

TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Recreation Department

MINUTES OF THE GOLF COMMISSION MEETING HELD

MARCH 24, 1995

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL A meeting of the Golf Commission was called to order by the Chairman, Ashton Clark, at 9:05 a.m. on March 24, 1995, at the Palm Beach Rehabilitation Center. The Commission members in attendance were; Mr. Clark, Mr. Berkow, Mrs. Herman, Mr. Levy, Mr. Shore, Mr. Shulman and Ms. Weiss. Alternate members in attendance were; Ms. Hickox, Col. Stern, and Mr. Schorr. Staff members in attendance were Mr. Bitzer, Mr. Dytrych, and Mrs. Walkowich.
- II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA There were no changes to the agenda.
- III. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 24, 1995 MINUTES The February 24, 1995, Golf Commission Minutes were approved.
- IV. ATTENDANCE RECORDING Mr. Clark asked Mrs. Walkowich to make note of who was in attendance and reflect it in the minutes of the meeting.
- V. PRO-AM BENEFIT TOURNAMENT - CHECK PRESENTATION Mr. Clark said that on behalf of the Golf Commission and all the people involved in the Pro-AM Benefit, he was very happy to present a check in the amount of \$10,000.00 to Mr. Larry Ochstein, Chairman of the Seaview Park Commission for the Seaview Park Tree Project. Mr. Ochstein said that on behalf of the Seaview Park Commission and the children at the Recreation Center he wanted to thank the Golf Commission and everyone involved in the Pro-Am for their generous donation.

Mrs. Henderson from the Rehabilitation Center introduced Ryan and Rachel, two children from the center who would benefit from the money that was raised at the Pro-Am Benefit. Mr. Ash Clark said that he on behalf of the Golf Commission he was pleased to present her a check in the amount of \$10,000.00. Mrs. Henderson thanked everyone involved in the tournament for their generosity.
- VI. OLD BUSINESS - none

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Golf Course Conditions

Mr. Dytrych said that there were no capital improvement projects pending and that the overall condition of the course was very good. He said that there was work to do on the fairway because they were bare and some work to do on cart paths that have formed around the greens.

2. Golf Course Activity Report

Mr. Dytrych said that play was down a little bit in February due to some of the bad weather we had been experiencing. He said that last year 4,736 rounds of golf were played as compared to this year of 4,478 round played. Mr. Dytrych said that 742 riding carts were rented last year and this year 764 were rented, 1,435 pull carts were rented last year and this year 1,358 were rented, rangeballs rented last year were 2,749 and this year 3,200 were rented and golf lessons increased from 188 lessons given to 216 lessons given. Mr. Dytrych said that overall the course has been very busy .

Mr. Schorr asked when the summer rates would go into effect and what they were. Mr. Dytrych said that summer rates go into effect May 1st. He said that resident greens fees goes down to \$7.00 and non-resident greens fees goes down to \$9.00. Mr. Dytrych said that what he tries to do is have the fees a little bit lower than the fees listed on the charity cards. Mr. Shulman asked if the course go a lot of people from the seniors program. Mr. Dytrych said yes, that they are given a complementary greens fee but that they have to rent a cart and they can only play once since there is only one coupon in the book. He said that they average about \$4,000 just from the people who come in from that one coupon book and that a lot of them return to play again.

Mr. Schorr asked "Who taught lessons at the Golf Course." Mr. Dytrych said that he taught, and a gentleman by the name of Gene George. He said that he was currently trying to get Debbie Moss to teach. He felt that they could use a female pro at the course.

VIII. ANY OTHER MATTERS Mr. Clark asked if there were any other matters to be discussed. Mrs. Herman said that she would like to see more of those cement pyramids placed along the shoulder of the road to protect the grass on the course. Mr. Dytrych said that he would look into it. Mr. Schorr asked if there was any chance of D.O.T. putting a light in at the golf course crossing. Mr. Dytrych said that D.O.T. would not put a light there because it would upset the flow of traffic and possibly cause accidents. Mr. Levy said that there was talk that a light was going to

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be placed at the new fire station and that if this came to pass it would at least slow down traffic.

Mr. Shulman asked if there was a lawsuit pending regarding someone getting hit by a golf ball. Mr. Dytrych said that there was no lawsuit but yes two people in the last month were hit by golf balls. He said that at the hole behind the seventh green there was a condo that was being leased. Mr. Dytrych said that the ball bounced and hit a child who was sitting on the lawn. He said that the child wasn't hurt but that her parents planted hedges to shield them from the golf balls. Mr. Dytrych said the other incident was a lady walking along the bike path, a ball was shanked off the first hole and she was hit. The paramedics were called and she was fine. He said that she was more upset by the fact that no one would admit to hitting the ball. He said that this was the first time in all the years he has been at the Par 3 that anyone on the bike path was hit by a ball.

Mr. Shulman said that a Mr. Spitalny, who lives in the 2500 building, had complained at a recent council meeting about the noise from the mowers in the morning. He said that he was there this morning at 6:15 and it took about 3 minutes to cut the tee, but that Mr. Spitalny said that they were there for a 1/2 hour, he didn't understand what Mr. Spitalny was talking about. Mr. Schorr asked at what time the course opened and closed. Mr. Dytrych said that staff was at the course as early as 7:30 a.m. and golfers could play until dark. Mr. Bitzer said that staff was reviewing Mr. Spitalny's complaint and there may be a few possible options. He said that one of those options was an electric greens mower, he said that he was unsure if the new mower would help the situation but he was hopeful.

Mr. Shulman asked if the purchase of this new mower would also be beneficial to the golf course as well as to help relieve the situation with Mr. Spitalny. He said that if the only reason for purchasing the new mower was just for this one individual, then he was against it. Mr. Bitzer said that Mrs. Tannone, Golf Course Superintendent, was testing the equipment, and checking with people who owned the equipment as to its efficiency. He said that right now it seemed to check out very well and seems to be something that might be less maintenance cost than our existing gas mowers. He said that because there are residences right on the golf course, if we can get a piece of equipment that would be quieter but still perform the same or better than our existing mower, then it may not be a bad idea. He said that he was also looking at the times that maintenance takes place and possibly trying some changes on a trial basis.

Mr. Shulman said that Mr. Spitalny's big question was what did we do before the Town allowed the Par 3 to operate any time. Mr. Bitzer said that approximately a year ago the noise ordinance changed and for a period of time, we started at the later time, then a lot of

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problems arose. He said that maintenance was going on at the same time that people were playing golf, this resulted in maintenance people being hit with balls, and the golfers complained that we were disturbing their games. Mr. Bitzer said that the Town Council had previously reviewed the problems that golf courses were having and exempted them from the Town's noise ordinance. He said that prior to this we operated and did the maintenance, for 15 years, much earlier then we do right now, as early as 6:00 a.m. Mr. Dytrych said that when he started at the Par 3 the maintenance crew started at 4:30 a.m.

Mr. Shore asked that if we started later would we lose revenue. Mr. Dytrych said that over the course of a season it is estimated that we would lose about \$30,000. Mr. Bitzer said that there were some revisions to the maintenance schedule that we were going to try, on a trial basis, and that hopefully, these revisions would improve the situation.

Mr. Shulman asked if the Commission was going to see the budget before it was proposed to the Town Council. Mr. Bitzer said that historically, staff does a budget presentation for the Commission. At the conclusion of this presentation, the advisory board has an opportunity to make comments and recommendations regarding the staff's proposed budget. He said that staff would bring the preliminary budget to the Commission at the April meeting. He said that if the Commission had anything they wanted to suggest prior to the April meeting they could contact him or Mr. Dytrych.

Mr. Shulman stated that he had been on the Commission for approximately a year and the only thing that they had been involved with was the Golf Pro-Am. He said that there hasn't been very much for the Commission to get involved with or have responsibility for. Mr. Clark said that really there hasn't been much going on other than the work that was already planned, such as the rebuilding of the greens and tees. He said that he was unsure about what was coming up as far as capital improvement projects. Mr. Clark said that he would welcome suggestions from the Commission as to projects that they might want to undertake. Mr. Shore said that one thing that could be done, would be to landscape the side of the first couple of holes to make them look more attractive, if we had the money in the budget. Mr. Dytrych asked Mr. Shore to show him exactly where he was talking about and he would look into it.

Mrs. Herman wanted to know why the Commission had to stop meeting in May, why couldn't they meet in May and maybe once over the summer. Mr. Bitzer said that it was their prerogative to set meetings. Mrs. Herman made the motion that a May meeting be held on the fourth Friday of the month. Seconded by Mr. Shore all were in favor.

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Mr. Dytrych said that when they go through the budget process that there are a lot of line items that are fixed costs but there are areas that we could look at such as water. Mr. Shore said that the water is going up 25%. Mr. Schorr asked if we paid all our own expenses. Mr. Dytrych, said that the golf course is self sufficient, that it was an enterprise fund giving the Town \$25,000 a year for different department such as purchasing. A percentage of that \$25,000 goes to them for processing purchase orders and getting supplies; the same for Public Works where we pay for electricians, painters, laborers, and the Finance department to process checks. He said that this is how it is in all municipalities. Mr. Schorr said, "Then the town is reimbursed for actual outlays." He wanted to know if the bond issue to purchase the par 3 had been paid off and if it that payment came out of the Par 3's revenue. Mr. Dytrych said that the bond was never paid out of revenue and he was sure the bond was paid off but would check into it.

Mrs. Herman wanted to know if the Commission could discuss doing something about non-potable water for the Par 3. Mr. Berkow said that the Town Council was working on it. Mr. Bitzer said that the Town Council was looking at the water situation for the whole town including the golf course. Mr. Shulman said that he felt that all we could do was drill a well. Mr. Dytrych said that the Town was looking at different alternatives to the water situation. Mr. Schorr wanted to know how much water the course consumed. Mr. Dytrych said that in the summer time the water bill was around \$12,000 - \$13,000 a month. Mr. Schorr said "and you pay for it?" Mr. Dytrych said, "Yes." Mr. Shulman said that the four golf courses on the island account for 35% of the total water used on the island. Ms. Hickox said that the Everglades club was putting in a desalinization plant at a cost of \$500,000 Mr. Shore made the motion that we call to the attention of the Town Council the amount of money we spend on water and see if they can come up with a plan just for the par 3 golf course, to consider our water problem as a separate problem from the overall Town problem. Seconded by Mrs. Herman, all were in favor. Mr. Bitzer said that they may want to draft a letter to the Town Council asking them what would be the appropriate forum for the Commission to advance their concerns. Mr. Shulman said that we were talking about two different things, the Town is obviously interested in saving water for everybody but that our committee is interested in doing something specifically for the Par 3, dig a well or something like that. Mr. Bitzer said that they would then need to write a letter asking the Town Council to place this matter on the agenda of one of their meetings. Mr. Shore said that maybe the Par 3 should look into a desalinization plant. He said that with the money we spend every year on water, in a few years the plant might pay for itself. Mr. Shulman asked how much money the Commission had in their account. Mr. Dytrych said that there was about 1/2 a million dollars in unappropriated funds. Mr. Shulman said that was a good start. Mrs. Herman said "This was something that should be researched and I so move." Mr. Shore said that the Town should research it. Mr. Bitzer said that he would advise the Town of the Commission's concerns.

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Mr. Schorr asked Mr. Dytrych if the water bill for the Par 3 was about \$100,000 a year. Mr. Dytrych said that last year the bill was about \$65,000. Mr. Shore said that it would be 25% more this year with the surcharge. Mr. Dytrych said that in the budget process there's a line item that tells you to increase the water by a specific percent. Mr. Schorr said that there was a remote possibility that the city of west palm beach may cut that 25%, but that investigating alternative methods would still be worthwhile. Mr. Dytrych said that if a desalinization plant could pay for itself over the years it would still be worth it. Mr. Shore said that a desalinization plant would help us if there was a water shortage. Mr. Bitzer said that this may be something that the Council is already working on and if that's the case we will update the Commission. Mr. Shore said that they might not be aware of how much money we have since they don't pay the bills. Mr. Shulman said that if we continue to use too much water then we are going to lose the \$1,000,000. subsidy we get from the State and that would increase the price of water. He said that if we could save that water then we would be giving something to reducing the water consumption of the island.

Mr. Shore said that the Commission should start writing letters to the big organizations in Town to put the Golf Tournament in their budgets for next year. Mrs. Herman said that the Commission had to have a motion to have the tournament next year. Mr. Dytrych said that he used to think that the tournament only raised a small amount of money (\$20,000) compared to other tournaments but this year the PGA had a tournament in Stuart for the hospitals this past year and only raised \$4,000. Mr. Shore said that if we work on the businesses as well as approaching a foundation to sponsor the tournament, that would help cover the cost. Mr. Clark made the motion that a Pro-Am be held next year. Seconded by Mr. Shore, all were in favor. Mr. Clark made that motion that Mr. Shore be in charge of a committee to pursue acquiring a sponsor for next year's tournament. Seconded by Mrs. Herman, all were in favor. Mr. Shore said that he would like to other Commission members commit to solicit the businesses that they do business with to buy tickets or help sponsor the tournament.

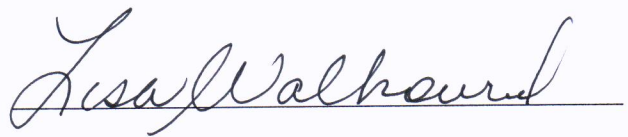
Mrs. Herman asked if any thank you notes were sent out. Mr. Dytrych said that the letter was at the printers. Mr. Shulman said that he felt the letter should have been presented to the Commission before it was sent out for their approval. Mr. Berkow said that it was just a form letter thanking the people and listing the amount of their donation. Mr. Bitzer said that they had taken the suggestions of the Commission at the last meeting and that's how we came up with the verbiage for the letter. Mr. Bitzer said that the letter was going to come back to the Commission today but there was a mis-communication between staff and it went to the printer instead. Mr. Bitzer said that their recommendation to hold a golf tournament next year will go to the Town Council and if they see fit, they will approve it via the charitable solicitation permit.

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Mr. Shore said that one item they discussed at the last meeting was that a cocktail party be held for the players, sponsors and professionals that are involved in the tournament and he felt that it was important to bring it up again and have it reflected in the minutes. Mrs. Herman said that the new fire house was going to have a community room and that it might be a nice place to hold the party. Mr. Bitzer said that he would check with the Risk Manager in regards to this suggestion.

Mr. Schorr asked for a clarification. He said "We are a golf commission and the Town has personnel that deals with the Par 3, where is the line of demarcation with respect to decisions?" Mr. Shore said that we do not make decisions, we are advisory to the Town Council. Mr. Bitzer said that he would be sure that Mr. Schorr received a copy of the ordinance which would explain everything. He said that the Commission was advisory to the Mayor and Town Council. Mr. Schorr asked who makes decisions with respect to the golf course. Mr. Bitzer said that it was the Town Council makes policy based on recommendations from the Golf Commission and staff.

IX. ADJOURNMENT Meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lisa Walbourn", written over a horizontal line.