

**TOWN OF BERLIN**  
 Timberlin Golf Commission  
 230 Kensington Road • Berlin, CT 06037  
**Thursday, August 17, 2023**  
**6:00 p.m.**

Location for in person: Doc Mac Room

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81034978138?pwd=T2l1Q0NrbW8rRHhOUzhvb0hOOzBwdz09>

Meeting ID: 810 3497 8138

Passcode: 645318

Via Phone: 929 205 6099

Commissioners Present: Nancy Berger, Peter DeFazio, Gale Lemieux, Jim Norton, Bill Richards, Seb Senia

Commissioners Absent: Jim Green, Joe Pulcini

Staff Present:

Kevin Delaney – Director of Finance

Sol Guerrero – Director of Golf

Mark Bayram - Golf Professional

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Norton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS**

None.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: July 20, 2023**

Commissioner Lemieux moved to approve the July 20, 2023 meeting minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner DeFazio.

Those voting in favor: Commissioner Berger, Commissioner DeFazio, Commissioner Lemieux, Chairman Norton, Commissioner Richards, Commissioner Senia

Vote being: 6-0. MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Lemieux asked to amend that it stated there was no Audience of Citizens, we had the gentleman from the Firehouse (South Kensington Fire Department Assistant Chief Hrubiec) come speak. Chairman Norton said yes, but he wasn't really Audience of Citizens. Commissioner DeFazio said that was an agenda item. Golf Pro Bayram added that South Kensington Fire Department Assistant Chief Hrubiec can do movie night on either October 13 or 14, which is a Friday, or Saturday.

## 5. OLD BUSINESS

### 1. GEO Fence Update

Director of Golf Guerrero said we turned it on and used it for rough only. It went good, carts are stopping where they are set to stop. We can do some adjustments on boundaries. I have to figure out if it is rough only, or are they able to cross fairways. Commissioner DeFazio said we do 90 degrees and it should allow 90 degree crossing. Director of Golf Guerrero said maybe it is a quick stop and go rather than normal boundaries where it stops longer. I have a call/email to see what options we have for cart paths only. Chairman Norton asked if you can set those on the fly? Director of Golf Guerrero said yes. Commissioner DeFazio asked what are the cart path restrictions today? Director of Golf Guerrero said we are doing handicap boundaries for everyone which are all on greens. Normal golfers would have another 5 to 10 yards.

Commissioner DeFazio said there was a cart today between the bunker and the green on hole number 16. Director of Golf Guerrero said a lot of ladies told me they were going on the right side of hole number 16 and stopping. Commissioner Berger said if you are on that side, the tendency is to go around that. Director of Golf Guerrero asked are we stopping people from going around the right side of 16? Commissioner DeFazio said yes, we are the only golf course that allows carts to drive on par 3's that I know of. Most golf courses are cart path only on par 3's. Commissioner Lemieux said we have a nice cart path on par 3. How close can you currently get to a green? Director of Golf Guerrero said 10 yards from the front, it narrows all around. Golf Pro Bayram said the biggest challenge is that the customer doesn't know. Chairman Norton said can you put something on the website. Golf Pro Bayram said say something simple, you can't go within 10 yards of the green, unless you have a handicap cart. Commissioner DeFazio said maybe we come up with the most common problems and make a card that we put up in the cart. Director of Golf said right now there are generic directions, but we can give them 4 bullet point items. Commissioner Berger asked if there is no way to mark it? Director of Golf Guerrero said we don't want to use ropes.

Commissioner Senia asked about hole number 6, carts are going around the green coming the other way on the cart path, by the tee box on hole number 7. They are turning around to go back to hole number 7. Director of golf Guerrero said if you are going in the direction of the cart path, you are in the outside lane, the right is slower on the side of hole number 6. It gets muddy there. Commissioner Senia said you have one guy going around and one sitting at number 7. Commissioner Lemieux said as much as reasonable, stay on the cart path. That is what they are there for. Except if you are handicap, there is no reason why you can't walk. There is no fairway that is 50 yards wide. Chairman Norton said number 16 could be an issue because it is so far off to the left, especially if somebody hits it off to the right. Chairman Norton said the Geo Fence is a work in progress right now.

Commissioner Senia said he tried looking for the handicap policy on the town website but couldn't find it. Things like the refund policy are posted, but I did nothing about the handicap policy. We need to look at that because somebody is going to challenge us on that. Chairman Norton asked everyone to look and see what they have on the policy. Commissioner Senia said maybe it is just a matter of loading it on the website.

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Norton said regarding the bridges, we have given out close to \$500k over the past couple of years to the town. It is kind of frustrating because a lot of work must be done at the course, but we are turning money over. It goes back into the General Fund unless we allocate it to a Reserve Account. Finance Director Delaney said the bridges have been a topic for about 3 to 4 years. How do we fund replacing all of the bridges on the course? Typically, when it comes to capital for any venture in town, the highest priority is Public Safety. Anything that represents a safety issue. With the wide spectrum of users of the golf course it is clear and obvious that it needs to be safe. It is used for carts, public safety vehicles and anyone that is walking. Last year as part of the appropriation of surplus, \$50k was put into a separate account and it is still there. Once capital is put into an account, essentially it is non-lapsing. It sits idle for 3 years and by Charter it is supposed to go back to the General Fund, but it gives you a period of time to work with it.

The request this year is to take another \$50k and put it into that account. The latest conversations that I had with Superintendent of Golf Salvio indicate there is a good bridge option available with a long life span and it is in the neighborhood of \$250k to \$275k. When you look at that gap, there are 3 ways to fund it. One would be for the town to borrow money, but the Board of Finance and Town Council do not have an appetite to borrow a lot of money right now. The second option would be to take money from savings and appropriate the money and do that. There are a lot of projects that need to be done. The probability isn't necessarily great. I have been in contact with the state and every year in the state budget there is a local capital improvement amount of money allocated to every community. The town has used that for the last 3 cycles to fix leaking roofs. The state has confirmed that we can use that money under the Parks and Recreation program if we wanted to do the bridge. Chairman Norton asked how much money is that? Finance Director Delaney said we have over \$200k there and it accumulates every year if we do not use it. Chairman Norton asked if you are going to lose it if it is not used in 3 years? Finance Director Delaney said that is the local money, not the state money. The state money will sit there. Typically what happens is you request it from Town Council and the Town Council passes a resolution authorizing to go do that. Then we go to OPM and say that we would like "x" dollars of that money. Then they approve it, we spend and request reimbursement. The budget this year included a measure that said the state does not want to do that anymore. The state wants to actually give that to the towns and simply say that we have the right to audit it. Here are the parameters, spend it within these parameters. Here is the money upfront. My hope is that within the next month or two that will happen. The money will come out and then it is a local decision as to how that money should be used.

Chairman Norton asked if we have to get in line with everybody else that has little projects going on. The golfers have funded the town to the tune of \$500k in the last 4 or 5 years. Finance Director Delaney said I would say that is true for the last 4 or 5 years. If you went back a little further the golf course was getting things and receiving more than was put in. Chairman Norton asked if it was \$500k? Finance Director Delaney said in the neighborhood of \$300k. One thing you want to consider is a number of towns, including Farmington do this with their golf course, is put it in a Special Revenue Fund. It is not an enterprise model, an enterprise is like what Water Control is where all of your operations and debt service are like a mini business. The Special Revenue Fund is an opportunity to put your operating money separate from the General Fund. You run it on your own. Parks and Recreation actually has Special Revenue Funds, so there is some General Fund and some Special Revenue money. That money does not lapse at the

end of the year. If you look at the P&L from the end of last year, there is close to \$200k above budget, a substantial amount of money. With the Special Revenue fund, that money would sit there until you decided to do something with it. You could transfer it to capital projects and do capital projects with it. I would recommend in that instance you would leave some cushion there, so if you had bad weather or something, you would be ups and downs, but that is an opportunity to have the money sit there and you don't have to act by a particular fiscal year. It is in Fund Balance, so you do not have to use it for a particular purpose at a point in time.

With the General Fund at the end of the year when the books are closed, it goes back to Fund Balance and the General Fund and you have to appropriate it. We are trying to do that now with the \$50k, as well as a whole series of items, not just Timberlin related, it is close to \$1.9M, Parks and Recreation, vehicles, Police, etc. It is something to consider. Again, Special Revenue is about your operating, not about your capital. It is about putting Operating separately from the General Fund. You are already effectively doing that, but the budget is developed with the idea that there is an Ordinance, you must be self-sustained. The benefit to this is if you are going to be self-sustaining and you have a good year, the money stays in that fund. You can think of it similarly to your CIP money. The CIP money, \$1 and \$2 dollars you pay goes into a separate Capital Fund. It does not go into the General Fund. It sits there separate all the time. This is an opportunity for you to operate outside of the General Fund. You would very likely still have to present and have a budget adopted by the Town Council. If you were to go online and look at the Town of Farmington's books, they have that. If they have a bad year, they basically borrow from the General Fund and ultimately they pay it back.

Chairman Norton asked what happens if you run a string of bad years, you would be rolling the dice. Commissioner DeFazio asked how does New Britain operate? Finance Director Delaney said he has not looked at how Stanley Golf Course in New Britain operates. Chairman DeFazio said he believes they operate like we do, only they receive a ton of grant money. When was the last time \$1 from any grant money was spent on Timberlin? Commissioner Senia said he remembers getting \$100k back in the mid 90's and it was used for the Little League fields. Commissioner DeFazio said not one cent of grant money coming to this town has been spent on Timberlin that I know of. Finance Director Delaney said there was grant money used on the roofs in Timberlin before I arrived here. They did actually take money to redo some roofs over there. That is something that I'm proposing and we have already talked about it at the Board of Finance and it was brought up to the Town Council to potentially use the money for that. It is an opportunity to take a safety matter. Whether folks support the golf course or not, it is still town owned property and similar to bridges at Sage Park. Chairman Norton added that the golfer supports the golf course and they are getting short changed because we are setting their rates on a budget that is totally fictitious. Let's look at what the actual expenditures were vs. what was budgeted for the last two years. This year it is to the tune of \$120k. We didn't spend that budget. It goes back to the General Fund, but the golfer paid for it. Finance Director Delaney said that is where the Special Revenue Fund comes in, it would sit there. Commissioner DeFazio said we should make it retro-active, but that won't happen. Chairman Norton said it is frustrating that we put this on the golfer every year and it is not fair to the golfer because they are not getting what they paid for.

Commissioner Lemieux asked what are the steps that we need to do to set up the Special Revenue Fund? Finance Director Delaney said the distinction between Enterprise and Special Revenue stems around the capital and financing the major expenditures vs. your operations.

Commissioner Senia said I read in the newspaper that Rockledge got \$150k from the state to put in a new pump house. Other courses are doing their thing, what is wrong with Berlin? Commissioner DeFazio said we don't have a Grant Writer that focuses on that kind of stuff. Chairman Norton asked if the town has a Grant Writer? Finance Director Delaney said yes, we have someone who is very good with state grants. He is a former employee, but is now a consultant.

Chairman Norton asked if we had to put a bridge up at Sage Park, who would pay for that? If the town pays for that at Sage Park, why would they not do that at Timberlin? That includes the bridge and tree work. We have to look at the cost benefit of some of this stuff. Is it more efficient to do things differently? Finance Director Delaney said this is where I put out there, using the LOTCIP grant from the state. The other elephant in the room is the town does not fund much capital at all anywhere. I know you are very passionate about Timberlin, but I can tell you as a person who sees the full picture, it is typically one item that is consistently cut from the budget. We are circling back if there is a surplus to spend it. It does not resolve your issue, but I would say it is not focused exclusively on Timberlin. There have been requests from Parks and Recreation that have been on the books for 7 years and pre-dated me and we have continued to put them on every year. Commissioner DeFazio said if a tree in Sage Park is endangering anybody who goes to the park, the town pays to have that tree removed. Same with Pistol Creek, but we pay for our own tree service and also for our own refuse/dumpster removal.

Commissioner Senia asked if the Finance Department does not want to spend the money, or is it Town Council, or both? Finance Director Delaney said we don't dictate financially. We are executing what has been. The \$50k that was for the bridge was in the budget that the Board of Finance sent in the last vote to the Town Council and the Town Council made the decision in the interest of helping taxpayers during a tough year of revaluation, the economy and other things. They cut all of the capital, but we have spent a lot of time on the capital. This was actually in the current budget and it would have been in the mill rate and all of the capital was taken out.

Chairman Norton asked Finance Director Delaney when he will talk to OPM? Finance Director Delaney said that OPM has already said that this qualifies. Chairman Norton asked if that money goes up for grabs, it is earmarked for the bridges? Finance Director Delaney said there has to be a discussion internally to propose to the Town Council. Chairman Norton asked if the Golf Commission has to go in front of the Town Council and request that? Finance Director Delaney said ultimately it would be Superintendent Salvio whose been working on it. He has been working closely with some different contractors to figure out different options. That is why it has not moved forward, it is figuring out exactly what we want. Chairman Norton added that he spoke to Superintendent Salvio about this two years ago. If it takes you two years to figure out what to do then you are not the right person for the job. Finance Director Delaney said the key with this grant is you want to make sure everything you want to put in, whether it's remediating something, whether it has to be included otherwise, and the state has the right to say it is great that you did it, but you are not getting reimbursed. To my knowledge during my time it has never happened. We have never been rejected because we are thorough in making sure that we know what the project is. Whatever the project might be, we had an all-encompassing request and then we execute the project and that grant has worked very well for the town on a number of different initiatives. This is an opportunity to take something that is of substance. It is not \$2M to redo the sand traps, but it is \$250k to \$300k. It is a substantial project, to finally get that done.

Donna Bovee, 85 Steepleview Dr.

Ms. Bovee said the Finance Commission (Board of Finance) decides what eventually gets done, or we can change it. This September 5, the Town Council is going to be discussing capital and how to spend the surplus and how to spend whatever they want to put towards capital. From the Parks and Recreation Commission, we have our list of capital. You guys should all have the same list for Timberlin and you put it out for years. You have that list and you prioritize again with safety being number one, but I can tell you that I go to a lot of meetings. I go to Board of Finance and Town Council meetings and I will continue to talk and push what we feel we need for the citizens of Berlin. Finance Director Delaney is a great advocate at the Finance meetings. You hear him speak about every one of those capital items and why it is important. Sometimes they listen and sometimes they just say we are not doing anything, but they execute. You have to go to those meetings.

Finance Director Delaney said the first item on the agenda on September 5 will be a town meeting at 6:45 p.m. It is a non-budget appropriation essentially asking the residents first, then the Town Council, then the Board of Finance. This is how the Charter is written, to appropriate money from savings. It will be replaced with surplus from this year, but everybody who is an elector in town or who owns property in town has a right to come and vote for or against. You have the right to speak up and ask questions on any of the items that are in there. Maybe there are items on that list that you believe are not as high a priority as some of the items that you think should be on there. We put a list together and it is close to \$2M because there has been a lot of deferred capital for the town. I'm sure you see it not just at Timberlin, but around town a lot of things you would like to see.

Commissioner Senia asked if they put it out to vote for the town's people and they shoot it down, does that stop right there? Finance Director Delaney said yes. There are the Town Council members, the residents that have a right to vote and occasionally there are a few other people, but it's typically pretty quiet. People are generally satisfied, if it passes, they are okay with it. We are trying to move forward on a number of issues. The bridges are one. There was a lot of discussion during one Board of Finance meeting this budget season. A number of ladies came and spoke very well about the playgrounds and playscapes in the town. We need work there and there is an attempt to move forward with Little People's Playground and use that as momentum. Part of it is getting that momentum going through people who start to see things improving, you get an opportunity to get a little public support and momentum. Chairman Norton added that the bridges are a safety issue and could be cause for a lawsuit.

Finance Director Delaney said the brains for the irrigation system had frayed wires per the experts doing the work. It was about a \$20k repair to put the new brains in the system. Obviously if the irrigation system goes that is a critical problem for any golf course. That money was put aside, transferred and put in during the year. I don't know if that is done or not, but it is an active project and the bridges are coming next. It is trying to take priorities, you don't want a brown golf course. At the same time we are trying to work the bridge element and get those repaired. Then you start to open up some of the other things, whether it is the cart paths, etc. Chairman Norton said he has been asking for a 5 year plan as a living document. People said they have never seen it, we will have to resurrect it again. Finance Director Delaney said I would encourage you to do that. Anybody can go to the website, we have a 10 year plan. We have asked everybody (Town Dept. Staff) and there are details right down to boilers for the

school, police vehicles, fire trucks, etc. It can be as robust as you want it to be, but it is on the website for anybody to look at. Ultimately, it is not just your golf course, it is the town. If the priorities are not what you think they should be, less of course a major safety matter that needs to be addressed, you have an opportunity to go to the Board of Finance and Town Council. At one of the Board of Finance meetings there was concern about what was going to happen with capital. Between the folks who joined on Zoom and there were probably 25 people in the room, it was over 40 people voicing their views on that and it did influence. The Board of Finance cut the Little People's Playground, but they said at the end of the year if we have enough surplus, we would like to see that added on and it has come back to us. That entire list has been vetted with the Board of Finance before it went to the Town Council. They gave the nod and said we need to invest. They do hear you. I feel it had an impact just observing all of those meetings. It was very well attended and hopefully that will continue. Ms. Bovee added that make sure that 5 year plan you talked about is in the town's plan. Chairman Norton said we need to whiteboard all of these things. We have the framework for some of this stuff. It is a living document that can change with priorities.

Commissioner Berger asked if the money that we would borrow from our own money, would they charge interest on that on top of borrowing the money? If we borrow say \$200k, do we have to pay it back? Finance Director Delaney said that would be for the Town Council and Board of Finance to determine how. Commissioner Berger said so we don't have to give that money back? Finance Director Delaney said that is how the CIP came about because there was bonding done before, I don't recall the project (irrigation, bunkers?), but the CIP \$2 dollars were started to repay that money. I arrived at the very tail end of that. The money was transferred in and it was used to help with service payments. The idea behind it at that time was continue to charge the \$2 dollars and build up a fund rather than paying the debt service. It is being used for capital. That is why it has been segregated all along. It is completely separate, it does not go back to the General Fund at the end of the year. The \$1 and \$2 you pay stay with the golf CIP fund. The Special Revenue fund would give you the opportunity to operate that way. It does have the inherent risk of having a bad year. The only way that I see you having a bad year is due to bad weather. Commissioner DeFazio said we are at a point that if we have to keep raising rates, people are not going to come. We are pretty much at the ceiling now. The commission thanked Finance Director Delaney for coming to the meeting.

#### 1. Remzi Contract

Director of Golf Guerrero said Town Manager Jayawickrema and I started talking about a new contract for Remzi and see it being finalized in early November. Remzi has already sent us his first proposal. Town Manager Jayawickrema is going to see our first rebuttal in September and then we will give it back to Remzi. Commissioner DeFazio asked if we get to see it? Chairman Norton said no, I don't think his contract has anything to do with us. Commissioner DeFazio asked if there will be an RFP? Director of Golf Guerrero said yes, that is why we are trying to do it now. Chairman Norton said everything has to go through the RFP process if it meets the criteria. Director of Golf Guerrero said Remzi wants a 5 year contract, but we are thinking a 3 year contract with options. Commissioner Senia said if we do a write up for proposal on the RFP, there are things that we talked about that maybe you should add on like the tent, or stuff like that. Is that going to be part of it? Commissioner DeFazio said Remzi does not agree with the short term contract. If you are going to be here a long time, maybe you help us build a structure instead of the tent, work it out. If somebody does something, you reward them with

long term. He was willing to do a big patio on top near the flag pole, but they shot him down. Chairman Norton added that on a positive note, my wife and I played the couples event and the food was very good. They are doing a great job. Commissioner DeFazio said I think the contract deserves longer.

## 2. High School Golf Team Sign

Golf Pro Bayram said Coach Barnes came to me maybe a year or two ago. He thought it would be a great idea to have a sign either in the driveway, or out front that says "Home of the Redcoats" and it would list the state championships for both the boys and girls. We came up with a timeline of spring 2024 for the project. We need to design it and the location is yet to be determined. Then we need to get a quote for the cost. Chairman Norton asked if that would be paid with CIP funds? Golf Pro Bayram said it would be through donations. We will probably present the design proof here first and then go to Town Council. If Town Council approves it we will go find the donations. Chairman Norton asked where do you think the sign will go? Golf Pro Bayram said we were thinking as you drive up, just past the maintenance area on the right side. Ms. Bovee said there is a space before the maintenance driveway and a space right after it. There is a 330 number sign, you could put a sign there on the right side just as people are driving up. Somewhere down there. You have a nice Timberlin sign coming in and it is going to compliment from that to this. Commissioner DeFazio added that everyone spends time near the practice green, 1st tee, 10th tee. You can't miss it there. If you put it by the road you are driving by. Look up at the railing where Remzi's is, you could put a massive sign over there. Golf Pro Bayram said right by the putting green would be a nice spot. Commissioner DeFazio said he would put it where there are a lot of eyes and a lot of time spent as opposed to just driving through. Golf Pro Bayram said I don't think we will have a problem getting the donations. Commissioner Lemieux said you have to be able to add on to it. Commissioner Berger asked what is the size? Ms. Bovee said for now we are looking at either "4 x 8" or "5 x 8" and it would have the years listed, girls and boys. The girls have 6 years and the boys have 9 years. There would be enough room for 16 to maybe 20 years total. We should have a couple of layouts for your next meeting. We are thinking of putting it up on the building and that might be a different type of sign. Right now what we are quoting for and working towards is one withstanding wind, an aluminum sign with an aluminum post going down all of the way. Those are the best and the strongest ones to withstand wind. If it is going up on a building, you might want to have something different. That would be important for us to know because of the cost. We know what the cost is right now. Commissioner DeFazio said it is all about the design. If you are hanging it up on the building, nobody is going to get close enough to see the material. It is the design and how it looks. They can put on vinyl lettering. Ms. Bovee said we need to define that quickly, but right now it is aluminum posts. Chairman Norton said how about giving us a couple of different options? Ms. Bovee said if we are seriously thinking about that, then we need to do that now because he is working on the design and all that kind of stuff. Chairman Norton said it is up to you because you are raising the money. Ms. Bovee said I like that idea, but I don't know what the cost would be, or what materials it would take. Commissioner Lemieux said to quote both and ask what would be his recommendation. I agree with Commissioner DeFazio, that is a very visible location. Commissioner DeFazio said Vital Signs is vendor in town. Chairman Norton said we are good with the timeline. Golf Pro Bayram said we will hopefully have something for the next meeting.



Commissioner Berger asked if we could get a clock for the starter shack? One that is on the building so people know what time it is. Commissioner Lemieux said that is the point of the anniversary clock. It is a big clock on the back of the first tee. Commissioner DeFazio asked if there are columns on the bottom? Commissioner Lemieux said yes. Commissioner DeFazio said we could use that space. Commissioner Lemieux said the clock is going to be positioned so you can see it. It will be coming in December. Director of Golf Guerrero said he could put up a temporary clock. Commissioner Lemieux said we need a sign to recognize all of the donors and there are about 12 or 15 sponsors. I like the sign at Wethersfield because it goes along with the sign that is on the Senior Men's club tee, the stone. Commissioner DeFazio said the solar panels are built into the face. Commissioner Lemieux said yes and you can probably use that space. My goal is to get the clock up and the sign up with the sponsors that have paid for the clock. The pad will be done this fall. You will be able to see it from the putting green and the starter shack. It is going on the back of the 1<sup>st</sup> tee. When you drive in, or if you are on the putting green you could see it. It is going to be on an angle.

### 3. Patrons Actions Towards Staff

Chairman Norton said a situation happened where a Staff member, Matt Tierney, was being harassed by a golfer using profanities and he was just doing his job. Matt then took the next step and approached the golfer saying that if I'm sorry if I offended you, I was just asking you to move this thing along. I was with Commissioner Senia. They pushed it to the right and lost their ball, proceeded to hit another ball and the person started yelling at Matt that him being there is going to affect my shot, etc. They made up, but we do have a policy dealing with this and warnings. It is time to remind people via an email list. It is uncalled for.

Commissioner DeFazio said he would like to commend the cart people for clean carts every day. Commissioner Lemieux said Don is top notch. Chairman Norton said all of them are top notch. They are a great staff. Commissioner DeFazio added that both counters are great too. Director of Golf Guerrero said Commissioner Green helps me out a lot including on the range. Commissioner DeFazio asked if it is a conflict of interest volunteering and being a Commissioner? Commissioner Lemieux asked if we could volunteer, but only for certain things. Not course improvement type things. How could we help? Commissioner DeFazio said he is all for it. The question has come up a couple of times last year, but if somebody sees me, or whomever doing something, I don't want it to come back and bite us in the butt. Commissioner Richards said there was a problem in the past with volunteers. Chairman Norton said what Commissioner DeFazio is alluding to is with volunteering, there is a union issue. Commissioner DeFazio said it brings up questions like is he paying for his balls, etc. What do you get out of it? Chairman Norton added it is no different than you (Commissioner DeFazio doing the Gooseonator). Director of Golf Guerrero said Commissioner Green is doing things around the golf course, I don't look at it as an agreement to volunteer. It is the same as when Don Demaine helps. When Golf Pro Bayram and his assistants use the range and all of the golf balls, he returns the favor and helps pick up those range balls, so I don't think it is a volunteer thing. I think it is more a part of our operations. When Commissioner Green is helping me he is not volunteering, it is part of how we operate daily. Commissioner Lemieux said I think you have to be careful because you can't say he is not a volunteer because other people will ask is he getting paid. If he is volunteering to help you that is great. Also, if there are other volunteer opportunities, let us know. Director of Golf Guerrero said we do not have a volunteer program. Commissioner Lemieux said maybe we could try it. Commissioner Senia said if Commissioner

Green is setting up a tournament, I could help move some of the carts. Director of Golf Guerrero said Commissioner Green is part of our tournament staff. Golf Pro Bayram said in my contract I'm responsible for tournament setup, tournament operations and volunteering. Commissioner Berger asked what kind of things can people volunteer for and help you? Golf Pro Bayram said they can volunteer to help me get balls on the driving range. There are tournaments and leagues where you can volunteer to handout scorecards. You can do that. It is different because I'm a contractor and I'm not taking somebody's job by doing that. It is separate in terms of picking weeds. Commissioner Senia said he could do those plastic setups for the junior league. Golf Pro Bayram said absolutely, it does not matter if you are a Commissioner, you are just helping. We want to work together as a team. We should all be helping each other. Director of Golf Guerrero said which we do, he doesn't consider my staff different from his staff, and I don't consider it his staff or my staff. Commissioner Lemieux said yes, a staff member is a staff member who gets paid. A volunteer is somebody who does not get paid who is helping.

Commissioner Berger said she called a couple of times on Friday and could hardly hear the person answering. Director of Golf Guerrero said that is something we need to look into. You are not the only one who has said something.

#### 4. Revenue Returning to Golf Course/ Long Term Planning

Chairman Norton said we spoke about this earlier. Director of Golf Guerrero will set up a meeting with Director of Finance Delaney, Town Manager Jayawickrema and Gerald Paradis on long term planning and CIP to whiteboard everything. I can send out the 5 year plan to everybody. We need to list everything from bunkers and cart paths to maybe even a new clubhouse. Bridges come into play and a lot of other things. It is looking down the road. We prioritize as we go along. Finance Director Delaney spoke about the pumphouse. Is it a band aid approach to something, how long is this going to last? Director of Golf Guerrero said this was the fix. Chairman Norton asked if we need new heads, or need to re-do the lines. Commissioner DeFazio said that is a work in progress. Director of Golf Guerrero said this expenditure was made so you don't have to fix whatever else.

Commissioner Lemieux said I'm looking to Director of Golf Guerrero to let us know when these meetings are happening like the September 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. I gathered that we have to be present at these Town Council meetings. We need to hear when something is coming up on the agenda so we can plan to be there. Chairman Norton said we should rally the troops (various clubs). Commissioner Senia said that the September 5<sup>th</sup> date was included in Superintendent Salvio's report. I picked up what Finance Director Delaney talked about earlier, we have to start pushing again for an Ordinance meeting. We have to push the Town Council to have an Ordinance meeting to have that discussion. I'm looking to Chairman Norton to push that. Commissioner DeFazio said they said they were going to change it. It was suggested to go to a 3 year average. Chairman Norton said we were down 500 rounds from the year before. The weather has been pretty good this year. We made money this month. Director of Golf Guerrero said last month we lost a lot of days because of the weather. Golf Pro Bayram said we were down rounds in July. It wasn't a great month due to the weather. Commissioner DeFazio said I don't mind less rounds as long as the money is there. Golf Pro Bayram said revenue per round is up \$3.

Commissioner Senia asked if the commission can put in a formal request to the Town Council, or to the Town Clerk to get an Ordinance meeting going? Chairman Norton said I don't see why

not. We could go to the Ordinance meeting, but we need to have something concrete in our hands on what we are requesting. This is what we are looking for. Tell me what you want to do and we can write something up amongst ourselves, edit it and make the presentation.

Commissioner Lemieux said Town Manager Jayawickrema had the idea of potentially having a 3 year rolling average. Golf Pro Bayram said he is worried that the golfers will start to realize that they are funding the town. We have so much, but other places are doing bigger, better things. Chairman Norton said we can't compete with Stanley we have our niche. Commissioner Lemieux said just by doing better budgeting in terms of better expenditures, we could have spent. Commissioner DeFazio asked how many thousands of dollars of capital improvement money went to cutting trees over the years and how is cutting a tree capital. Chairman Norton said that is operational. Those are operating expenses.

Golf Pro Bayram said what if you make CIP \$2 for 9 holes and \$4 for 18 holes and it pulled from the revenue. You would take it from the actual greens fee and bump up the capital that goes into this account. If the greens fee rate is \$30 and it is 18 holes, that is \$28 to revenue and the rest would be capital improvements, so make it \$6 in revenue and \$4 for CIP. Chairman Norton said we can do that for next year. Chairman Norton said we didn't spend the money. We could have transferred some of that money to a CIP. Golf Pro Bayram said I don't know if you can transfer it to a CIP. Commissioner DeFazio said we can't allow that to happen again.

#### 5. State Grant for Cart Barn

Director of Golf Guerrero said he spoke to Chris Edge a couple of months ago about doing something like that and he said to work with our grant writer, Jim Mahoney. Commissioner Lemieux said let's ask him to do something.

#### 6. Hole 12 Stair Railing

Commissioner Berger said some of the ladies won't use those stairs because of no railing. Chairman Norton said by code it needs to be a certain number of stairs. Commissioner Berger said it is two steps.

#### 7. Timberlin July FY23 P&L

Chairman Norton asked if we paid \$124k this month for the fertilizer piece? Director of Golf Guerrero said those are the things we order in October with a July 1<sup>st</sup> bill. Usually, it is paid in August. Chairman Norton said we did lose money. We can't afford to raise the rates more, or it will be cheaper for people to go someplace else. I'm hearing that our carts are too expensive. If we had a Special Revenue fund and didn't cover our costs, then we would still have to pay it back. Commissioner Berger asked if we had that Special Revenue fund where we set it aside, if we took from it, we have to put it back? Chairman Norton said no, when you lose money operationally you have to pay it back.

Commissioner Lemieux said shortly after COVID ended, but people were still skeptical and wanted to take a single cart, we wanted to charge them an additional fee. Are we still charging that? Director of Golf Guerrero said yes if they want their own cart. Commissioner Berger said no one is monitoring that. Director of Golf Guerrero said the Starter will tell me and we will charge them. Commissioner Lemieux said I was there when the Starter was asking people to double up and they told him that they won't do it. Apparently some of the reasons are they are

still concerned about respiratory illnesses and want to ride alone. If they ride alone, we have a cart policy that they have to pay. Director of Golf Guerrero said what if they say no, I'm not going to pay it. Commissioner Lemieux said then they have to double up. Commissioner DeFazio said or we refund them the money that they paid and they can exit the premises. Director of Golf Guerrero said I don't like to go to that extent. Commissioner Lemieux said your team is doing the right thing, they are asking people. Commissioner Berger said that the Starter did take the persons name when they said no. Commissioner DeFazio said this would not happen at Stanley. Director of Golf Guerrero said there are probably some fights my staff does not want to do. Commissioner Lemieux said I suggested to the Starter after these people left the area that he may want to discuss it with Director of Golf Guerrero. Director of Golf Guerrero said we will keep an eye out on it.

#### 8. Open Discussion

Commissioner Richards said he was absent at the last meeting, but watched the video. There was discussion about putting up a net between the driving range and hole 18. Has anything progressed from that? Director of Golf Guerrero said he has not done more research on it. Commissioner DeFazio said we were talking about from the driving range to the parking lot. Just behind the arborvitaes, to the left of the driving range. Chairman Norton added that someone in his league had his car hit in the parking lot by a stray golf ball. Commissioner DeFazio said every last spot up there is no parking now, is that because of it being a dangerous spot with the golf balls. Golf Pro Bayram said I think you need a net there. The commission agreed.

Commissioner Senia said hole number 2, left side, it is awful with all of the rocks. Something has to be defined saying if you are in the rock area, put it on grass. Golf Pro Bayram said people are out there recreationally and they will move it and not care. The Men's and Women's club we have it in the rules to move it. Commissioner DeFazio said from the rough line to the wall, one club length.

#### 9. Account Balances:

- Tee sign account (\$5,578.56)
- CIP Budget balance (\$), encumbrances (\$)

Director of Golf Guerrero said due to software issues he did not have the numbers, but will email them out tomorrow to everyone.

#### 10. Reports:

- Directors Report, to be given at meeting (see attached)
- Golf Pro Report, to be given at meeting (see attached)
- Superintendent Report (see attached)

#### 7. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Lemieux motioned to adjourn at 7:55 p.m.

Seconded by Commissioner Berger.

Those voting in favor: Commissioner Berger, Commissioner DeFazio, Commissioner Lemieux, Chairman Norton, Commissioner Richards, Commissioner Senia

Vote being: 6-0. MOTION CARRIED.

Submitted by,  
Alina Brown

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BERLIN TOWN CLERK

2023 AUG 31 AM 11:13

*Kathleen Wall*

BERLIN, CT.

## Director of Golf Report August 17, 2023

### 30-Day Recap of Operations and Benchmarks

- We had a decent month of operations for the Golf Course and Driving Range.
- The GPS Map of the golf course has been generated with boundaries for adult golfers, handicap golfers, and Cart Path Only. This process will be evolving and always changing.
- The GEO Fence system was turned on Tuesday, August 15.
- The patrons will have a learning curve when using a golf cart.
- The system will also help the staff monitor pace of play by time and position.
- The system will also help the staff during rainy days and keeping carts off the fairways.
- With school around the corner, we will need to replace some personnel in the golf shop. We began to interview for the Golf Shop counter and looking to hire at least 2 folks.
- Similar with the grounds crew, our High School helpers only have one week left of work.

### Looking Ahead/Goals

- Continue to work with Golf Commission on new, innovative ways to increase play and revenues.
- Working with Jerry and rest of maintenance crew to pay attention to small details such as cup cutting, green speed, rough length, and divot mix program.
- Get consistency with pace of play during normal play and for tournaments.

## Golf Pro Report



To: Golf Commission

From: Marc S. Bayram, PGA

**August 2023**

### 30-Day Recap of Operations and Benchmarks

- Detailed revenue comparison between 2022-2023 is attached.
- PGA Jr. League has ended for the Summer. We are in the process of putting together the Fall program. We had 90 total participants ages 7-17 over the summer.
- Our weekly Future Stars Academy has been averaging 15-20 participants. I have noticed a large increase in participation in every program which is amazing. A lot of this is credited to the programs we host, but also the parents being willing to have their children try a recreational activity like golf, in a safe environment. Once they are introduced to the game it is our job as Golf Professionals to keep them interested. I give a lot of credit to my staff of George Claffey, Geno Giancola, and Brandon Funari for executing successful programs.
- The Women & Wine golf clinics continues to popular on Mondays from 5pm-6pm. We have averaged 15 participants each week. Other courses like Lyman Orchards host similar clinics to ours and have much better facilities to do so. Participants enjoy the environment at Timberlin, and a large amount of credit should go to the coaches and Remzi and his staff. Introducing these new players to the game has helped create new members of our Women's Club and Lady Niners along with participants in our Mixed League.
- We hosted the Ryan Lee Junior Open for the 12<sup>th</sup> straight year. This event attracts some of the best junior golfers in the state of CT. With the help of the Lee family the event was a great success with 113 participants.
- Our 17U PGA Jr League team got 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the CT PGA Jr League Championship. We lost by a very slim margin against all the other 17U teams in the state. I am incredibly proud of all the players.
- We successfully hosted our largest outing of the year, the Ryan Lee Golf Classic. We had 256 participants over 2 shotgun starts. The event is very pleased with their experience at Timberlin and they raise a good amount of funds for the community. They also support our junior programs at Timberlin each year as well as the high school boys' team.
- Two soon-to-be 5<sup>th</sup> graders, Ari D'Anna and Ruby Michaud set up a lemonade stand outside the Golf Shop with 100% of the proceeds going to PGA Hope, an organization to give veterans the opportunity to learn golf. They raised \$500 total dollars for the organization and presented a check to the CT PGA. Both Ari and Ruby participate in our PGA Jr League program and are aspiring high school golfers. I want to recognize them for their community service.
- Coach Ferrero, Coach Barnes, Donna Bovee, and I have been working on a sign project for the driveway up to the clubhouse. The sign would feature both the Boys and Girls High School teams and their state championships won. Timberlin is the proud home of the Redcoats and we are looking to recognize all of the success the teams have had over the years.

### Successes and Challenges

- I got the chance to play 18 holes on 8/12 and was very impressed with the course

condition. The last time I played 18 holes at Timberlin was on Father's Day in June and some of the things that were a noticeable change were the green speeds being faster and smoother, bunkers well-maintained, and fairways in awesome shape. Unsure if there was a change to the operation of golf course maintenance, but if there was it was definitely a positive one. Great job Jerry and team.

- We successfully hosted the Ryan Lee Junior Open and U.S. Senior Amateur Qualifier on back-to-back days. These 2 events attracted some of the best Junior and Senior players in New England. Great job by the team in prepping the golf course for successful events.

#### **Customer Satisfaction**

- From my perception, it looks like customers are satisfied with their experience at Timberlin. I would recommend conducting a survey to customers to see what they like and what they recommend we improve.

#### **Looking Ahead/Goals**

- Advertise Fall Junior Programs as well as other instructional programs offered.
- Monitor staff and adjust their daily routines as deemed necessary.
- Continue to keep the tee sheet organized daily with the number of leagues, organizations, outings, and regular play traffic we get each day.
- Create fall outing schedule for Remzi.
- Continue updating the website and blast email marketing.
- Collect league 2<sup>nd</sup> half payments.
- Continue posting on social media.
- Host junior clinics.
- Successfully host outings in August.
- Send out Aeration email.

