

**CITY OF COPPERAS COVE**  
**GOLF COURSE ADVISORY BOARD COURSE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**November 5, 2015**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Regular Meeting was called to order at 1:30 P.M. by Sandy Vegh, Chairperson

**B. ROLL CALL**

Matt Russell – City Council Liaison -Present  
Joe Brown- Dir. Parks & Rec. - Present  
Mike Chandler, GC Staff Liaison - Present  
Sandy Vegh - Present  
Cody Fox- Present

Gordon Irwin- Present  
Craig Foster – Present  
Frank Somera Jr. - Present  
Marc Payne – Present  
Donna Sadd- Present

**C. ACTION ITEM-**

1. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES-** Mike made a clarification to the minutes that of the \$40,000.00 budgeted, \$25,000.00 is for new projects, camera system, maintenance and [foot golf], \$10,000.00 for sure is for cart paths and \$5,000.00 is slated for restrooms. Frank motioned to approve the minutes of September 3, and Craig seconded. Minutes approved with this clarification.

2. **DRAINAGE COMMITTEE-** Mike reported that [LAN Engineering, Inc.] the engineering firm working on the master plan has already asked about the points of contention at the golf course and are compiling a list. At some point, the directors of each department will be brought in as well; therefore, a committee was not formed.

**D. OLD BUSINESS-**

1. **BUDGET/ GOLF COURSE REPORT – Joe Brown, Director of Parks and Recreation,** Joe will get us FY 09, 10 and 11 once merged. Actuals for FY2012 and 2013 were passed out. To note, we dropped in 2013, but salaries and benefits went up because the golf course had mini renovations on 2 greens, and 6 temporary greens. 2013 was the worst year of the golf course. Salaries and benefits went down in 2015 because positions were cut. The green fees are projections. The golf course took a big hit in 2012 with ammonia issues in the water; did repairs in 2013; in 2014 the course was still coming out of it and in 2015, is now pretty much in good shape. Number 18 was repaired last year. Storage fees went up in 2015, but haven't lost any business because the prices went up.

Joe will copy the board on the City Manager Report, which will be done each month for Parks & Rec. and the Golf Course, and will show month-to-date revenues, month-to-date expenditures, and give a month-to-month basis that will show participation numbers, and numbers of greens played. It's due Monday, November 9<sup>th</sup> and will share a lot more numbers fiscally and operationally for

where the golf course is at. Expenses went down for 2012, 2013 and 2014, and are supposed to go down 33% for 2015, but the projected budget is way up. This was before Joe signed on however. Green fees went up as well. Projected revenue of \$415,000.00 seems high because the expenses are probably going to be much higher. Davis, the pro, has been the one projecting based on the numbers that come through the point-of-sale system in the pro shop. Mike thought that the projections were done in May. The fiscal year is October 1 to September 30th.

We have 70 cart sheds with less than 10 percent empty, and have more trail fee folks than sheds. No one has left because of price.

Mike is working on looking at a total cost and putting it down on a per acre basis and then will break it down further to a cost per hole to operate the golf course. We can determine revenue per hole once the costs have been determined. The idea is to answer the question: Why is the fee what the fee is? Setting fees should be more scientific than just setting arbitrary fees. We need to see what others offer and what it costs so we can justify it. Now it's an all day green fee at the course.

## 2. PRIORITIES LIST-

- a. **Course Safety- Dams-** A concern for the dams was voiced because of recent bad rains. It looks like #8 is getting worse, but Mike did not believe the concrete moved—yet. Some concrete work was done at #10 because the creek banks were caving. Joe and Mike have been in talks with Daryl in Public Works, who shared emails from the Land department over the course of time and of their recommendations on how to fix dam #8. It's expensive, so they talked about a temporary fix of pulling the cap off that one section and backfilling it. Posts might have to be driven as well.

Matt deemed repairing #8 dam an emergency budget item. Joe reported that dam redevelopment would run \$45,000.00 with a concrete wall. The EDC gets about \$4 million a year, so perhaps they can do something to have a premier golf course which attracts business that we can wrap up in a 4A project.

Joe will talk to Andrea about fixing #8. The Land department has looked at it, but they think it's a Parks and Rec. /Golf Course issue, and Mike's contention is that it's a drainage issue. It affects the aesthetics of the golf course, but the **only reason** we have this issue with either of the dams is because of the drainage water we take on from the city. All the drainage improvements that have been done over the last year and a half have only made things worse.

The board will hold to the issue of safety, economic development, and quality of life to get action. Matt will go through his channels as a council person and speak with the city manager and the EDC to see if we can get it as an agenda item quickly. If the EDC wants to get some great accolades, this is a

great accolade for the community; they just have to put a little money out. Joe will do whatever he can as a director as well. Hopefully, we will see this as an agenda item on the next agenda to get the EDC on the podium.

**b. Course Safety- #4, 5 & 6 Bridges-** There are metal bridges behind the maintenance barn but they're not long enough and can't be pieced together. The golf course will have to go outside the city for railroad ties. #5 bridge should have had the metal rail built in-house by now, but are now working with Morris Welding to have a 2 3/8" round- 21' rail put on the bridge about 8-10" high as a kick-back for tires.

Wood bridge #6, with concrete footings on each side, is giving way. If we could get three bridges, #5 where we need the rail, #6's pole is giving way underneath, and #4 has a rotted out utility pole underneath. In 2007, it was roughly \$60,000.00 per bridge, FOB manufacturer. Joe will get quotes for three bridges to length to match the rest of the steel bridges. If the EDC can, and the lawyers in Austin agree, we'll lump several projects together. Joe will get quotes for three bridges to match the rest of the steel bridges to length.

A company in Florida builds aircraft aluminum bridges that will outlast us all. They're cheap and come parted out and Joe will work to get actual costs. If a band-aide approach is pushed, the board can point to Heritage Park, a bridge that got washed out because money wasn't spent to fix it. The banks on #6 need to be higher. Matt instructed Joe to get a market survey and give quote for aluminum bridges. Matt will get with Andrea to see if EDC money could be used.

**c. Short Game- Cody Fox, Assistant Chairperson,** Through the course of 4 years traveling with his golfer daughter, Cody's seen 75-80 courses which only offer short game play. It could do us good to boost our short game facility here. Cody spoke with Eddie Pelz of Dave Pelz Synscapes in Horseshoe Bay. Dave Pelz is the number one short game instructor in the world and he lives an hour away from us. His son, Eddie, came out and talked to Mike about offering the T-Line Turf to put on the concrete bed we have at the driving range. Six foot would be going towards the putting green, but we have the hole at #9, we might have to put a net up so no one gets hit with an errant ball. Synbermuda 211 is fairway turf and lasts forever. We could probably eliminate some of the costs by cleaning it off, buying the 3/16" padding, and installing it ourselves.

Joe mentioned they built a \$20,000 batting cage last summer and used dunning turf, which is sand and rubber.

Target greens or black tires could be used on the interior of the driving range for precision shots. Competitions, especially for kids, could be held all year. A three hole short course is another idea.

Our mission is to identify interests in the people, provide it and charge money for it.

Cottonwood Golf Course in Waco has a pretty par-3 course, of maybe four holes. Mike thought we might be able to squeeze something in coming in the front. We could re-purpose that strip and use it more than one way to get more people on it.

Matt advised that the land trade negotiation with Ft. Hood, between Highway 9 and Highway 190, is on the Secretary of Defense's desk. That will close out that piece pretty soon; we're hoping for a huge chunk of land. This year, Andrea's looking at getting the area towards the water station and up on the east side, but nothing's been done yet.

Marc suggested getting more walking and biking trails out there between the golf course and the land we get. Other than South Park, which is in rough condition, we really don't have anything. Having a walking path around the golf course where wives and kids can watch their husbands/fathers play, with strollers and spending the day outside can be a beautiful thing. Of course, said paths would not be close to the course so as to be dangerous. Screening in pinch areas could be considered.

Short game facilities are becoming popular. Cody got back from Seattle a few weeks ago where he talked to pros in Redmond who offer only short game facilities with monthly fees. If players don't want to go out and play 18 holes, they could play a short game place instead.

The price for a short game solution is \$22,000.00. It will be less if we install it ourselves. Joe thought that we could glue it down with carpenter glue. We also could figure out what the padding is and purchase it ourselves.

Sandy proposed that Cody chair a committee to get into details and the costs of pursuing the short game. Mike and Cody will work with the USGA in Waco who helped build the short game facility at Cottonwood. There may be some USGA grants.

**d. Signage Committee Report- Marc Payne, Frank, and Donna**, three tasks: 1) signs getting folks to the golf course; 2) provide a more scenic route to get there; and 3) at Frank's suggestion, have Keep Copperas Cove Beautiful (KCCB) provide plantings for the stone entry sign and a backdrop of color. We coordinated with Silvia Rhoads, the Executive Director of KCCB and then with Andrea who didn't see a problem in doing any of these things that we asked. In fact, she offered help from Parks to help with digging holes for the larger trees.

There are two routes into the golf course. One is come over the tracks and drive straight down Wolfe Road, which becomes an eyesore near the

government housing area as one turns down Golf Course Road. The other route is to come in the same way over the tracks, but turn right on Joe's Road and come through the Turkey Creek development on Hawk Trail. The traffic will not increase through the Turkey Creek development, a city road that people are welcome to drive. We need a right arrow sign at the corner of Joe's Road and Wolfe Road on city property. A left turn arrow is needed by Hawk Trail, and then another is needed on the back of a sign that already is for the golf course. That will bring them into the flow towards the golf course. Andrea said that she's agreeable to have the city make the signs and put them up. We might need another on Hawk trail. As one drives down Golf Course Road, there's a farm on the left that's unsightly. Either putting a fence in or planting there will have to be coordinated with the land owner, but they shouldn't mind an improvement. That is still in the works.

KCCB has agreed to provide plants and trees around the stone sign, which would tier from short plants to tall ones in the back to give it some color and make it look more attractive. Mike will make sure the four feet of folks' property lines that border the golf course get mowed.

We're looking at planting crepe myrtles at the back and then smaller bushes and plants. Silvia mentioned looking into a decorative curb. We talked about coordinating the project where a smaller Austin stone would be utilized to match the rest of the course improvements. Sandy painted the sign recently.

Marc asked if the board was agreeable to having signs made, enlisting the assistance of KCCB to do a planting project at the entrance sign for color, and our providing a more scenic route to the golf course and was met with no objections. Sandy did mention that planting was tried before several years ago, but there was no water. However, we would now use a Xeriscape landscape approach and use plants that are indigenous to the area, stand up in high heat/drought, are deer-repellent and require little to no maintenance.

Mike thought it possible to tap a sprinkler line for the plantings and suggested planting in the rainy season to give them a good start. We mentioned a woman on the KCCB board that might take on the job of care, and Mike said the course could give her a cart and buckets to water 2/3 days a week.

**3. FOOT GOLF - Mike Chandler, Golf Course Staff Liaison** – Due to start up costs estimated at \$5,000.00, and time and effort to install the cups, foot golf will be put on hold while speed golf is explored instead.

**4. CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT & PRIORITY RESULTS- Donna Sadd, Secretary**, the board did not glean much information from this study.

## **E. NEW BUSINESS-**

**1. Ideas to Increase Usage of the Golf Course, Sandy Vegh, Chairperson,** The EDC could be a main advertiser and advocate, as well as the Chamber of Commerce.

The #10 restroom fence could be used for event ads.

Promoting monthly/ seasonal memberships should be considered.

In an effort to market better, Joe got permission from Andrea to start a Parks and Rec. /Golf Course Facebook page to keep active with the social media folks.

The “City of Fort Hood” is a great market. Joe suggested changing gears during the winter months, and appeal to our military because they’re always looking for outlets for PT. Having a private or NCO day is one idea. For about \$100, we can do some advertising through the newspaper, the movie theater, and hang banners about the golf course and speed golf at the pools and parks.

Speed Golf- Speed golf is one of the answers to the question: “How do we capture people we might not otherwise capture?” We have cross-fitters and very active people in this community, and we have it and already maintain it, and don’t have to do anything up front to get it going we just have to offer it and block out some windows. The average round is about 50 minutes, where players literally hit the ball and run using a maximum of 7 clubs. Though it is designed for fit folks, it can be played in a cart with a timer, where the faster ones come through. We could get an agreement with Ft. Hood that soldiers could use the course for PT. Infantry platoons are always looking for a way to allow folks to have fun. The units will pay for it. Want to do it in a way to be sensitive to our regular users.

It was mentioned that folks who didn’t play golf, especially women, needed to be introduced to the game, where rules, etiquette, the ins-and-outs of golf could be taught, so the ‘club-like’ stigma would dissipate. Joe mentioned he had done something similar elsewhere teaching the facets of football to woman. An annual or semi-annual event called “Golf 101” will be created.

The job of generating ideas and programs to attract folks to the golf course should be the Pro’s job. A recreation aide is being hired.

## **F. REPORTS-**

- 1. Mike’s Report**
- 2. Joe’s Report**
- 3. Matt’s Report**

## **G. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

1. Joe's City Manager Report
2. Emergency Budget Item- Dam #8
3. Bridge Replacement Costs
4. Market Survey and Quotes for Aluminum Bridges
5. USGA Grants- Mike & Cody short game committee
6. Fence/Hedges to cover farm on Golf Course Road
7. Daryl & Water Department to speak to watering greens

## **4. ADJOURNMENT**

Sandy adjourned the meeting at 3:20 pm. The next meeting will be January 7<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm.