



TOWN OF PALM BEACH

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

MINUTES OF THE RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION PAR 3 GOLF COURSE PRIVATIZATION STUDY GROUP HELD ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2010

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

A meeting of the Town of Palm Beach Recreation Advisory Commission Par 3 Golf Course Privatization Study Group was held on November 1, 2010, in the Town Council Conference Room at Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Danielle Moore, Chairman of the Recreation Advisory Commission at 8:30 a.m. Other individuals of the study group in attendance were Mr. Steven Hall, Mr. Timothy O'Hara, Mr. Scotch Peloso, Ms. Kellie Stenzel and Mr. Stuart Shulman. Staff members in attendance were Director, Mr. Jay Boodheshwar, Assistant Director Mr. Alan Brown, and Office Manager Mrs. Lisa Walkowich. Also in attendance was Town Council member Mr. William Diamond.

II. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

Mrs. Moore suggested that rather than taking citizen comments at the beginning of the meeting she would prefer to have a questions answered as information is presented. Everyone agreed.

III. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mrs. Moore asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Hall made the motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Peloso. All were in favor.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Before beginning the discussion on Old Business, Mr. Boodheshwar informed the group that the Dockmaster, Mr. Jon Luscomb, had tendered his resignation effective November 10, 2010. He reported that Mr. Alan Brown will be assuming the interim responsibilities of managing the Docks and will be working with Mr. Luscomb closely in the next week to transition into the position. He will also continue to provide leadership for the Par 3 Golf Course, but members of the golf staff will assume additional responsibilities in this interim period to allow Mr. Brown the ability to divide his time between the two facilities. Mr. Boodheshwar stated that he had spoken with Mrs. Moore yesterday to discuss the time line for the study group process and recommended that the Docks and the Golf Course study group process be removed from the original time line and accelerated. Mrs. Moore felt that completing the study of these two facilities on an expedited time line would be beneficial to our customers, staff, and entire community as we head into the season.

A. Further Discussion Regarding Golf Course Leasing Option

Mr. Boodheshwar stated that after the last committee meeting staff contacted Billy Casper Golf to informally research leasing opportunities for the Par 3. Mr. Boodheshwar furnished the company with information regarding staffing and fees, historical finances, as well as statistical information such as rounds played. Mr. Boodheshwar said that in the letter received from Billy Casper Golf, they recommended that the best approach for them was to offer management services to the Town. They stated it was not economically viable at this time to lease the golf course.

Mr. Shulman said that if you are not going to lease the golf course then there was no need to hire a company to manage it, that staff could accomplish this. Mr. Boodheshwar suggested that if the study group agreed with Mr. Shulman, we could possibly contract with a firm to provide ongoing marketing services to support staff and help drive volume.

Mr. Diamond asked what the advantage of hiring a management company over having the facility run by Town employees. Mr. Boodheshwar said that a management company would have a variety of in-house resources to draw from (i.e. marketing services). Mrs. Moore added that we have researched the management companies for a couple of municipal courses in our area, and they have all ended in less than desirable results. She also stated that she is concerned about taking such a risk with the newly restored \$4.5 million golf course.

Mr. Hall said that before getting into this privatization issue the plan was to develop a marketing plan and improve the professional operations of the course. He said that staff has not been given a chance to accomplish this and stated that he liked Mr. Boodheshwar's idea of hiring an outside consultant for the marketing of the golf course.

Mr. O'Hara stated that he was not in favor of privatizing the golf course and we should move forward with the plans that staff has in place. Mrs. Stenzel agreed and said that if we can complete this process earlier as Mr. Boodheshwar and Mrs. Moore suggested that it will also give the staff confidence to work as team and move forward.

Mr. Peloso said that when he began the process he was on the fence. He said he looked at the numbers and saw the golf course had not made money in a long time. But staff is so close and it would be a shame with all that has been done not to give the opportunity to make a go of it. He further said privatization is not appropriate at this time.

Mr. Hall said we have spent two years getting the golf course in shape and now need to continue on the path that Recreation Commission chose a few years ago, and that is to make it truly an outstanding course, and give it a chance to grow. He said there is no way an outside company can come in and do a job better than has been done

because we residents have a strong interest and a real love of this golf course in this town and we have the staff that can pull this all together.

Mr. Shulman said that he cannot see how any form of privatizing the golf course will bring the Town any additional money than what staff can do by running the golf course.

Mr. Hall made a motion recommending that staff continue to operate the golf course and work to provide a more vibrant teaching program, bring a staff person on board for the management of the daily operations and continue the marketing strategies that are in place, with the possible help of a marketing consultant. Seconded by Mr. O'Hara, all were in favor.

V. ANY OTHER MATTERS - There were none.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Mrs. Moore at 9:06 a.m.