

**Yarmouth Golf Enterprise Committee**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**May 10, 2021**

**Attending Committee Members:** Ellen Chapman, Ted Deckel, Frank Fields \*, Chris Hanson, Andrew Laird \* and Richard Simon

**Attending from the Golf Operations Department:** Scott Gilmore and Dennis Hoye

**Attending from the Public:** Jay Frapie \*, Andy Martin and Michael Meany

The virtual Zoom Meeting was called to order shortly after 6:00 PM.

1. As required by state open meeting law, a public notice was read and a roll call vote was conducted to authorize use of the online meeting method. All GEC members voted in the affirmative. The meeting was recorded and available for viewing <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7mTiKHAYo8>
2. Chairperson Chapman opened the meeting thanking former committee members Andy Martin and Beverly Arnett for their years of service on the GEC and welcomed newly selected committee members (\* above). An online orientation workshop is being organized for the new members (date TBD).
3. The minutes for the GEC's April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved as amended (for a correction of the footnote date) by unanimous rollcall vote. The committee also approved amendment of any prior month meeting minutes when the meeting had been recorded and posted for online viewing to include a sentence "The meeting was recorded and available for viewing [link address]".
4. The meeting was opened for public comments. Attending members of the public did not request time to address the GEC and the meeting continued.
5. The Directors report covered the following topics:
  - a) State mandated COVID restrictions for golf courses were removed effective Apr 30<sup>th</sup>. Bunker rakes, ball washers and water stations are being returned at both courses. Shared gas carts will be mandatory unless a private cart fee is paid. Carts with a roll down separator are available for golfers who are not in the same household or vaccination status.
  - b) The Grilles at both courses are open daily with a limited menu for both inside and outside seating. The Chez Hospitality Group liquor license is on the May 11<sup>th</sup> Board of Selectman agenda; expanded menu and beverage options will be added in upcoming weeks.
  - c) Spring aeration and fertilization has been completed and the turf is recovering nicely thanks in part to beneficial rainfall. Both courses are operating 7 days a week. The final stage of tree stump grinding should be completed by the end of May. The new 'tee-line' driving range mats have been installed and will be in use

by the end of May, once the sodded area around the mats is re-established.

d) Both courses have been fully converted to Club Prophet POS resulting in faster check-in and merchandise payment.

e) A 'Sound Policy' has been prepared to address a growing trend of golfers using Bluetooth speakers to play music on the course. The policy will be posted in the Pro-Shop, starter's station and gas carts. The GEC endorsed the policy with a unanimous rollcall vote.

f) Article 3 at the Spring Town Meeting on May 22<sup>nd</sup> will authorize funding expenses for the next fiscal year from golf revenues (video explaining Article 3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FPaU8KFvZ0> ).

g) The demand for golf remains high. Sales of annual passes remain strong (895 through May 10<sup>th</sup>) almost equal to 2020 total count with 6 weeks remaining in the fiscal year. Annual pass fees are already \$0.1m ahead of last year with a higher mix of unrestricted passes. The combination of increased greens fees, cart fees and pass revenues pushed fiscal year to date income above \$1.6 million over last year with expenses only slightly above last year.

h) The delivery of 20 new sets of rental clubs had been expected by mid-April; a revised delivery date has not been provided.

6. Article 24 at Spring Town Meeting, the citizen petition to authorize a feasibility study that would convert the Links course into an industrial solar farm, is opposed by both the Selectman and Finance Committee. Multiple members of the GEC have added their voices in opposition, supported by data that shows the financial benefits are overstated by a factor of 30 and the adverse impact on golf operations is understated as the demand for golf surges.
7. A discussion of potential changes to the 2022 Annual Pass options opened with a review of the 2021 Annual Pass comparison table that was part of the yearly formal Selectman approval process. At recent meetings, the alternative of charging a fee per round in addition to a (lower) annual pass fee or a restricted afternoon Bass River pass option had been brought up. The golf department plans to discuss these and other options with the NGF in upcoming weeks with a goal to accelerate the timing of the Selectman approval of the 2022 fee schedule by 2-3 months (early fall). It was noted that restricted options are typically incorporated to incent incremental play when demand is low but due to the surge in rounds played, there is little, if any, slack time on the tee sheet. This topic will be included in next month's GEC agenda.
8. A brief recap of Yarmouth's position on the DHY wastewater proposal was discussed. The golf department is focused on the immediate 2022 capital needs at Bayberry for Links irrigation & bunker restoration as well as undersized

clubhouse service and parking space.

9. The following GEC member concerns were covered:

a) Bayberry Hills (Red & White) bunkers will not be in peak season form until rakes are back in use and rainfall relents. Additional sand may be added to some bunkers as conditions warrant.

b) The golf department efforts to improve two way email communications with golfers is ongoing. When 2021 annual passes are sold, email addresses are being updated and a link to register an email is being added. A generic 'proshop' email link will be added to speed response to public questions.

c) After the Spring Town Meeting, the golf department will ask town officials for clarification of allocation methodology for fringe benefits and indirect costs consistent with best practices for state enterprise fund administration. Fringe benefit allocations appear to be significantly higher than the average to the town. Historically indirect costs have been offset by landscaping services provided by the Golf Dept. for Homer Park.

d) The GEC Chairperson joined Selectman Horgan during the interview phase of the selection process for new GEC committee members. Members whose terms expired were interviewed by Selectman Horgan only.

e) The number of 'Under 35' annual passes is ~15% of total passes, about three times higher than other towns. The golf department will provide analysis of this segment (residency of new pass holders, renewal rate, full pass rate at age out)

10. The GEC will meet next on June 14<sup>th</sup> at 6PM.

A motion to adjourn was accepted by unanimous rollcall vote about 7:45 PM.