the driving range in their place. Commissioner Hartmann asked if we could engage a volunteer architect to survey the property. Superintendent Tighe to get a map of the property from Kevin Magee to evaluate prior to engaging an Architect. It was agreed to table this discussion until the next scheduled meeting.

**h. Appeal and advertise more toward larger groups and wedding parties update – Mirles**

With the fact that businesses are currently closed not much work has proceeded on this. However opening up the use of the course, especially now that it is closed, to photographers use was discussed. Commissioner Hartmann noted that local photographer Catherine Kiernan has offered free prom photos to students missing out on the prom. She will contact Catherine and let her know of the offer to use the course for this, providing that she tie the course in on Facebook and be considerate of golf traffic (once the course is open again) and allow the use of her photos on the course website.

**i. Work with Solstice Senior Living to get a Shuttle Update – Berry**

When contacting the facility Steve was told that they had already been approached with the idea. They were not in favor of encouraging it to residents as most are not capable of the walking required to play the course. Commissioner Berry contacted the Guilford Housing Authority as well and received the same response.

A discussion then ensued about putting together a putting league for this clientele which would not require them to walk the course, but allow them an outing. It was suggested to Steve by Brian McGlone to contact Terry Holland-Buckley at the Community Center. Terry is responsible for senior programming and may want to include a putting league. Commissioner Berry agreed to contact her.

**j. Update website and New Coder – Mirles**

Christine Berry has been contacted and is capable and willing to provide the course website services as previously provided by Digital Progress Media. Her proposal comes in less than our previous service provider at \$100/mo. during the season at \$60/hr. for 7 months plus a monthly media posting fee of \$100/month totaling \$2,500 plus \$100 monthly posting fee. Our previous provider was paid \$5,000 a year.

*Motion made by Chris Hodgson to accept Christina Berry's proposal and terminate our contract with Digital Progress Media. Seconded by Eric Hedberg.*

*In Favor: Chris Hodgson, Phil Maltese, Brittany Mirles, Laura Hartmann, Robert Cuzzo*

*Abstain: Steve Berry*

*Opposed: None*

Commissioner Hartmann left the meeting at 7:45 pm.

Chair Brittany Mirles stated that the closure of the course has not been posted on the Town website. She asked Sally Berezowskyj to make the appropriate contacts to do so.

**k. Golf Tournament Update – Mirles**

No update; further work pending the open date.

*Motion made by Robert Cuzzo to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 pm. Seconded by Chris Hodgson and unanimously approved.*

Respectfully Submitted

*Sally J. Berezowskyj*

Sally J. Berezowskyj  
Recording Secretary

Approved