

CITY OF NORWALK  
OAK HILLS PARK AUTHORITY  
JULY 20, 2023  
VIA ZOOM TELECONFERENCE

ATTENDANCE: Joe Andrasko, Chair; Gary Leeds, Richard Dellinger, Alan Dutton,  
Denise Brown, Jerry Crowley, Mark Gartner, T.J. Tromboli.

STAFF: Jim Holiday, General Manager; Jim Schell, Superintendent;  
Paul Alexander, Golf Pro

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Andrasko called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and acknowledged those in attendance. There was a quorum present.

Mr. Andrasko noted that Denise Brown, whose term has expired, is admitted into the meeting, and has not been officially reappointed, but will be.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES - Acceptance of minutes from 6/22/2023 special meeting

Changes corrections noted: Page 4 under New Business, correct the motion to remove Dellinger from 'Mr. Andrasko Dellinger'

\*\* MR. DUTTON MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM JUNE 22, 2023 AS AMENDED.  
\*\* MR. DELLINGER SECONDED THE MOTION.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chair Andrasko welcomed James Holiday as the new General Manager, and he looks forward to great things under his management. He will be doing organization coordination that will be a positive direction for the Authority.

City of Norwalk  
Oak Hills Park Authority  
July 20, 2023

Mr. Andrasko noted a new member, Robert Stowers has been added based on the Ordinance Committee recommendation to have the director of Recreation and Parks as a voting member on the Authority.

Mr. Andrasko reported that the Authority is in a strong position with financials and included in the budget is a plan for capital projects that are needed to keep the course vibrant and in the best shape for usage and access. He thanked the team and staff for their hard work with the season to meet the demand and to keep the course and park in a good position.

- \*\* MR. ANDRASKO MOVED TO CHANGE THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA TO HAVE OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS NEXT ON THE AGENDA.**
- \*\* MR. TROMBOLI SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Old Business / New Business:

- a. Election of Executive Committee

- \*\* MR. LEEDS MOVED THE FOLLOWING SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR THE AUTHORITY:  
CHAIRMAN: JIM ANDRASKO; VICE CHAIR: ALLAN DUTTON;  
TREASURER: DENISE BROWN**
- \*\* MR. DILLINGER SECONDED THE MOTION**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- b. Interest bearing account for cash balances

Mr. Leeds gave a background overview of the current bank accounts with excess cash and earning interest, and the outcome of addressing the objective of increased interest or an interest-bearing CD or money market account investment. He was in contact with Norwalk Bank & Trust which is a Community Bank, with FDIC limit of \$250,000. He spoke about a third-party agreement by the City's Finance Director with Webster Bank and Bank of New York, and he will meet with the contact next week to discuss a sweep account of U.S. securities/bonds money market account.

There was discussion on available banking options, and it was agreed to go back to the Community Bank to negotiate an interest-bearing FDIC insured account before changing banks. It was agreed to provide more information next month after next week's meeting. Ms. Brown asked to be included in that meeting.

## MANAGEMENT REPORTS

### Report of the General Manager (filed on July 18)

Mr. Holiday provided his report as included in the agenda packet, as follows:  
I've been spending my first several weeks listening and learning. I've been talking to staff members and members of the golf and tennis communities.

City of Norwalk  
Oak Hills Park Authority  
July 20, 2023

Most people I've encountered are more than willing to share their opinions and concerns, the vast majority of which are positive. I've introduced myself to dozens of golfers, most of whom see my hiring as a positive move for the park.

I've been talking to owner/operators of food trucks to determine if this may be an option for breakfast as the owner & manager of Smokin' Aces has informed us they're not serving breakfast effective July 1. Food trucks don't appear to be an option as demand for these trucks is high and they command significant fees to attend special functions.

On the tennis side, we received the building permit for the pergola, the General Contractor is selecting Sub-Contractors and the group spearheading the effort is completing their fundraising. The Tennis Friends of Oak Hills raised \$750 from a Wimbledon event that they intend to pool with USTA grants and additional funds they will raise to pursue their goals to replace the fencing. Court activity is robust and I'll be meeting with the pro and manager later in the month.

Weekly manager meetings with Jim Schell, Mark Gartner, Paul Alexander and me are ongoing to review current events, maintenance and areas in which I can help by taking responsibility.

Some of the items we discussed at our first meeting included:

- Clubhouse: HVAC inspection - condensing units need attention; entry doors at clubhouse require service; north end of clubhouse deck rails need to be power washed & painted; lights in clubhouse entry- older style bulbs need new LED fixtures & bulbs.
- Structures: stain one side of halfway house; double glass doors at old pro shop which have out-lived their life expectancy; replace indoor/outdoor carpet at starter station.
- Training/Safety: schedule training for AED (Automated External Defibrillator) with members of the staff, including rangers and executives; audit existing first aid kits & replenish if needed.
- Other: patch asphalt at entry & various other locations; exterior lighting (walkway bollards & parking areas); inspect outdoor ashtrays & remove debris & non operable units.

#### Large Projects

Awnings for clubhouse, Quarterly newsletter, Fund raising ideas: Norwalk City Amateur tournament 2 day event, Corporate outings, Reach out to local hotels and to the local Golf Channel representatives to drive more rounds.

#### Immediate needs

Employee for pro shop for August, September & October to replace departing college students

## Item #5 – Management Reports

Report of the Golf Professional (filed on July 18)

Everything is going well and running smoothly at Oak Hills Park! Our course is in great condition now in peak golf season and we are continuing to see full tee sheets. Our GolfNow software and tee sheet program is working well and they are continuing to drive lots of golfers to our golf course from all over as our reputation of great course conditions and putting surfaces continues to grow. Our utilization rates are consistently above 90%.

The golf course opens every day during the week at 6:30 AM and at 6:00 AM on weekends. The golf course and golf shop close at 6:30 PM.

Sales have been picking up in the golf shop. We recently had seven golf outings that went very well and the digital scoring with our Golf Genius premier software package has stepped up our game and has pleased our outing guest immensely. One outing was new this year, The Hundred Club of Connecticut, and they have already booked for 2024. A big thank you to Steve Shepherd for his help. In total we have had 10 outings and 963 outing guest YTD. We have 8 more outings on the schedule.

In June we had 125 golfers compete in a Connecticut State Golf Association qualifier and many of the golfers complimented the conditions of our golf course. A score of 70 was low and 75 qualified. Recently in July we had 60 women from the Southern Connecticut Women's Golf Association play their yearly golf event here.

OHMGA and OHWGA are now in their 12th week of tournaments and the digital scoring from Golf Genius has been a major upgrade reducing the amount of work and making the events much more fun and interesting.

We have had five junior golf schools which have gained popularity year over year and we are seeing our efforts grow the game of golf with numerous juniors and families playing at OHP. We have worked very hard over the years to introduce new players to the game, and just to give you an idea of how popular we have become, we have 43 five-week golf clinics scheduled for juniors, women, and men for 2023.

Our PGA Junior team has played four matches and their record is 4-0 with victories over Shorehaven GC and Silvermine GC.

51 annual pass memberships have been sold for the year and we are up to roughly 1,200 golf memberships. 876 are residents, 160 are nonresidents, and 34 are juniors.

We have also discounted our golf memberships now that it is July hoping to attract some new golf members.

We recently had some major issues with our internet service which we have been experiencing for a few years and I now think it has been fixed once and for all. We poured concrete last month for a synthetic tee line at the lesson range to help accommodate all of our golf clinics.

City of Norwalk  
Oak Hills Park Authority  
July 20, 2023

- The synthetic turf is on order and should be completed by the end of the month.
- Our 68 golf carts are clean and all are running well.
- We refurbished two of our AED units, purchased one new AED unit to save a life.
- We presently have an inside golf shop staff of 10 and an outside golf staff of 25 on staff. We have recently added three new members to our golf staff.
- Our golf staff is now complete with 35 staff members.

**REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT: JIM SCHELL**

Report of the Superintendent (filed on July 18)

All is well with the course. Weather the last few weeks has been unpredictable and not the best for great conditions at the course, but we are mostly holding steady doing maintenance between raindrops.

The paver did a nice job doing some repairs on #2, #15 and by the cart barn, which they threw in.

We need to have a meeting outside of this one to discuss the amount of work we think we can bite off in the first round of bunker renovations. I'd obviously like to do more than my original proposal, just don't have a feeling as to how much we will be spending. Not sure if everyone knows, my previous mechanic resigned and moved down south. Lucky for me I have a gentleman named Glen that worked here in the 90's. We hired him at the beginning of the season, and he was an auto mechanic for many years. We are going to get him trained on the finer points of mower blade sharpening and small equipment. Glad to have Glen on board.

We are in a desperate search to find a netting installer. We need to increase the size of the net between 18 tee and a neighbor's house. He says he is still getting bombarded with golf balls which if you look at the situation, you will wonder how that is possible. He is a good neighbor, I believe him and finding an outfit even in this state for this little bit of work is proving difficult. For now, the blue tee markers remain on the white tee box.

*Mr. Leeds left the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Mr. Andrasko noted that there was no longer a quorum.*

Report of the Controller (filed on July 18)

General Notes:

1. Our FY2024 fiscal budget was finalized and approved in our June Authority meeting.
2. We've continued with our debt payments to the City of Norwalk as normal, paying down \$119k throughout the full fiscal year.
3. The year-end financial audit is scheduled for July 24, 2023.

Financial / Operational Activity:

1. Month of June golf rounds and cart rounds performed well above budget and finishes out a fiscal year that regularly performed above budget.
2. Discount ID card sales which had just gotten back on track with budget in May, fell short of budget in the final month unfortunately. However, ID card purchases were sold at a 30% discount beginning July 6th as an incentive and have been performing very well.

City of Norwalk  
Oak Hills Park Authority  
July 20, 2023

3. Total golf rounds for the fiscal year are over 5k rounds, or 13%, above budget. Cart rounds are nearly 6% above budget.
4. Full fiscal year revenues are \$266k over budget driven by greater than expected revenue rounds. Full year expenses are \$94k under budget driven by operating with less staff than expected and keeping a careful eye on overall expenses.
5. Full fiscal year Net Operating Income is \$700k, which is \$360k over-budget and insures that we can make some much-needed capital investments back into the park.
6. We ended the year with an unrestricted bank balance of \$612k as well as a capital reserve cash balance of \$33k. The reserve can only be used for capital improvements to the structures on the course.
7. This is our second fiscal year in a row that we did not have to utilize our Line of Credit.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### TENNIS COMMITTEE

Ms. Brown reported the grant from state USTA has been received and will be used for facility repair fund. The national grant is in the works and volunteer Mr. Falsey feels confident funds will be received. There was discussion on money in the account for repairs along with the donation for the Pergola. Mr. Gartner will provide a report of the accounting to Ms. Brown.

Mr. Dillinger reported that the Pergola building permit was picked up last week now waiting for the contractor for the construction timeframe.

### RESTAURANT COMMITTEE

Mr. Dutton reported that Don or Lisa are invited to attend meetings and provide a report. Jim will coordinate an email to them to schedule their attendance.

### Supporters

Mr. Crowley reported there is no detailed report until next month. Mr. Gartner added this is given to the Attorney Avery and an IRS report will be filed.

A water fountain was purchased for \$1,500 and the supporters' donation will cover that.

### NEW BUSINESS –

A proposed change to the meeting of August 17 will be announced by email.

### ADJOURNMENT

- \*\* MR. DUTTON MOVED TO ADJOURN.
- \*\* MR. DILLINGER SECONDED THE MOTION.
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Knox, Telesco Secretarial Services  
City of Norwalk  
Oak Hills Park Authority  
July 20, 2023