



**Bella Vista POA
 Joint Advisory Golf Committee
 Minutes – August 12, 2015**

Members Present: Bill Barr, Jake Grasmick, Gale Harder, Harris McKee, Tom Stephens, Kirk Van De Walle, Members Absent: Terry Predl

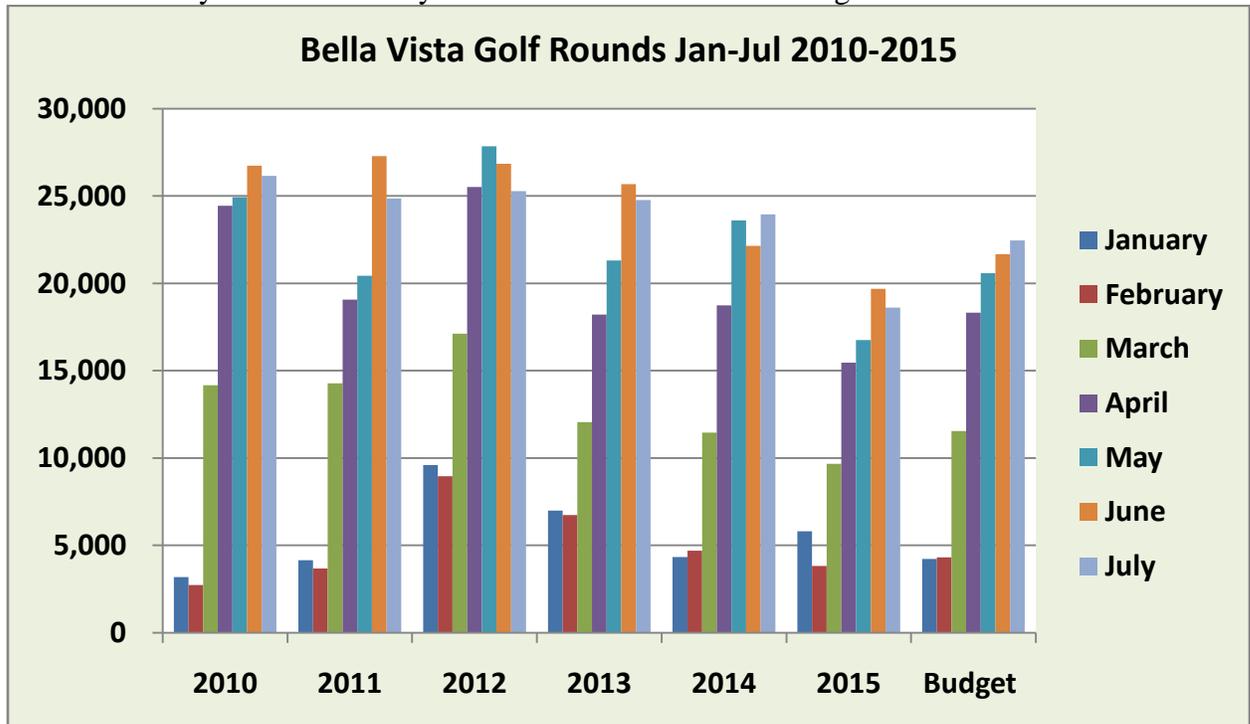
Others Present: POA General Manager Tommy Bailey; POA Maintenance Manager: Keith Ihms; POA liaison: Ruth Hatcher; Ron Stratton; The Vista Reporter, Brendon Howard; Visitors: POA Board Member John Nuttall, Mary Riorden, V.P. 18 Hole Women's Golf; Tom Riordan

1. Chair Jake Grasmick called the meeting to order at 4:27 p.m. following review of USGA Chris Hartwinger's day in Bella Vista.

2. Approval of June Minutes: Approved without additions

3. Regular Business

a. Golf Rounds—Andy Mar was unavoidably away but had forwarded July rounds earlier. July Rounds were 3,845 below budget (17 %) and lower than any July from 2003 onward. The graph below shows six years of rounds by month as well as the 2015 Budget.



b. Maintenance Keith Ihms

Keith reported that during the shutdown of BVCC until November 1, green #s 7, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, and the putting green will be reseeded at a cost of about \$5,000. Ron Stratton inquired whether it would be desirable to install Hybrid Bermuda greens while the course is closed. Keith

noted that the cost would be about \$150,000 and could not be completed in time for a reopening on November 1.

(Earlier in the day, Keith noted that the cause of the greens' damage remained a mystery. The same chemical mixture was applied to all surfaces and only those noted for reseeding sustained damage.)

c. Course Reviews

The 18 Hole Women's Golf Group has led the way toward establishing "Play It Forward" positions on all Bella Vista courses by placing temporary markers on each hole (except par 3s). As a guide to determining placement for permanent markers, Chris Hartwinger suggested a PGA document ["Setting Up Golf Courses for Success: A Critical Factor in Attracting More Women to Golf"](#).

Play It Forward This chart is a guideline to help golfers align their average driving distance with the course length best suited to their abilities.	Driver Distance	Recommended 18-Hole Yardages
	275	6,700–6,900
250	6,200–6,400	
225	5,800–6,000	
200	5,200–5,400	
175	4,400–4,600	
150	3,500–3,700	
125	2,800–3,000	
100	2,100–2,300	

Placing permanent markers will cost about \$1,700 per course. Keith Ihms has received a \$3,000 grant from the Golf Course Superintendents' Association of America (GCSAA) in honor of his having served as president of the association. This would nearly cover the cost of the Berksdale/Kingswood courses. See comments below for additional funds for other courses. Keith committed to placing markers for the 5th tees by next spring.

- i. **Highlands--Gayle Harder--**The 4th of July tournament was a success, and the Friends of the Highlands currently have \$5,300 in their treasury. It was noted that markers for the "Play it Forward" position would be a good use of some of their funds.
- ii. **Berksdale--Bill Barr--**Noted that he had just returned from out of town and had not had a chance to review the course. Other members commented on the good condition of the course.
- iii. **Dogwood--Tom Stephens--**Andy and Tom have completed the review of the O.B. and hazard markings on all the courses and made changes where appropriate. He noted that in some instances they were able to convert O.B. markings to hazards when a review showed the areas to be POA land not private land. For some markers, they created two-color marker posts for a transition from hazard to O.B.
Tom reported the course to be in excellent condition but noted that he continues to be frustrated by the rocks in the bunkers and the pot-holes on cart paths. Keith will see if some hot-mix can be placed in the worst pot-holes.
- iv. **Scotsdale--Kirk Van De Walle --**The Lads and Lassies will be planning a golf outing in the fall and are considering funding a bulletin board at Scotsdale. It was suggested that their funding of "Play It Forward" markers might be more appropriate.
- v. **Country Club--Jake Grasmick--**The course is in great condition but shut down because of the greens. Playing only the front nine during the shutdown was not considered feasible.
- vi. **Kingswood--Terry Predl--**Terry was not present but Jake noted that Terry had initiated the replacement of mulch around the tee markers with rock, which will be completed this fall.

5. Reports from Management

A. Andy Mar--Not present.

B. Tommy Bailey--There are three ongoing projects.

- 1) The Engineer engaged to study Scotsdale #13 where sloughing continues to erode the left side of the fairway is ready to submit his recommendation, which is expected to recommend replacing the culvert.
- 2) Addressing the Low Water Passage at #2 BVCC. Repairs here will require the same permitting as for a bridge; bureaucracy will preclude completion of a solution during the current shutdown.
- 3) Effort to replace the culvert on the Kingswood maintenance entrance road will require similar permitting.

C. Board Liaisons

1) **Ruth Hatcher**--The Boys and Girls Club of Bella Vista are establishing a kids' golf program and need some clubs (preferably women's). She will explore further to determine the specific needs.

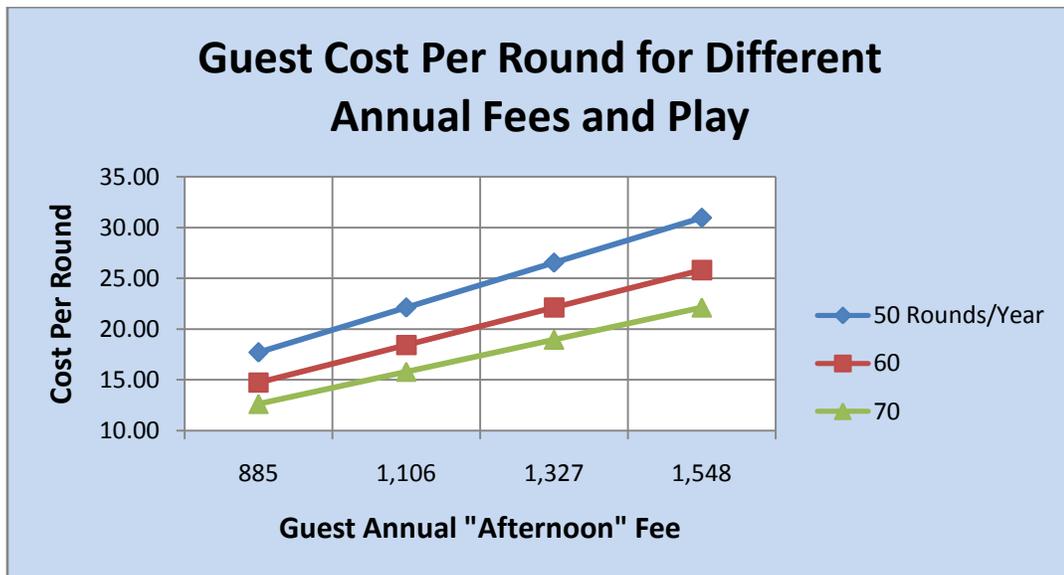
2) **Ron Stratton**-- Nothing to report.

6. Guest Comments--None

7. Old Business

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. **Course Enhancements**--Jake noted that we had been following efforts at Metfield for three years to make modification around the clubhouse. The lead volunteer has moved to Iowa and is no longer available. Jake, Andy, and Kirk are working on a plan and will present it at the next meeting so that details can be completed this fall.
2. **Membership and Marketing - Bill Barr**--Has developed an idea that could be attractive to golfers who are working. The idea is to provide an annual golf membership that would only provide for afternoon golf. Two versions are suggested, one for POA members and one for persons who are not POA members (Guests) at a higher cost. Advantage of the Guest option is that Guests would have a POA number and could make reservations on-line. Price for either type would be determined to maximize total revenue. The charts below illustrate the sensitivity to price and number of rounds played for both the Member and Guest Annual "Afternoon" options.



8. Other Issues--A brief summary of USGA Turf Specialist Chris Hartwinger's comments are provided as Appendix II below.

9. Volunteer Hours for June & July: 108 hours

10. Adjournment: 5:17 p.m.

11. Next Meeting: September 9, 2015 - 5:00 p.m. Riordan Hall

Submitted by: Harris McKee, Advisory Committee Secretary

Appendix I. 2015 Golf JAC Tasks

1. Continue to develop marketing programs to increase play on Bella Vista Village golf courses with POA Marketing and Communications Manager.
2. Develop a program with golf group leaders to ensure earliest availability of unused tee times.
3. Continue to support course support groups like "Friends of the Highlands" and "Lads and Lassies of Scotsdale" with fundraising events.
4. Develop programs for increased play on Bella Vista Village golf courses during afternoons and evenings.
5. Continue monthly course inspections, documenting repairs and maintenance issues.
6. Assist with the 50th Anniversary Three Skill Challenge event to be held on May 30.
7. Participate in and promote activities for the POA's 50th Anniversary. Continue to participate in GRIP.

Appendix II. USGA Turf Specialist Chris Hartwinger Day End Review

Chris began by providing a brief biography. He has worked for the USGA since 1995 and lives in Birmingham, Alabama. He estimated that he has reviewed more than 1,000 courses. He claimed expertise in women's golf by virtue of his marriage to a ten time Alabama amateur champion, having a mother-in-law who is also an excellent golfer, and having a 16 year-old golfing daughter.

He noted that across the country, golf participation peaked in 2005 and took a downturn in 2007-08 as the economy deteriorated. Since about 2012, golf participation has stabilized.

Turf: Recognizing the difficulty of maintaining bent grass greens in summer heat, the southeast began to convert greens from bent grass to ultra-dwarf(hybrid) Bermuda several years ago. This change has begun to move west and north. Bent grass thrives when the temperature lies at 55-65 degrees F, a level not seen in NWA for much of the summer. Fans help by increasing evaporation.

On #6 Highlands, he conducted a "sunlight analysis" to evaluate the possibility of converting the green from bent grass. He concluded that only a few trees would need to be removed.

On #2 Highlands, he had several recommendations which he provided after criticizing the course layout which places the most difficult hole as the second hole to be played. Change the sprinkler to provide more uniform watering. Provide fill to control drainage. Replace grass with zoysia.

Women's Golf: He noted women represent a tremendous underserved market. Furthermore, women make the major decisions regarding such issues as home location, etc. He said that the PGA recommends that the longest par four should only be 260 yards. With this criterion, Highlands has 7 par 4's that are more than 260 yards from the forward tees. This means that women playing from the red tees are effectively playing 11 par 5's, 4 par 3's and only 3 par 4's. He commended our effort to establish the "Play It Forward" tees and recommended the PGA document noted above.

Questions and Answers. (Some to Chris and some to POA)

Ques: Why was review conducted at Highlands?

Ans: Because of all the criticism this spring about the condition of the fairways. Basic problem is that the fairways at the Highlands (and Scotsdale) are predominantly "common" Bermuda. This grass was considered the best until late 50's. The hybrid Bermudas are much better.

Ques: What do other courses do to cut their budgets?

Ans: Reduce the # of people and delay in regular activities. Usually labor represents about 2/3 of the budget. Bella Vista at 40% is well below the average. It is important to consider revenue as well as budget cuts!

Ques: Isn't the labor required to cover Bermuda greens so high that it overwhelms the advantage?

Ans: It takes about 32 labor hrs to cover 18 holes. This compares to 3,800-8,000 hours to syringe bent grass greens in the summer for all BV courses, a step not required with the Bermuda greens. The Bermuda greens don't have to be covered every night. Sometimes they can be left on throughout the day. Overall, it's a good trade-off.