

Val Halla Board of Trustees

Wednesday, October 12, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. to 6:55 p.m.

Council Chambers – Town Hall

Meeting Minutes

Present: Tim Moody, John Zappia, Bill Putnam, Steve Sloan, Judy Ingraham, Paul Dugas, Rick Scott and Norene Ward

Absent: Michael Perfetti, Council Liaison

Others Present: Bill Shane, Town Manager, Alex Kimball, Finance Director, Brian Bickford, Director of Recreation/Golf, Toby Young, Golf Course Superintendent, Bill Stiles, Council Liaison, George Turner, Council Liaison and Cynthia Stennett

I. Welcome & Introduction of Guests –Tim Moody called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and thanked everyone for attending and extended the Board’s deepest condolences to Norene on the recent loss of her husband.

II. Approval of August 17, 2011 Minutes – Tim Moody asked if everyone had an opportunity to review the August 17, 2011 minutes in their packets. Seeing that there were no corrections, additions or deletions, a motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Steve Sloan and seconded by John Zappia.

VOTE: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

III. Val Halla Golf Association – Steve Sloan expressed the Association’s thanks and appreciation for everything that Toby and his crew has done on the course this year. He also extended the Association’s appreciation to Brian and Bill Shane for their efforts, and those of their staff, and stated that the Association was looking forward to 2012. He reported that the Association’s Annual Awards Banquet, with a mixed scramble, will be held on October 23rd and invited everyone to attend.

IV. Public Comment – None.

Review of Revenue Reports – Alex stated that the data from the last two months is very similar to that of the same period of time from previous years. He did bring the Board’s attention to two particular areas of concern. The first is the drop by about \$11,000 in Golf Membership monies, which he feels could be a timing issue with membership renewals and the second area of concern is that of Clubhouse Expenses. Alex also reported that the Clubhouse Expenses are down to the bare minimum and indicated that the Cart Payments line, under Course Expenses, is over from last year, which reflects the payments for the new electric carts. Alex attributed this increase to the larger payments for the carts and the fact that the payments are now through Wells Fargo Bank, which is much more prompt in issuing bills than the previous biller. He did state that all of this should even out over time.

Alex also brought the Board's attention to the line titled Sport Programs, which includes the revenue from sports programs previously run through the Recreation Department, and explained that these monies mostly come in during the Spring, although the expenses don't show up until August or September. Alex indicated that he felt Val Halla would still show a profit, but that it will be reduced by incoming expenses and indicated that this is the way the Recreation Department has run for a long time with the income in one year and the expenses the next year. He stated that on the surface it appears that things are trending a little worse than last year and stated that the massive changes that have appeared previously at Val Halla are rapidly becoming a thing of the past and indicated that he feels the October numbers will be very interesting, particularly once all of the membership monies come in. Alex also stated that, given the raise in rates, he is hopeful that those numbers will be up from last year and indicated that overall he feels things are remaining stable.

V. New Business:

a. Business Reports:

I. Department Reports:

1. Brian Bickford – Pro Shop

Brian stated that it has been a tumultuous October, particularly in terms of the weather, because of the number of times the course has been closed.

Brian indicated that he has posted the Risk Free Calculations a bit earlier this year on the website so that folks could make their decision by either the 15th or 17th about whether or not to join for next year. He stated that the total amount of Risk Free monies is estimated to be around \$22,000 and indicated that he expects a loss of between \$3,000 - \$4,000 in revenues from those individuals who are going back to Freeport Country Club.

Brian reported that he had just been informed of the fact that Dunegrass has recently been leased by Harris Golf.

He also reported that today the Greely Golf Team had a 9-hole scramble and cookout to finish up the season and reported that things are strong around both the Junior Programs and the Wine & Nine Programs.

Tim asked Brian if he remembered what the new member number was for last year and Brian reported that currently there are 28 new members, which is less than the 32 from last year. Brian stated that he had heard comments about single men players not finding others to play with when visiting Val Halla, which could account for losing some memberships. Because of this fact, he indicated that he is looking to start a group for this category of players for next year where they can be paired up with other players that play on a more random basis.

Brian also reported that Val Halla had lost Paul Adler on August 1st, which is causing him to analyze exactly what Val Halla needs in terms of an Assistant Golf Professional going forward and stated that he will be meeting with Executive Director of the PGA for the New England Section in order to write up a job description sometime within the next couple of weeks.

Bill Putnam asked Brian if he had any data on how many one year members there were and Brian indicated that he has not tracked that data, but was willing to do so.

Judy asked how folks were informed of the Risk Free Credit due to them and Brian indicated that he was going to send out e-mails from the new Active Golf system. Bill Putnam asked how many people were on the list and Brian indicated that he believed there were about 70.

There was some discussion about scheduling of tournaments and Steve indicated that he felt that Brian should definitely be involved because of his knowledge of what goes into running a tournament and assured the Board that this will be addressed over the Winter. Bill Putnam stated that he feels that the tournament schedule is what draws many people to Val Halla.

2. Toby Young – Course

Toby reported that Public Works will be doing crushing and hauling next week for the cart path on #13 for work starting the first week of November.

Toby stated that the new trees planted on the course were originally to go to Twin Brook from a nursery going out of business in northern Maine. Since Twin Brook was unable to use those trees as they only plant shade trees, Val Halla was able to get a ginko tree and three river birches to plant.

Toby indicated that he would like to be involved in any tournament scheduling and decision-making going forward. There was some discussion about when Toby would be punching the greens and how that affects tournament events and he indicated that he usually punches them the week after Labor Day and Bill Putnam asked about the actual procedure and how it is done.

Norene stated that everyone likes the new ladies tee on the 2nd hole and asked if the tee box could be moved backward instead of being moved back to the old spot.

Bill Stiles asked Toby about the feedback from the e-mail he had sent around asking about how everyone felt about where he had placed the islands in the bunker between #13 and #15. Toby stated he had only got a couple of responses and it was now too late in the season to do anything. Bill Putnam stated that he did not see something like that as a Board decision. However, he did comment that he felt that there were things being done at Val Halla that changed the golf course and stated he feels those are a Board decision; i.e., things that make the course more difficult and harder to play.

Old Business – Bill Stiles clarified the fact that the Council has adjusted the Bylaws to include the proper number of electees and to allow two council representatives to serve on this Board.

VI. Final Public Comment – None.

VII. Adjournment, next meeting, Wednesday, November 9, 2011, 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Town Hall. Tim indicated that he will be unable to attend the next two meetings due to upcoming surgery so Rick Scott will be stepping in to chair the meetings. A motion to adjourn was made by Steve Sloan and seconded by Rick Scott. Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

VOTE: MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia A. Stennett
Recording Secretary