BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
GOLF AD-HOC COMMITTEE

There was a regular meeting of the above referenced subcommittee held on Wednesday, June 8, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom meeting platform.

Committee members present: Councilors Rickford Kirton, Chair, Deputy Mayor Gregory Davis, Councilor Shamar Mahon (in at 6:40 p.m.), Jon Colman

Also present: David Melesko, Director of Leisure Services, Ciaran Carr, General Manager, Kevin Laing, Assistant General Manager, Steve Howard, Regional Director of Marketing, Dennis Petruzzelli, Course Superintendent, Mayor Danielle Wong and Councilor Suzette DeBeatham-Brown

Absent were: Ryan Phelps, Vice President of Operations, Brad Klein and Lynette Easmon

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 March and April 2022. The golf course officially opened for the season on March 17, 2022.

The month of March started late extremely cold weather was not very pleasant, however very productive to towards the end of the month.

The course missed the revenue budget over prior year by $37,000. Therefore, with less play means decrease in staffing and expenses, the course ended up in the positive with only a loss of $13,000, instead of the budgeted amount of $69,000.

Mr. Carr stated that 66 events have been booked has of June 1, 2022, many non-golf events.

March and April Financials

- Total Cash Investments - $736,000

During the month of April, the weather was great. The course was able to beat budget revenue and prior year by approximately $10,000.

Mr. Carr reported that the course had about 127 more rounds this April than the previous April. The rounds was actually very close to prior year. There was not a huge drop off in rounds this year. It was noted that fiscal rounds were actually about 3600 rounds over prior year.

Mr. Carr compared last year with the COVID-19 impact, in which everybody was playing golf there is nothing else to do. This activity increased revenues for the course. However, the course missed the EBITDA by about $76,000, but the long way behind last year's fiscal, which is about $187,501 less the same time last year.

Mr. Carr also commented on the rising costs in Labor due to materials, products, electricity or merchandising the shop fertilizer for the course. The food and beverage and liquor costs have also been impacted, by approximately five to up to 15 to 20% depending on the product purchased.
Marketing Update

Mr. Steve Howard, Regional Director of Marketing gave a status update of marketing strategies and plans for Wintonbury Hills.

Mr. Howard reported that as of May, the Net Promoter Score for Wintonbury Hills was 78% and 80% for the year. The Net Promoter Score is measured by asking customers/employees the likelihood of recommending a product/service to family or a friend. The respondents rate their score on an opinion scale of 0-10 with zero being very unlikely and ten being extremely likely.

He also reported that the course receive four stars with 12 reviews by the end of May. The application update through the end of May reported $10,530.70 in revenue, 86 downloads and 258 year to date.

Mr. Howard noted positive statistics with all Social Media platforms, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Wintonbury Hills course reputation reflects the overall counter experience for golfers.

Councilor Kirton inquired about marketing strategies and outgoing communications to enhance and reach the end user. He suggested push notification capability as an example in Facebook.

Deputy Mayor Davis asked about any constructive feedback from comments submitted. There were very little negative comments, received mostly positive comments.

Mayor Wong inquired about any initiatives to compare to other local golf courses. Mr. Howard stated that they do comparison to online reviews and statistics.

Course Maintenance Update – April 2022

Mr. Carr introduced the new Course Superintendent Dennis Petruzzelli. Mr. Petruzzelli started on April 18, 2022 with Wintonbury Hills. He gave a brief background of himself and experience as a Course Superintendent.

Mr. Petruzzelli is currently evaluating the course and will maintain course conditions based on recommendations with turf management. He also noted that some challenges noticed with the course are some Environmental conditions (wind breaks, searing sun – micro-climate and quick to dry out).

OLD BUSINESS

Irrigation Update: Request for Proposal (RFP)

Mr. David Melesko, Director of Leisure Services gave a brief update of the RFP update for the Irrigation system. The Irrigation RFP will be written and distributed within the next two weeks. He noted that there is an approximate 6 months’ timeframe for installation.

NEW BUSINESS
Discussion regarding the FY 2022-2023 Budget

Mr. Carr reviewed the FY 2022-2023 Budget outlining detailed revenue, labor and expenses in the golf shop, golf operations and General Administration.

The estimated and projected EBITDA is $102,576.
He also noted that the course will have approximately 50 employees at the high peak of the season.

Discussion of Overflow Parking

Mr. Carr reported that the golf course is receiving more events are being booked than ever before. Thus far, 15 non-golf events were scheduled throughout the duration of the season. He informed the committee that all non-golf events were booked by Bloomfield residents. He will continue to market to businesses and larger corporations in Town for more outing venue promotions.

Mr. Melesko stated that he met with Public Works to review the empty lot and possible suggest services in-house. Public Works is not equipped to perform the necessary tasks for this site. Mr. Melesko also met with the Planning and Zoning Officer and Town Attorney. It was noted that this project must be presented before the Town Plan and Zoning Commission (TPZ).

Mr. Melesko is currently writing the site plan with price quote. He noted that there would be an additional 40 parking spaces planned for that empty lot. There are currently 70-80 parking spaces on the original site.

Deputy Mayor Davis inquired about overall communications to market the value of Wintonbury Hills to the community. It is important to recognize and inform residents of all benefits to the development of the Town. In addition, Councilor Kirton suggested highlighting the benefits of the course in the Bloomfield Messenger.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Kirton would like to continue to explore ways for young people to get involved with the game of golf. He suggested inquiring with the school district and local businesses to sponsor for programming.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. **Robert Berman, 8 Hiram Lane** requested a status update regarding the donation of a Memorial bench on the 5th Tee box. He asked the committee to also consider the front entrance of the clubhouse for the bench installation.

   There was a brief discussion about policy, process and application procedure from community members.

2. **Dr. James Biffer, 17 Terry Plains Drive** commented on the meetings of this subcommittee are so refreshing, focused, thoughtful and intentional. A number of the other subcommittees' meetings are scattershot, unfocused pontificating and posturing, instead of conducting honest, serious business. Congratulations to you all for honestly, honorably, and intelligently working on behalf of the Town. I enjoy your meetings very much.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Councilor Mahon, seconded by Deputy Mayor Davis, and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of April 13, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Councilor Kirton, seconded by Councilor Mahon and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.