BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
GOLF SUBCOMMITTEE

There was a regular meeting of the above referenced subcommittee held on Wednesday, February 9, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom meeting platform.

Committee members present were: Councilor Rickford Kirton, Chair, Deputy Mayor Gregory Davis and Councilor Shamar Mahon, Jon Colman, Brad Klein and Lynette Easmon

Also present were: David Melesko, Director of Leisure Services, Ciaran Carr, General Manager, Kevin Laing, Assistant General Manager, Ryan Phelps, Vice President of Operations, Steve Howard, Regional Director of Sales and Marketing, Matt Fauerbach, Director of Agronomy,

Absent was: Mark Mansur, Course Superintendent

Guest was: Peter Wilcox, 12 Julie Lane (Memorial Donation Request)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Wintonbury Hills Golf Course – Activities, Status of Property and Financial Report

Mr. Ciaran Carr, General Manager for Wintonbury Hills Golf Course gave a brief financial report and status of property report for January 2022. The golf course officially closed for the season on December 17, 2021.

January Financials

- Total Cash Investments - $962,390
- Annual Total Revenue $2,287,218 an increase of $355,968
- Final Year End Earnings before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization (EBITDA) $328,805 and $97,357 over prior year
- Driving Range $61,563 an increase of $23,411 – Credit Cards are now accepted at the range
- Golf Shop sales increased $39,371
- Food and Beverage sales $484,112 and $212,817 over prior year

Marketing

Mr. Carr noted the following upcoming events:

- Mayor hitting opening shot –Press Release- Resident invite
- Resident Day is scheduled for April 15th - $5.00 green fee
- Resident Day Free Clinics
- July 4th – Celebrating Residents – TBD

There was a brief discussion regarding discounts for resident events. The committee discussed if there should be a discount, how much for food/golf or both, how many scheduled events each season and the criteria for events to qualify.
The Marketing Plan should be completed for presentation at the next meeting. The Dynamic Pricing Model is ready for launch. It was noted that only the resident rates will be displayed. Mr. Carr stated that ongoing marketing efforts have been extended by the Hartford Yard Goats. Each year, Wintonbury Hills has a billboard display at every game, in addition to two e-mail blasts in the spring and ongoing database marketing.

Councilor Kirton commented on the bonus reached with Indigo Golf relative to expenses of a $40,000 variance.

**Course Maintenance Update – January 2022**

- Winterization of Golf Course equipment fleet – preparing for upcoming season
- Enhancing Golf Course Maintenance building – painting, cleaning, etc.
- Daily walks on the course to discourage geese populations
- Pruning low lying limbs on trees for ease of mowing as well as improved playability of the golf course
- Removal of dead trees on the course for safety and aesthetics
- Preparing maintenance budget for the 2022 golf season

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Discussion and Status Update regarding Irrigation**

Mr. Matt Fauerbach, Director of Agronomy for Indigo Golf gave a brief status update regarding the course irrigation plans. He outlined a summary of projects that led up to a system replacement, prioritizing items such as the Pump Station, in which the motor will be replaced by spring 2022 (Specifications together will go out to bid). It was noted that other projects will be funded from the Operating Budget – Enterprise Fund such as the broken operation valves and the Transfer Pump Station with river water to the course water supply. The total amount is $230,000.

Mr. Brad Klein, Committee Member inquired if the course can proceed without interference with going ahead to purchase. It was noted that the Town is bound by the procurement process, in which a Request for Qualifications can be submitted for pre-qualification requirements.

**Discussion regarding a Memorial Donation Request**

Mr. David Melesko, Director of Leisure Services briefed the subcommittee on a Memorial Donation request. Mr. Robert Berman and Mr. Peter Wilcox requested a Memorial Donation (bench) in honor of Mr. Frank Dipippo, who passes away on February 7, 2021. The cost estimate for the bench and installation is approximately $2000.00.

Mr. Wilcox commented on Mr. Dipippo’s career as a school teacher for over 40 years with the Bloomfield Public School District. He noted his genuine character, accomplishments, integrity and passion for sports.

Mr. Melesko requested a full justification and recommendation for the Memorial Donation bench donation.

Mr. Klein stated that it will be a mistake to have stationary objects installed on the golf course. He noted that this is bad policy for golf course maintenance.
Mr. Jon Colman, Committee Member urged the Council to consider setting a precedence moving forward, although he is sensitive about the issue in honoring those who have made contributions to the community.

The committee deferred concerns and setting precedence to Golf Management. Mr. Ryan Phelps, Vice President of Operations for Indigo Golf suggested a designated area on the course or in the golf shop for memorials.

**Discussion regarding Town & Local Non-Profit Events**

Mr. Carr commented on an inquiry about discounted rates for Town and Local Non-Profit events. Currently, there are no special discounted rates for these types of events (residents and town agencies). The committee discussed parameters around how many and to whom to approve. There was a recommendation to develop a policy for these types of requests, financial impact, if any.

Deputy Mayor Davis made a suggestion to work with golf course Management and inquire about discounted rates offered at local area golf courses. He also noted the importance of where to draw the line of classification.

Mrs. Lynette Easmon, Committee Member inquired about having a discussion regarding Veteran pricing similar to resident rates.

**Discussion regarding Connecticut State Golf Association (CSGA) One Day Event**

Mr. Carr gave a brief description of the Connecticut State Golf Association (CSGA) One Day Event coming to Wintonbury Hills. There will be approximately 90 players utilizing the driving range, purchasing food and beverage, engaging in practice rounds. Mr. Carr noted that sponsoring this event would be a Give Back to Golf within the State of Connecticut and would not be a huge revenue driver.

The marketing of this event will be highlighted in print/social media, e-mail blast and course website.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business for discussion.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Davis, seconded by Councilor Mahon and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of January 12, 2022.

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Deputy Mayor Davis, seconded by Councilor Mahon and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m.