

Wicomico Shores Golf Course Advisory Board
Thursday, May 17, 2012
(Rescheduled from April 19, 2012)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robert Richardson, Chairperson; Gloria Tippet, Everett "Ebie" Cooper, David Phalen, Gerald Slagle and Tom Schumacher.

R&P STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT: Brian Loewe, R&P Director; Pat Meyers, Golf Course Manager; and James Farren, Golf Course Superintendent. Citizens Sandie and Paul Callahan also attended.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Wicomico Shores Golf Course (WSGC) Advisory Board was called to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Wicomico Shores Golf Course.

Chairperson Richardson introduced Brian Loewe, new Recreation and Parks Director, to the Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tom Schumacher motioned, seconded by Gerald Slagle, to approve the minutes of February 23, 2012; motion carried with all in favor.

GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

As a follow-up to last meeting's budget discussion, Jim Farren provided a handout that detailed the Golf Course maintenance equipment inventory. The report showed the item description, year purchased, and purchase price. Items included greens mowers, tee mowers, trap and bunker rakes, fairways and rough mowers, greens and surrounds mowers, and tractors. He discussed recommended hours/mileage for equipment. He also discussed the challenges with maintenance, repairs and replacements. The last large purchase of equipment was in 2010 for the Jacobsen greens mower.

Mr. Schumacher noted that the Annual Comparison of FY06 through FY12 sheet doesn't show capital equipment past FY08. Ms. Meyers stated that nothing is shown in FY09 and FY10 for capital equipment because that has been depreciated off by the Finance Department (FY08 figure of \$17,520 is an auditing misprint; that should also be zero). In FY10 \$45,000 was budgeted for capital equipment and \$27,454 was spent. Historically, there has been capital equipment in the approved golf course budget; however, due to budget constraints, capital equipment was not requested in FY11 and FY12. The concern is that in the future there may need to be significant capital outlay to keep up with what's needed to maintain the course.

The depreciation numbers grew in FY09 – FY11 due to the addition of depreciation of the new Clubhouse. FY12 depreciation will be added later by the Finance Department after the county audit. Mr. Schumacher suggested it may be a good idea to estimate a depreciation figure during budget development in order to plan for the expense. He asked for clarification on how the county develops the depreciation figures; Ms. Meyers will get more information on this from the Finance Department and report back to the Board at the next meeting.

Ms. Meyers noted that the golf cart lease payments are incorporated in the administration/debt service line item. The course has about \$85,000 in expenses associated with the golf carts (salaries, fuel, lease); the lease for the carts is \$28,092 and the property tax is \$5,082 for a total of \$33,174. The revenue generated from the carts last year was approximately \$330,000.

Mr. Slagle asked about maintenance expenses for equipment over the past few years; the thinking is that older machines will incur more maintenance. Mr. Farren noted that generally equipment repair will be going up as equipment gets older.

MARKETING UPDATE

Ms. Meyers provided a marketing update for the Board.

- She is continuing the email “blast” notifications.
- Events are being posted on the community calendar on the county’s website (listed Mother’s Day breakfast, welcome to golf month).
- Mother’s Day breakfast was a good turnout with 175. Last year, the Riverview tried a Father’s Day dinner; because of the Lion’s Club event conflict, staff is planning a Father’s Day Friday night event.
- The new golf course brochure has been sent to Pax River NAS for employee welcome packets.
- Golf news has been included in DECD’s monthly business newsletter.
- The idea of joint marketing with other counties has not moved forward at this time.
- Ms. Myers is working on developing a golf course survey, either/or/and online or hard copy.

The Department is still hopeful that the county will reimburse the course for past Amusement Tax fees collected in error. Staff has been told that could be about \$150,000 (the amount the department has receipts for). Ms. Meyers stated that some of those funds could be used to contract with a firm such as the National Golf Foundation to do a study/critique of the golf operation. Calvert County recently considered this, but did not move forward due to the cost. Mr. Loewe will follow up with Finance on the status of the possible reimbursement.

Ms. Meyers referred back to the Annual Comparison FY06 – FY12 sheet and noted that as of April 2012, the Net Profit/Loss is (\$12,576); last year at this time the loss was approximately (\$94,500). The fiscal picture is much better so far for this year and Ms. Meyers credited staff for their “belt tightening.”

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Slagel asked about plans for happy hour or pizza nights? Ms. Meyers stated that staff has ordered the pizza dough but that has not moved forward yet. Drew Tippett volunteered to donate a pizza oven. Ms. Meyers will check into this further; staffing could be an issue. Mr. Slagel thought this would be a good idea to get more patrons coming in from the Wicomico Shores development.

SCHEDULING THE NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the WSGC Advisory Board will be held on Wednesday, July 18, 2012, at 6:00 p.m. at the Clubhouse. The Board decided to meet on Wednesdays again instead of Thursdays; a media release was subsequently sent out advertising the meeting day change.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 P.M.

Kathy Bailey

Kathy Bailey, Recorder (from tape recording)