

# COLUMBUS GOLF AUTHORITY MINUTES

## MAY 28, 2025

Chairman William Roundtree called the meeting to order.

Friends of Columbus Golf Chairman Bruce Bacon was welcomed by the chairman and asked to brief the Authority on the 501c3 charity's mission and how it plans to impact public golf in Columbus.

Bacon said the tax-exempt non-profit has a 5-member board and was founded with the purpose of helping junior golf, especially with low-income residents, veterans and, through teaching programs, creating an opportunity to curb violence within communities. It will handle fund-raising and donations that will be used to help sponsor programs, clinics and tournaments for junior golfers, build character, introduce problem-solving practices and decision-making skills, and generally build a positive influence on life through golf.

Funds will only be available for public facilities promoting or providing golf opportunities. Initially, goals include establishing a web site, expand the board membership, educate the community and establish support groups, pursue grants and launch programs that will lead to goal fulfillment.

Chairman Roundtree said he and Director of Golf Jim Arendt will seek information from the city's attorney as to how the public courses within the Authority's governance may work with and benefit from the charity's benevolence.

Minutes of the April 22, 2025 meeting of the Authority were approved by unanimous vote upon a motion by Tommy Nobles, seconded by Ken Crumpler.

Superintendent Steve Brown said work continues to focus primarily on tree removal and trimming required after the recent tornado that struck Bull Creek Golf Course. Three inmate work crews are working each day on that

project, and the city has been a great help, including hauling off logs and debris. But he said it likely will continue to be necessary to have log and debris removal assistance for the rest of the year.

Brown also said the city's foresters are assessing trees at Oxbow Creek Golf Course, where as many as five trees already need to be removed.

The good news is that the new equipment for the golf courses, some on order for more than two years, has finally arrived in full.

Aerification of Bull Creek's West Course will begin next Monday, with the East to be aerified in July. Oxbow will be aerified during June, as will the Godwin Creek greens, he said.

The position of inmate guard for Oxbow Creek has now been posted, with the previous guard still recovering from a stroke and unable to qualify for return to the position at this time.

Director Arendt said the city's Risk Management Department and its insurance carrier have assessed damages incurred at Bull Creek as a result of the storm, including such items as stump removal, debris removal, and facilities damaged. It's possible damages could total between \$400,000-\$500,000.

Revenues at Bull Creek during April exceeded \$287,000, with a year-to-date total of \$1.8 million of the \$2.2 million budget for the fiscal year. May revenues to date total almost \$260,000, and Bull Creek revenues are expected to exceed the budget again this year, Arendt said.

Oxbow revenues were \$131,628 in April, resulting in more than \$520,000 for the year to date, which will allow the 9-hole facility to "easily exceed" its budget of \$654,842 without requiring a \$100,000 transfer-in from city coffers. More than \$90,000 in revenue recorded during the last month also reinforces that projection, the director said.

Bull Creek now has cash reserves of \$362,260.10 as of May 22, and Oxbow Creek has a cash reserve of \$31,345.17 – the first positive figure reported this year for the course.

Arendt also reported that the latest total of funds raised for local charities since Bull Creek's inception reached more than \$7 million.

The Authority has been requested to release a 5-foot linear section of property along the existing fence separating Godwin Creek from the city's soccer field parking area. The section is needed to provide more parking for the soccer patrons. Arendt noted that there already have been complaints of errant golf balls flying into property beyond the proposed expanded parking area. Authority members expressed a reluctance to authorize the property transfer without further information, which the director said he will pursue.

Arendt said he has job postings for one assistant PGA professional, the guard position at Oxbow Creek and for a grill server.

The director also said he has solicited quotes for a weather warning system for all golf facilities, and Emergency Management Director Chance Corbett has pledged to assist in seeking grant funds for that proposed system.

Outings during the past month have been numerous and very successful, including the first ever booked by The Bridge, an organization that in its 23-year history of outings in Columbus has never been at Bull Creek, but reported it was "the best ever" and has already booked a return in 2026. Other outings included the AA Georgia High School Championship, which Columbus High won, Southern Power's Plant Franklin, Calvary Christian, Columbus Water Works, TSYS and the Georgia Sheriff's Association.

The golf director noted that Bull Creek's rate plan does not include a rate for college students. He proposed that a new College Rate be set at \$37 for 18 holes with cart, with a membership rate of \$500, the same as now accorded seniors and military members. Gerald Miley made a motion, seconded by Alonzo Jones, to approve the new rate and it was adopted unanimously.

Tommy Nobles said it will have been a year on July 1 since the last rate increase for Bull Creek and Oxbow Creek play. He made a motion to increase those rates, excluding junior golf, by \$1 effective July 1. The motion was seconded by Gerald Miley and approved by unanimous vote.

Chairman Roundtree said he has a conflict with the June 24 Authority meeting date and asked if members would agree to advance the meeting by a week. Director Arendt asked members to check their schedules and notify by e-mail whether Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup> or Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> is preferred. He said he will notify members and the public of the meeting date agreed upon.

A motion to adjourn was made by Ken Crumpler, seconded by Alonzo Jones, to adjourn the meeting and was passed unanimously.

Attending were Chairman William Roundtree, Ken Crumpler, Tommy Nobles, Alonzo Jones, Ken Davis, Vice Chairman Richard Mahone, Gerald Miley and Secretary Jim Houston. Stephanie Leohr was absent.