

CITY OF NORTH SALT LAKE
EAGLEWOOD GOLF COURSE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 16, 2020

FINAL

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

PRESENT: Council Member Brian Horrocks
Committee Member Roger Graves
Committee Member Court Huish
Committee Member John Logan
Committee Member Karen Mills
Committee Member Ryan Curtis

STAFF PRESENT: Ken Leetham, City Manager; Janice Larsen, Finance Director; Brent Moyes, Golf Course Director, Linda Horrocks, City Recorder.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mayor Len Arave.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ken Leetham addressed the committee, introduced City staff present, and then invited the committee to introduce themselves and share a bit about their various backgrounds.

Mr. Leetham distributed paper copies of his PowerPoint presentation for that evening.

2. DISCUSSION OF POPOSED OPERATING PLANS AND BUDGET FOR FY2021

Mr. Leetham referred to the Golf Course Advisory Committee and their recommendation that the City hire a Golf Course General Manager. With that suggestion, he put together some details about the areas for which this position would have responsibility, including: managing all golf department employees, having oversight of all business units, financing, budgeting and fees, overseeing new initiatives, building repairs, marketing, social media, new customer outreach, and image improvement. It was also recommended that performance would be measured through revenue enhancement.

Roger Graves stated that the typical PGA professional did all of their planning, marketing, and long-range planning during the winter, and stated that the Eaglewood Golf Course was already months behind for 2020. He said you cannot overestimate staffing, and that they needed to be quality individuals at all levels. Mr. Graves stated that everything was underperforming, and staffing was the key to successful operations all around.

John Logan stated that Eaglewood was low on staffing compared to everybody else. He stated that the best golf course around is Mountain Dell, but they charged a lot more. It was pointed out that Mountain Dell was also a 36-hole course. Court Huish asked if the City was handcuffed by a rule of a 40-hour work week. Mr. Leetham stated that the department head/general manager would be exempt and not limited to the 40 hours.

Mr. Leetham stated that increased staffing levels would allow having a golf pro presence at all times (110 hour demand). There would be increased teaching and league development, a decrease in accumulation of comp time/overtime, more long-range planning, better tracking, more accountability to the City Council, improved oversight, responsiveness and accountability in all of the City's business units, and better management and training of all City employees at the Course.

Court Huish asked who this general manager would report to. Ken Leetham said directly to the City Manager, but would definitely receive input from this oversight committee.

Roger Graves said the City should take advantage of the expertise on this committee and use it as a resource. He added that since it was an oversight committee, he would like to see it as a more proactive, supportive group. He stated that recently John Logan went over and helped at the course and cleaned up the front of the clubhouse because it needed to be done. He suggested not just branding this body as “watchdogs” but a body that would contribute to the success of golf operations.

Ken Leetham brought up other initiatives that could be considered by the golf course committee and new general manager including: aggressive marketing, ambitious customer outreach, new golf software – ForeUp (currently being incorporated), building and roof repair, additional wedding revenues, corporate memberships, etc.

Mr. Leetham passed out financial information including proposed financial and pricing changes at the golf course.

Brent Moyes stated that Eaglewood’s biggest obstacle to rates was the close proximity of the Bountiful Ridge Golf Course. He said they had raised their cart rates, and were planning to raise their golf rates as well, but that they were currently level with Eaglewood for green fees. Mr. Moyes then added that compared to the SLC courses, Eaglewood’s fees were quite a bit less.

Roger Graves said the \$2 increase was a good amount of an increase, but that residents in Davis County were very sensitive to rate increases, so they did not want to suggest anything higher.

John Logan said he thought the Eaglewood rates should be increased a little bit more and to give some flexibility, and be able to give discounts. People like to feel like they get a deal, and he used the example of offering a resident rate.

Ken Leetham asked if the City’s fee resolution should be more vaguely written, and instead of requiring City Council approval for every little amount, build in some flexibility. Brent Moyes said there was currently some leeway, and that they did do some negotiating with tournaments, etc.

Roger Graves stated that the most popular tee times could be priced higher, and slower times could be priced lower – using dynamic pricing.

Court Huish said it was important to give more flexibility to the people running the course so they can do what they need to do - experiment, try things, and learn without being totally limited.

Roger Graves stated that if the course did raise rates, the public/golfers would expect better service. Club fittings lead to more equipment sales, professional lessons, more men’s/women’s association events, and with more staffers, hopefully, Eaglewood could implement some of that.

Ken Leetham stated that he and Janice Larsen were the midst of the annual budgeting process. For the budget, he said they were proposing increases in cart fees, rounds, range fees, corporate

memberships, concessions and banquet increases. Operating expenses were also listed. (*Financial information handouts to be included with the record.*) He reported that staff used a Municast module to make the projections.

Ken Leetham then said that the Coronavirus issues had created an unpredictable and unsure climate this year and that staff was looking at a way to keep the clubhouse closed and not serving food in the café. One suggestion was that golfers could prepay, or could pay using ApplePay and swipe their credit cards outside on the patio.

Roger Graves mentioned some golf guidelines other courses were using to limit crowds during the Coronavirus pandemic, including limiting the number of golfers, such as four at a time, in the pro shop. He then said Eaglewood needed to advertise heavily that it was open – as many other courses were closed during this time.

Ken Leetham recommended that the committee make a motion relating to the fees to pass along to the City Council at their upcoming meeting.

Roger Graves moved to adopt the fee schedule as written but with the flexibility to investigate a dynamic fee scale, and that the fee change should authorize City staff to use dynamic pricing if they felt it was the right thing to do, including a resident discount.

Council Member Horrocks suggested possibly including a percentage of plus/minus for the fee schedule.

John Logan suggested the City go with the 36 and 18 for surge pricing and perhaps modify it for annual memberships, or approve Ken Leetham's proposed rates, with a 10% flexibility.

Roger Graves made a substitute motion and moved to adopt the fee schedule as proposed with authority given to City Staff to implement dynamic pricing as needed and with the ability to establish a competitive annual trail fee for people utilizing their own golf carts on Eaglewood Golf Course. John Logan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by Ryan Curtis, Roger Graves, Court Huish, John Logan and Karen Mills.

3. OPEN DISCUSSION BY COMMITTEE

There was some discussion about terms of the committee. Court Huish and Ryan Curtis were selected to serve the initial four-year terms, and Karen Mills, Roger Graves, and John Logan would serve initial two-year terms.

Karen Mills moved to nominate John Logan as Committee Chairman and Ryan Curtis as Vice-Chairman. Roger Graves seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by Ryan Curtis, Roger Graves, Court Huish, John Logan and Karen Mills.

Ken Leetham reminded the committee of future meeting dates, March 25th and April 1st.

Council Member Horrocks mentioned the priority to update the clubhouse, and Ken Leetham stated that he is putting together the RFP for the work to be done.

Roger Graves asked Ken Leetham for an update on the food services/concessionaire. Mr. Leetham said he met with the concessionaire the previous Friday. There was some disagreement with the concessionaire about hours of operation and they looked at posting the hours of operation and that they would have to remain open during those hours. The City also requested that the concessionaire

allow the City to contract with a separate professional wedding planning company. Mr. Leetham said he personally thought it would take a professional group to increase the reputation and quality of receptions held at Eaglewood. He added that he had been speaking to a group who was looking at the wedding side of the Eaglewood business.

Ryan Curtis asked about the projections passed around and if the committee was privy to that information. Ken Leetham said they were, and that may be a good discussion for the next meeting.

Court Huish moved to recommend to the City Council that staff advertise and hire an Eaglewood Golf Course General Manager. Ryan Curtis seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by Ryan Curtis, Roger Graves, Court Huish, John Logan and Karen Mills.

Court Huish then asked about expectations and/or marching orders so that when the GM is hired, those are already outlined. John Logan agreed that they should outline the major problems, create a grand plan, then it was staff's job to implement those. He said that should be on the next agenda.

Council Member Horrocks asked about the hiring process of a GM. Ken Leetham responded that it would require Council approval, so his plan would be to present the finalist to the Council. He said he could also bring him/her or other candidates before this committee to review if they would prefer. Court Huish stated that the candidates should be brought to the committee.

Mayor Arave then addressed the committee. He stated that this committee was very important, and yes, the golf staff would be accountable to the Oversight Committee. He added that timing was important and that he wanted to get the whole process started, and the quicker, the better. The Mayor said he was hoping for creativity and suggestions from the committee. He said they would probably have some things to try and some that may not work, but that they would learn. He said government moved slowly, and if the committee was active and involved, it would help things move more quickly. The Mayor stated that nothing would be written in stone and that the committee was made up of creative people with good ideas. Some things could be implemented quickly and some things would take more time. He said he had always liked the blank canvas approach, and that there were a lot of long-term objectives the City wanted to accomplish.

4. ADJOURN

Roger Graves moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 pm. Karen Mills seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 pm.

The foregoing was approved by the Eaglewood Golf Course Oversight Committee on Tuesday, November 10, 2020 by unanimous vote of all members present.



City Recorder