

**Val Halla Board of Trustees**

**Wednesday, May 12, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.**

**Town Hall – Council Chambers**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Steve Sloan, Judy Ingraham, John Zappia, Rick Scott and Norene Ward

**Absent:** Bill Putnam and Tim Moody

**Others Present:** Brian Bickford, Golf Pro, Toby Young, Golf Course Superintendent, Alex Kimball, Finance Director, Bill Shane, Town Manager, Bill Stiles, Council Liaison and Cynthia Stennett.

**I. Welcome & Introduction of Guests** –Steve Sloan called the meeting to order at 6:00 and welcomed and thanked everyone for attending.

**II. Public Comment** – None

**III. Val Halla Golf Association** –In Mark Sundermann’s absence, there was no Val Halla Golf Association report this month.

**IV. Green’s Committee Report** – In the absence of any members of the Greens Committee, there was no Green’s Committee Report this month.

**V. Approval of April 14, 2010 Minutes** – Steve Sloan asked if everyone had an opportunity to review the April 14, 2010 minutes in their packets. Seeing that there were no corrections, additions or deletions, a motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Norene Ward and seconded by Judy Ingraham.

**VOTE: UNANIMOUS**

**VI. Review of Revenue Reports** – Alex reported that April had been a good month and stated that a lot of ground had been made up with golf memberships and indicated that this April is behind about \$4,500 from the prior year, which he felt was not a significant number that could be made up easily. He also stated that he felt there was a pretty good chance of hitting the budget number of \$236,980 or coming very close to it. Alex also reported that Greens Fees and Golf Cart numbers are up and stated that he felt the Golf Cart number was a direct result of the cart paths. Alex indicated that he felt that some of it was because the course was opened earlier, but that he felt that a good portion was due to the fact that players could use carts.

Alex stated that overall there were about \$20,000 more in revenues for this April. He brought the Board’s attention to the Full Time Wage line item being less than last year and indicated that it is simply because there were three pay periods in April of last year. He also stated that the overall wage figure comes in pretty much the same as last year.

Alex stated that he felt that overall April was a month that did about \$20,000 better than the same time period of last year, even though April of last year was felt to have been a pretty good month.

The bottom line is the fact that things are about \$43,000 better than the prior year and Alex stated that it is becoming an increasingly “bankable” number. Alex indicated that is a very solid increase over the prior year and a step toward Val Halla achieving a true break-even status which is a good, strong step in the right direction. Alex did state that the bottom line number for a net profit showing a net loss of \$93,500 could improve slightly by the end of the year.

John Zappia asked if Alex believed the weather had played a significant role and Alex indicated that he felt the weather had played a role, but that the new cart paths and increased memberships and expenses being stable all played a role. Steve stated that he agreed that all of those things had helped to contribute to the numbers and indicated that all the hard work being done by Brian, Toby and their respective staffs had also helped. Judy asked about the “Red Zone” specials which Brian had been offering and the Board agreed that they had helped bring in players.

## **VII. New Business:**

### **a. Business Reports:**

#### **I. Department Reports:**

##### **1. Brian Bickford – Pro Shop**

Brian brought the Board’s attention to the handout that he had prepared from Golf Gopher and stated that it was slightly different as he gathered his data on the basis of a golf season. He told the Board that the data ran from opening day to May 10<sup>th</sup> of this year comparing data from 2008 through May of 2010.

Brian reviewed the data in the handout with the Board that indicated the three year comparisons for Greens Fees, Member Rounds, Total Rounds, Total Rounds per Day, Carts and the Driving Range.

Brian indicated that there had been a 10% increase in Member Rounds over last year and stated that Overall Total Rounds are up by about 17%. He brought the Board’s attention to the Cart usage numbers, which are up significantly by 41% and the numbers for the Range revenue is up about \$2,000 from last year.

Brian stated that there had been a slight decrease in Greens fees dollars per round at \$17.23, which he felt was attributable to the “Red Zone” specials and that overall there were about \$2,000 more in revenues that

had come in.

He also stated that people are getting used to the new Cart Memberships and those numbers are pulling up a bit.

Norene stated how pleased she was to see that Brian was able to pull some good data/numbers from Golf Gopher. She also credited Toby with having the Course in such good shape that people want to play there.

Steve asked how things were looking for new members and Brian indicated that there were 94 new members and there are just a little over 400 new members presently. Brian stated that we will be ahead of last year. Brian also stated that the people who took advantage of the “Risk Free” Membership leaves uncollected income in that area around \$10,000, which he indicated was the cost of that program. He also reported that he still has about \$10,000 outstanding for the folks that took advantage of the Fall Option who still need to pay for the second half.

John asked if that was an automatic payment and Brian indicated unfortunately it was not as some of the credit card information had changed and they had not been able to charge those folks on their cards. Brian did indicate, however, as these folks came in, he was getting their updated information.

Brian told the Board about the Constant Contact Comment Box and reviewed the information contained in the handout. Brian felt that there were some good suggestions and he will continue to work on them. He also stated that, to date, there have been 1,066 people who have signed up to receive the newsletter and he reviewed each of the categories with the number of individuals who were interested in receiving specific newsletters with the Board.

Brian brought the Board’s attention to the list of contributors for the Junior Room and reported that they are fast approaching \$4,000 figure.

Brian also reported on the success of the Wine & Nine and Mimosa & Nine programs and reported on how rapidly they had filled with on-line registrations. Brian stated that he worries about meeting the demand of these programs and he stated that he felt these programs had brought in about 6 – 9 new members.

Bill Shane asked Brian if, as it appeared, there were 52 +/- members who did not return from last year and Brian stated that he felt there would be between 30 – 35 members not returning this year for a variety of reasons.

## **2. Toby Young - Course**

Toby reported that the greens were aerated only on the spots that really needed it this year, concentrating on areas that had been affected by snow mold and heavy traffic areas. He indicated that he had been working on trying to get the grass to germinate in those areas and explained the process in detail to the Board. Toby also stated that they will begin rolling greens tomorrow as the weather prediction is for rain on Friday.

Toby indicated that Portland Country Club had a very tough winter with significant damage occurring. He indicated that he will be adjusting the “cut” on the greens to get them closer to what they were last year. Toby also stated that he will be getting the hydro-seeding equipment tomorrow and plans on beginning that process on Monday. He reported that they had roto-tilled all of those areas to prep them.

Toby reported that they are getting close to having the irrigation system ready and will be fixing a couple more heads in the fairway. He told the Board that they are taking plugs from the greens and using them to repair the fairways and stated that he had opted not to do the Primo Proxy Spray as he had reported at the last meeting as he felt it was not the right thing to do.

He reported that the rough of the 1<sup>st</sup> hole will be repaired and he explained that process. Toby addressed the issue of the 17<sup>th</sup> hole and old #8 and stated that quite a bit of work had been done in those areas. Toby also stated that the monies that were going to be spent on sand for the greens was used to purchase some trees and he told the Board that they had added some more flowers and shrubs along the wall.

Toby stated that he would like to put the project at old #2 on hold, along the rock wall, for a while so that the money can be invested in the 17<sup>th</sup> hole and allow them to build another rock wall.

Toby told the Board about an exciting new fertilizer product that he is using that he feels works very well and is very highly thought of by other golf professionals. He indicated that he has also begun to make his own fertilizer, which is much more cost effective and should result in a \$4,700 savings.

Toby reported that they sprayed the greens today, which begins their every two-week spray program. Bill Shane asked about whether or not they should be applying lime and Toby indicated that it should be done in the Fall of this year.

Steve asked how things were going with ball marks and Toby reported that he had just fixed 38 on the first tee alone that morning. Toby indicated

that he felt it was an education/etiquette issue.

Steve asked Toby if he found the leak on #6 and Toby reported that he had and that it had been addressed. Steve suggested that the Stormwater Retention Pond needed to be cleaned out and Toby indicated he would take care of it. Toby also asked that the trees that are usually bought by the Association be purchased in the Spring rather than the Fall as the quality of the trees is better.

- b. Other New Business** – Bill Shane told the Board about his trip to South Carolina and the experience he had playing golf down there. The Starter gave him a term time card with four holes and he stated that it really made him conscious of his pace of play and asked if this was something that could be done at Val Halla. There was discussion amongst the Board members and Brian indicated that he will discuss this with his staff and report back at the next meeting.

**VIII. Old Business** – Steve asked about the Junior Room and Brian gave the Board an update. Judy asked if donations can still be done on-line and Brian indicated that they can be done in the Pro Shop.

Steve reported that the Twilight League is full and he needs one more in the Senior Twilight League.

**IX. Final Public Comment** – None.

**X. Adjournment, next meeting, Wednesday, June 9, 2010, 6:00 p.m. in the Junior Room at Val Halla.**

There was a motion made by Norene Ward and seconded by Judy Ingraham to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

**VOTE: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia A. Stennett  
Recording Secretary