

July 10, 2018 GJAC Fresh Start Task Force Notes

Golf Joint Advisory Committee Fresh Start Task Force Meeting Notes

Tuesday, July 10, 2018 4:00 pm at Country Club Boardroom

Attending: Rex Butler, Jason Loyd, Susan Nuttall, Mary Riorden, Bill Barr, Jake Grasmick, members of the public

Next Steps: Follow up on questions indicated below
Task Force Meeting 7/11/2018, 4:00 pm to formulate recommendation
Publish draft in Golf Update this week (feedback to leiab@bvpoa.com, she will forward to Task Force members)
Present recommendation to Board by July 17, 2018

The purpose of the meeting was to solicit public feedback on the Golf Course Strategy-A Fresh Look. A copy of the presentation can be found in the Golf Committee records on the POA Website. The meeting started at 4:00 pm.

Approximately 85 members of the public attended the meeting. The Task Force requested that Board Members and the staff not attend. The audience was overwhelming avid golfers. There were several people who were occasional golfers. Our goal was to have an open discussion without a predetermined outcome.

The meeting was structured to discuss 4 points, and each section was facilitated by a Task Force Member. Susan Nuttall opened and closed the meeting.

1. Berksdale South – Rex Butler
2. Berksdale North – Rex Butler
3. Kingswood – Bill Barr
4. ArkMo – Jason Lloyd

Comments were wide ranging. They are presented below by category. Approximately 30 different people offered comments. We also had raise of hands to gain a sense of the audience on Berksdale North, Kingswood and ArkMo.

The meeting concluded at 5:20 pm.

Committee / follow up comments in italics. Thanks to all for your quick response to questions.

Category	Comment
Berksdale South	Consider an option to turn this into a 12 hole golf course. <i>Many participants applauded.</i>
	If Berksdale South isn't a golf course, will the property be allowed to just return to a forest, like other common property. If yes, then would there be activities like hunting on the land? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Committee response: No, there is a Board commitment to maintain it as a greenway. Currently, if it is not used as a recreational amenity,</i>

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	<p><i>the land reverts to Cooper Development.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Clarification: The Berksdale land will not revert back to Cooper. The deed restriction would allow Cooper to block us from going commercial, but there is no reversionary clause.</i>
	Will the golf course be turned into a public park? I'm not in favor of any more public amenities. I pay my dues and this should be limited to just POA members.
Berksdale North	Golf Leagues that cater to more mature golfers like to play Berksdale because of the flat terrain.
	With current issues such as the need for restoring the greens at Scotsdale and potential renovation of the Country Club, before we close, let's be sure of having enough holes of golf open in 2019.
	Berksdale, Kingswood is the easiest to golf and historically has been the most popular course.
	<p>Did we lose any tournaments because we lack a 36 hole facility?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Committee response: No, all 2 course tournaments were shifted to other configurations, usually Kingswood & Country Club</i> <i>Additional data: there are 5 2-course tournaments, we have not lost any.</i>
	The golf courses along 71 are one of the best marketing tools Bella Vista has to attract new residents.
	<p>Show of hands to close Berksdale North – 0</p> <p>Show of hands to keep Berksdale North open – everyone else</p>
Kingswood	<p>We should consider upgrading the bridge so that emergency vehicles can get across.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Per Keith: I meet with Fire Marshall last year and looked at every bridge on 3 valley courses and at that time he told me they had access to everywhere they needed with both ambulance and fire equipment.</i>
	Instead of closing Kingswood, we should consider closing Brittany first.
	Show of hands to keep Kingswood open - all
	<p>You indicate that at about 150,000 rounds, we need 5 golf courses. Why would we wait until rounds go up to 165,000 before we start to invest in Kingswood stream bank remediation, replacing the bridge and other updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>As of now, hardening the Country Club is the first priority.</i> <i>The suggested repairs are not urgent.</i> <i>There needs to be some indication that we will continue to need 5 courses to justify the cost of these repairs.</i>
ArkMo	We should sell the property.
	It doesn't make sense to close golf courses and then build a new one. If we

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	have the money to spend on ArkMo, why not spend it on the existng courses.
	We need to find a way to make golf sustainable. The concept behind closing Berksdale was to save the costs and redirect that money into hardening the Country Club against future flooding. The Board position was to gather the facts on 1) how many courses do we need, 2) what would it take to harden the Country Club against a 100 year flood, 3) what is the feasibility of building a course out of the flood plain at ArkMo. Base decision on the facts. There are no easy answers
	Show of hands to Build a Course at ArkMo – ~20 Show of hands to not Build a Course at ArkMo – ~60
General Comments	
Scheduling Tee Times	It is extremely difficult for a non-group player to get a tee time on weekday mornings. <i>This comment was made by and supported by a number of golfers who pay for golf daily.</i>
	Leagues are playing only in the mornings due to the cooler weather. This does not leave space for other golfers.
	Trying to get 2 tees times in a row on Friday is almost impossible. This is costing the POA, 8 paid rounds each week when tee times aren't available.
	Our tee time reservation system shows only Brittany most of the time. You have to select a specific course to see anything else. This is time consuming and irritating.
	Are Tee times being reserved for guests? <i>Per Phillip: We do reserve tee times in advance for out of town groups who are coming for a Buddies/Girls Out/Work event. These groups pay full guest rates. Otherwise it is 10 days for members and 7 days for non-members.</i>
Improving/Declining Rounds	Rounds are dropping due to course mismanagement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Read the study that will be published in the next few weeks about the golf trends in our Market to get a better understanding of some of the reasons golf rounds are down.</i>
	<i>We need to market more. What is our Marketing Plan?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Response from Kim Carlson, our Marketing Plan through August:</i> • <i>“Golf Bella Vista” Campaigns (through August)</i> <i>Cox Media:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>TV ads during PGA tournaments and on select channels (espn)</i> * <i>Digital Marketing</i> <i>KNWA/KFTA:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <i>TV and digital ads</i> * <i>SEM (search engine marketing) campaign</i> <i>Espn Radio</i>

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	You can't just look at rounds, you also need to consider revenue.
Annual Passes	<p>Many players who have annual passes, are playing rounds for 'free'. (after they reach the break even point).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Several similar comments</i>
Overall Revenue / Getting additional Revenue	<p>Our revenue has been flat rather than declining at the same rate as rounds. This indicates that golfers are supporting the courses better than we thought.</p>
	We should be able to change our rates by demand by tee time. Not just after 2 or after 5. Other courses have this capability.
	We should offer a winter rate for guests. \$50 is too high based on the condition of the course, especially December through February.
	I would love to see all the courses stay open, but we can only do that if we can pay for it. Hot Springs village sets annual passes at break even at 83 rounds where BV sets this price at about 60, taking into consideration the prices for the secondary member.
	<p>Why don't we just raise the price?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The recent marketing study indicates we are at the top end of pricing for daily play. Raising the price is likely to result in reduced rounds for those golfers who pay daily. There needs to be a balance.</i>
Spending Priority	<p>Country Club should be a priority for spending</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>That is our current direction.</i>
Golf Now	<p>If we are adhering to the rule that members can make tee times 10 days out and non members can make tee times 7 days out, why are there tee times available on Golf Now into the future?</p> <p><i>Committee response: We will follow up with Phillip. Our understanding was that we terminated our agreement with Golf Now.</i></p> <p><i>CORRECTION (Susan's misunderstanding): per Phillip. We are using Golf Now, Golf 18 and Teed Off. We have a new representative that resolved our billing concerns. Our bookings via these sites continues to rise. We adhere to the rule that offers show up 7 days in advance. We advertise at full price with occasional 'hot deals'.</i></p>
	<p>Are all tournament rounds counted?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This morning we did an audit of tournament rounds, all rounds except 1,214 were counted. Additional analysis will be done to classify these rounds.</i>
	<p>Are Replay rounds counted? If I play at 2 different courses in 1 day, my rounds total doesn't change. Why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>During the meeting Jason checked on the replay question. Yes, there is a button on the POS system that will capture the replay round.</i>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validated that Duplicate rounds played on the same day will not appear until the next day.
Vote of Members to Close Courses	<p>The members should vote to close Golf Courses. It should not be left up to a group of volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no provision in the governing documents for such a vote If there were a vote, it would be a vote of the entire community (improved & unimproved lot owners), not just people who golf or those who live on the golf courses. The results may not be favorable to the avid golfing community.
Stream / Flood Management <i>Keith followup</i>	<p>Where does all the timber go that we remove from the creek? Just back into the woods?</p> <p><i>Per Keith with clarifications:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have not removed timber from <u>creek areas</u> in my time here, nor can we without obtaining permits which are hard to get and restrictive on how we can do work. You can't enter creek or drag anything out of creek. It must be lifted out requiring a crane which is very expensive. We do remove timber from <u>bridges and off course</u> after flood events, and we have needed to hire outside contractors and rent cranes in the past for this work as well. This debris is either placed in burn piles to burn in the winter or hauled to stump dump. Some of this work isn't completed since can't burn in summer and time is issue in hauling now as well.
	<p>Why aren't we more proactive about removing the trees from the stream? We did it last year. Why aren't we doing this on a regular basis?</p>
	<p>We should take a new look at regulations since many are being rolled back.</p> <p>Talk to our legislatures to see if we can get relief from permitting / regulatory issues/costs in the stream.</p> <p><i>Per Keith:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We monitor state and federal regs on an ongoing bases and haven't seen any type roll back on laws currently in effect for work in streams so far. All major golf organizations-GCSAA, PGA and USGA, along with NGCOA and CMA, are working with congress to try and make needed changes in the regulations, especially as they pertain to WOTUS which covers all of Little Sugar and tributaries on our valley course. There is no mechanism for relief from these laws except if area declared a disaster area by the Federal Government and even then they still require some type of permitting and restrict how work can be performed.
Maintenance	<p>Why don't we schedule mowing and maintenance in the afternoon? Just</p>

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	<p>change the cups in the morning?</p> <p><i>Per Kieth:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>You must change cups, mow greens and rake bunkers in front of play in mornings.</i> • <i>It isn't practical to then send crew home for a time and bring them back in afternoon to mow.</i> • <i>In addition a minimum of 3 employees are tasked with watering greens in afternoon during the heat of summer. Need to remember on any given day we may have as few as 5 employees, most days 7, available to work due to scheduled days off so no overtime on weekends (open and must perform task 7 days/week), people out sick or on vacation.</i> • <i>In addition, maintenance practices such as top dressing and fertilizing on the bent grass greens must be done in the cooler time of day or damage will occur.</i> • <i>Employees not checking greens do mow in the afternoons currently.</i>
<p>Liability <i>Tom J. followup</i></p>	<p>Who is liable for non golfers walking on the courses during playing times?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Any golfer or non-golfer that comes onto a golf course is assuming the risk of being on the golf course. If a non-golfer is hit or injured by a golfer during normal hours of play, the non-golfer would probably have no claim against the golfer. That does not mean that the injured person could not sue the golfer or the golf course. Chances are they would not win, but there are no guarantees when it comes to the courts.</i> • <i>If a golfer sees a non-golfer on the course, we encourage them to call the pro shop so that the person can be asked to leave.</i>
<p>Room Setup <i>Tom J. followup</i></p>	<p>We needed microphones that worked. They were challenging for those unfamiliar with them to use. <i>Management response: forwarded to Joan G.</i></p>

Notes by Susan Nuttall, susanvnuttall@gmail.com