

COLUMBUS GOLF AUTHORITY MINUTES

MARCH 25, 2025

Chairman William Roundtree called the meeting to order.

Architect Paul Gibson of Studio BGP was introduced and shared drawings of proposed renovation plans for the Oxbow Creek clubhouse. The renovation plans were explained, with the only concern raised about the single toilet provided in the proposed women's rest room. Tommy Nobles, who has spearheaded oversight of the proposed Oxbow renovation for the Authority, said the rendering was based on the number of males playing regularly at the facility, versus the lesser number of women.

Stephanie Leohr said she had some concerns about the proposed restroom plans and Gibson said he would examine a possible revision to provide more space for the women's restroom.

Minutes of the February 11, 2025, meeting were then approved by unanimous vote upon a motion by Ken Crumpler, seconded by Tommy Nobles.

Superintendent Steve Brown reported the grasses are in early growth season, but the final frost of the season may not yet have been felt. He is waiting for warmer weather to push the growth with nitrogen.

Brown also noted that some poa annua grass has appeared on several greens despite application of herbicides. The grass having become resistant to previous herbicides, he said he is now applying a third version of the herbicide and hopes for better results. A USGA agronomist will visit in April and his experiences with the herbicide applications will be sought.

Godwin Creek grasses have been sprayed and the herbicide applied is working on the poa annua there, he said. There remains some tree work and treatment of pampas grass there, which will result in using some work crews from Bull Creek on occasion.

With the inmate guard supervising the labor crew at Oxbow Creek still recovering from illness and requiring recertification before he can resume his duties, a search for a volunteer guard has come up short. An additional crew will be needed there soon, Brown said. It is hoped the original guard's recovery will be possible.

It is planned to fertilize fairways before Easter, and tree trimming and cart path repair remains a priority, the superintendent said.

Director of Golf Jim Arendt reported that Oxbow Creek revenues exceeded \$35,500 in February and \$352,284 of the budgeted \$554,841 in revenue for the fiscal year has already been achieved. Figures for thus far in March show more than \$55,000 has been generated, with more than \$5,000 recorded last Saturday.

Bull Creek revenue for February totaled \$145,402, with more than \$1.4 million of the budgeted \$2.2 million for the fiscal year having been generated already. March receipts total almost \$189,000 with almost a week to go.

"Revenue is strong, expenses are under control," Arendt said.

Cash reserves to date show Bull Creek with \$405,175 after having purchased several key pieces of equipment. Oxbow Creek's cash reserves are (-\$57,256), but should be close to zero by the end of the fiscal year, the golf director said.

The budget for the golf courses' next fiscal year has been submitted and an initial virtual review was held featuring the mayor, city manager and finance director. The Golf Authority was complimented on its budget proposal and the city manager said he could see no reason to change it before submitting it to the Columbus Council.

Arendt also reported a contact list for Authority members has been forwarded; a plaque that will accompany the existing Bill Godwin bust at Godwin Creek has been ordered; the recent trip to the PGA Show in Florida is paying dividends in discounts obtained on merchandise, contacts made with vendors, and networking with industry leaders, including some who may have added value with the proposed new clubhouse construction ahead.

A new grill manager, Don Bryan, who is certified, has been hired. He formerly owned and operated a Honey-Baked Ham franchise in Florida for 13 years and should be a valuable addition to Bull Creek operations, Arendt said.

Meetings with city officials concerning bridges to be built with Special Purpose Local Option Tax funds allocated for Oxbow Creek and Bull Creek have resulted in proposals to replace the missing bridge at Oxbow Creek with a links bridge that can be built for less than \$200,000, using a sole source provider option, the golf director said. The meetings also resulted in a proposal to erect a replacement bridge for the defective culvert now in place below the West Course Hole No. 5 tee box.

The golf director said he has asked the three main cart manufacturers to allow testing for one year of an electric cart each produces. It's important to have that experience before committing to purchase or lease a fleet of electric carts when the new clubhouse is built. Yamaha and E-Z-Go have agreed, but Club Car wanted to limit the test experience to one month. Ken Crumpler made a motion, seconded by Stephanie Leoehr, to authorize a test of the lithium-ion battery driven golf carts produced by Yamaha and E-Z-Go for 12 months. The motion passed unanimously.

Arendt also reported that \$3,000 in additional rebates has been received from Coca-Cola Co., the sole provider of soft drinks for the golf courses.

The Golf Director also notified the Authority that he has implemented a policy of allowing no fivesomes for play at Bull Creek on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. The move is made to provide better management of golf carts, which sometimes are not available for players in early afternoon hours due to all being in use. He also said in April he will begin issuing tee times with eight- and nine-minute intervals to try to regulate play more smoothly.

Arendt reported he plans to hire an additional PGA Assistant Golf Professional to replace Nikki Siter, who operated at Oxbow Creek and recently resigned. Until a qualified person is hired, Assistant Professionals Adam Cooper and Jon Shuskey are helping to fill the needs at Oxbow Creek.

A new Assistant Accounting Technician, Jahmaya Nelson, has been hired, the golf director said.

Arendt also said he is no longer planning to delay improvement of Bull Creek bunkers until a renovation project begins. He is developing a plan to launch improvements hole-by-hole as possible, with golfers asked to adjust play around the bunker sites being worked – such as holes with fairway bunker work under way being played as par-3 holes, and where greenside bunker work is in progress, take par and go to the next hole. It's important to begin the bunker improvements now, he said.

Tommy Nobles reported that a plaque honoring Richard Callahan at Godwin Creek has been prepared and meets the specifications previously established by the Authority. It will be placed in position during a ceremony scheduled for April 12 at Godwin Creek.

The Golf Authority, like other city authorities, having been asked to provide one of its members to serve on the new Sports and Recreation Authority, Jim Houston made a motion, seconded by Stephanie Leohr, to appoint Gerald Miley as the Golf Authority representative. The motion was passed unanimously.

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

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