

**Golf Advisory Board
Town of Groton
Parks & Recreation Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
Sept. 10, 2012**

Call Meeting to Order

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Tim Castleberry at 7:00 PM.

Attendees

Doug Ackerman, Tim Castleberry, Todd Goodhue, Margaret Hirsch, Jim Kamercia, Tom Kiely, Ralph Little, Brian McCallen, Eric Morrison, Duncan Olding

Jim Streeter was not in attendance.

Minutes of June 4, 2012

Tim Castleberry noted a correction to the minutes from the June 4 meeting. In the May revenue report, the year was properly corrected to 2012. Motion to accept made by Tom Kiely. Seconded by Duncan Olding. Minutes accepted.

Correspondence from GAB Members

Todd reported that the CSGA has requested their championship be held the Tuesday after Columbus Day, 2013.

As reported in *The Day* on Aug. 12, the men's 36-hole club championship was won by Ken Wetmore "thanks to a bird, not a birdie." The match was square through 32 holes when opponent Tim Sisk's tee shot on the par-3 15th hole struck a seagull in flight and ricocheted into deep fescue on the right side of the fairway. Sisk, who works in Shenny's golf shop during the week, was forced to take an unplayable lie and recorded a double bogey. Wetmore won the hole. It proved to be the deciding factor in the match. The GAB discussed ideas for seagull-themed golf paraphernalia for Mr. Sisk.

Staff Report

Review of Monthly Revenue Report

Todd reported an active, profitable summer, one of the best in the facility's history. Specifically, Todd reported a second all-time grossing month in July 2012. Rounds were significantly up, as were cart rounds. Revenues are up in the fiscal YTD as well as calendar YTD. Memberships also registered an increase. Discount specials, Todd said, were

discontinued in early July, enhancing full rate revenues. Todd said top-end morning rates were left untouched, enabling the course to maximize profits in July and August. Increases came in additional play, not increased rates. The course is meeting its financial goals.

Todd noted that a solid September will likely to surpass September 2011, which was set back by Hurricane Irene.

Director Report

Doug Ackerman noted that a new Parks & Recreation director, Mark Berry, from Essex, VT, starts in his new job this month. He has both public and private sector experience. Looking back, Doug said many of the ideas discussed at GAB meetings were fruitful. The golf course balance sheet, which has an upside of \$26,000, is very positive, he said, adding that the GAB's accurate estimates of both revenues and expenses have been helpful to the town's planning measures. Doug pointed out that the golf course has a finite number of tee times available, and urged the GAB to determine what percentage of those tee times are used, and to identify any significant gaps on the tee sheet. The idea, he said, was twofold: trace traffic patterns to figure out how to sell tee times that go wanting; and get more sophisticated about rate structure.

Review of Summer Activity at Shenny

Eric Morrison said no trees were cut this summer. He pronounced the course to be in good condition. He said quite a bit of work has been performed to bunkers to replenish sand in traps where the sand was thin. Gullies caused by heavy rainfall, as noted by Margaret beside the 12th green, need to be given attention by the maintenance crew. Todd and Eric also discussed the possibility of marking off hazards and Ground Under Repair areas more accurately than is currently being done.

On another note, Duncan Olding reported seeing a large number of broken tees on several tee boxes. There is also concern about the replacement of divots. (Eric said 95% of large, substantial divots will regenerate if properly replaced). A discussion ensued about remedying the divot problem through etiquette education. Eric and Todd said that two to four rangers are usually on hand to educate golfers about their on-course responsibilities—replacing divots, raking bunkers, repairing ball marks and keeping carts 30 yards from green, among other duties. Tim said the biggest problem is that new golfers generally have no concept of proper etiquette. Todd noted that years ago, friends and family members imparted etiquette. Younger players who've been drawn to the sport as part of the "Tiger bump" are not tutored and do not realize etiquette is an

important aspect of game. It was pointed out that the USGA produces 'Golf Rules Made Easy,' the first part of which is devoted to etiquette. Tim discussed the current rate structure. Todd said the 9-hole weekend rate is not as competitive as it could be. Other rate structure adjustments will be considered. Tim said the numbers need to be gathered and submitted to the Town Council in December, in time for Christmas membership purchases. Tom said there is no family weekday limited play membership at present. Lost memberships in the 'weekday only' category were generally not seniors--these losses were attributed to the soft economy. In the current economic climate, many golfers have decided to pay as they go. The adult economy membership is the least loyal. Todd said an aggressive discount program targeting post-12 noon as opposed to the 10-play discount card would be contemplated. Inquiries are being made about offering the Off Season membership for \$400, to be followed up by an e-blast.

Tom talked about the possibility of creating a Mixed Scotch Foursome event. (There are currently 36 women in Shenny's women's golf club).

Next Meeting Date

Oct. 1, 2012

Adjournment

Time – 7:40 PM. Tom motioned to adjourn, seconded by Tim.

Brian McCallen
Secretary, GAB

Minutes have been approved and accepted

Signature  Date 10/15/12