

**Val Halla Board of Trustees**

**Wednesday, March 10, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**

**Town Hall – Council Chambers**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Steve Sloan, Tim Moody, Rick Scott, Judy Ingraham and John Zappia

**Absent:** Bill Putnam and Norene Ward

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

**I. Welcome & Introduction of Guests** –Steve Sloan called the meeting to order at 6:00 and welcomed and thanked everyone for coming as well as introducing Judy Ingraham as the newest Board Member to the Board and welcomed Jack McCarthy to the meeting.

**II. Approval of February 10, 2010 Minutes** – Steve Sloan asked if everyone had an opportunity to review the February 10, 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 John Zappia and seconded by Rick Scott.

**VOTE: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**III. Val Halla Golf Association** –Mark Sundermann reported that the committees have met and have published their final schedules. He also reported that the Executive Committee would be meeting shortly and that he anticipated that there would be discussion about keeping the GHIN Only membership.

**IV. Green's Committee Report** – In the absence of any members of the Greens Committee, Mark indicated that he was looking for a Chairman for the Green's Committee and Steve Sloan indicated that a name had been forwarded to him via e-mail.

**V. Public Comment** – None

**VI. Review of Revenue Reports** – Alex reported that there was almost nothing to report at this time of year and that the figures were similar to the same time last year with minimal expenses and no real revenue being generated.

Alex did state, however, that with the weather conditions that had been experienced, he did want to caution the Board about any early opening and stated that “just because we can open, doesn't mean we should” due to the fact that monies would be spent to open and there would not be a lot of revenues coming in. Steve indicated that Nonesuch had

been packed over the past weekend and he felt sure that the “early bird had caught the worm” insofar as revenue generation was concerned. Brian stated that he and Toby had opened up the range over the past weekend and had let the membership know that the temporaries were open. He reported between 110-120 folks had used the facilities. Bill Shane reiterated that he felt that a lot more work needs to be done before the course will be ready to open.

Steve asked about increasing cart fees in June and asked for clarification. Brian indicated that he thought it was better to increase cart fees at the beginning of the year and stated that the revenue projections he presented two to three months ago had indicated that something would need to be done in order to bring revenues up and reminded the Board that they had given him permission to do whatever he felt was necessary in order to do so.

## **VII. New Business:**

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

#### **i. Department Reports:**

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

- a. Brian brought the Board’s attention to the packet of information he had prepared for his report beginning with the proposed Weekly “Red Zone” specials which he would like to put on the website and reviewed the suggested timeframes with the Board. He stated that he can send out about 800 e-mails through the Constant Contact program that the Town is currently using and stated that the specials are for members and non-members alike. Steve stated that he thought it was a great idea. Brian also stated that the certificate on page two is an attempt to try and bring in repeat players. There was some discussion about rotating the specials on a weekly basis and Tim asked if any thought had been given to a Town of Cumberland league. Brian asked the Board if they had any other ideas to let him know.

Brian reviewed with the Board in great detail the “Risk Free” Credit sheet enclosed in their packets and indicated that he had currently taken \$4,815 in discounts. He also stated that any names with an “x” beside their name were those individuals that he anticipated would rejoin automatically. A recommendation was made by the Board to Brian

that he contact these individuals by letter. Bill Shane indicated that he felt that two-thirds of the top portion of names would not have come back to Val Halla if they hadn't had this option available to them. Brian indicated that he will aggressively go after the bottom portion of names.

Brian informed the Board that he has accepted the position of Recreation Director for the Town of Cumberland with the Recreation Department and Val Halla Golf & Recreation Center staff reporting directly to him, as detailed in the attached organizational chart enclosed in the Board packet. He reassured the Board that he will be present and overseeing programs at Val Halla. Bill Shane stated that he was very excited about combining the two Departments and that he felt there would be a cost savings of \$26,000 annually and added that this change brings a merging of Val Halla and the Recreation Department. He assured the Board that they are actively pursuing a "second in command" for the Recreation Department. Bill Shane stated that the recommendation for Brian to assume the duties of Recreation Director will go before the Town Council on April 12<sup>th</sup>. Bill Stiles stated that he felt that Brian was very comfortable delegating responsibilities and following up afterward to make sure things are running smoothly. Brian informed the Board that Toby will fall under the auspices of Public Services and will report directly to Chris Bolduc.

Brian brought the Board's attention to the draft memo he had prepared on Cross-Over Tee Times, which detailed some background including pros and cons and the recommendations on Cross-Over Tee Times. Brian stated that he felt that no Cross-Over Tee Time was necessary on Saturdays and also reminded the Board that no cross-overs are done during the Spring and the Fall. Steve recommended trying it for the month of June and Tim stated that he felt Brian should take a "wait and see" approach to starting Cross-Overs.

Brian stated that there will be food available at Open House and there will be a \$10 fee for dinner

and entertainment, provided by Danny Merrill, afterward beginning at 5:00 PM.

Brian stated that the Portland Golf Expo was ok this year, not great and Tim stated that he felt it had been in decline for years. Brian also stated that there would be a club liquidation sale at Val Halla around the first of April where 18 pros would be coming with old and new stock available for purchase. He also reported that they will be accepting MSGA vouchers and all proceeds will go to the MSGA scholarship fund.

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

Toby reported that the course looks good and that there had not been much ice this year until around the end of January. He reported his only concern is some wind desiccation from exposure. Toby stated that the greens that usually suffer the worst are the best ones this year because instead of ice they had snow.

Toby reported that Storey Bros. will wait until after the weekend rains to do the finish work which includes loaming the edge of the cart paths and then they will rent a paver and reclaim all the paths. After that is done, Toby indicated that will seed those areas.

Toby also reported that he has a couple of staff starting next week and that they will begin the clean-up process

Bill Shane stated how excited he is about the cart paths and how much he feels it will improve play. He also stated that he wanted the Board to know that the Portland Water District has approached the Town about putting the old water pump station up for sale and they are in the process of getting it appraised, which should take about a year. He stated that they have offered to sell the town the easement as part of the 12th hole as a piece or in its entirety.

Steve asked if there had been any trees that came

down during the recent storm and Toby indicated that Public Works has cleaned up some trees that were already slated to come down and there had been a few that came down during the recent storm, which fell into the woods.

Bill Shane reported that Charlie Sparrow had indicated that the past Sunday had been the biggest day he had all winter long and that he wants to continue to do the Sunday brunches through the golf season up to 11:00 a.m. Bill Shane reported that he has developed a regular crowd on Sundays.

Steve asked Toby if the weather held, would they be able to open early and Toby indicated that if the weather remained as it has been, the course could open, but he was not going to count on it.

Bill Shane asked Toby when the aeration had been done and Toby indicated that Frank Smith had done it last Fall.

**b. Other New Business** – Steve brought up the issue of the Val Halla Golf Association computer and asked Mark to address it insofar as the Val Halla Golf Association's position on moving the location. Brian stated that he felt if the computer was put in the hallway, a lot of players would forget to post their scores. He also mentioned the fact that Charlie does benefit from people waiting in the Viking Grill area as while people are waiting to post their scores, they patronize his facilities. Brian did state that he had not heard Charlie mention anything about moving the computer for about two months. Mark did state that the Association was thinking of investing in a better cabinet so they would like to know what Charlie's plans were. Steve indicated that he would like to see the computer stay where it currently is and Bill Shane indicated that he felt it would be a detriment to Charlie's business to move the location. Tim stated that Charlie would not gain any additional table room by moving the computer. Steve stated that it was the position of the Board that they were opposed to moving the computer and that it should stay in the same spot as it currently is located.

There was some discussion about the Jr. Golf Room still being on track.

Toby stated that they were getting some quotes on the markers for the sprinkler heads and asked if the Board had any preference in how they wanted them to look. It was decided that they should be "cheap and simple".

**VIII. Old Business** – Bill Stiles stated that they had tabled the issue of the tennis court project at the last Council meeting because the presenter did not get enough support to bring it before the Town Council until at least the next meeting. Bill Shane stated that when he looked at the area again, he had some concerns about the number of feet of trees that were not showing in the aerial photos. He also expressed concern about drainage issues.

**IX. Adjournment, next meeting, Wednesday, April 14, 2010, 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall in the Council Chambers.**

There was a motion made by Tim Moody and seconded by John Zappia to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

**VOTE: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia A. Stennett  
Recording Secretary