

**MINUTES
LONGMONT GOLF COURSE ADVISORY BOARD
August 22, 2011**

The August 22, 2011 meeting of the Longmont Golf Course Advisory Board was called to order by Vice Chair Jeff Cannon at 7:05 p.m. in the Twin Peaks Golf Course clubhouse.

Item 1 – Roll Call

Jeff Cannon, Vice Chair, called the roll. Those present were Board members Jeff Cannon, Ken Davis, Judson Hite, Matt Cain and Council Representative Sean McCoy. Staff members present were Larry Mills, Sally Helms, Keith Martin, Sam Linnenburger and Rick Heck. Board Member Rick Phillips and Chair, Jim Ruff, were absent.

Item 2 – Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Board member Matt Cain moved the minutes of the May 23, 2011 regular meeting be approved as written and Board member Judson Hite seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 3 – Communications

A. Golf Professionals Monthly Reports for July

	July Revenue			July Rounds		
	Projected	Actual	YTD %	Projected	Actual	YTD %
Sunset	\$ 55,800	\$ 58,595	107.9%	4,050	4,363	110.7%
Twin Peaks	\$ 117,900	\$108,775	104.4%	5,130	4,976	109.1%
Ute Creek	\$ 164,900	\$159,350	94.4%	4,840	4,856	101.6%

Mr. Martin reviewed July round and revenue reports for Twin Peaks. Mr. Linnenburger reviewed Sunset and Ute Creek July reports. During the month of July, Sunset was open 31 days. Twin Peaks was open 31 days and Ute Creek 31 days.

B. Other

Mr. Cannon asked if there were any other communications. Mr. Mills noted that he had passed out two separate communications that could be discussed at the end of the meeting.

Item 4 – Public Invited to be Heard

Peter Elzi and Dan Conway from THK Associates were in attendance to present the THK report. Also in attendance were Aaron Babl and Mark Frederick. Mr. Frederick spoke and noted that he has lived in Longmont for 7 years. Mr. Frederick stated that he felt the Longmont courses were very well run, prices were reasonable and that many of the golfers he plays with feel the same way. He felt that there was a little bit of trouble accessing the on line tee times. He felt that it was a little bit confusing and he would like to see that process be more user friendly. He liked the on line eblasts and ‘thank you for playing’ emails that he gets. He shared that it was nice when Ute Creek had a starter at the first hole and he misses that.

Item 5 – Unfinished Business

A. Update on Golf Operational Review and Financial Analysis

Vice Chair Cannon introduced Mr. Dan Conway, President and Director of Marketing & Economics of THK Associates and Mr. Peter Elzi, Jr., Principal of THK Associates. Mr. Conway gave an introduction to THK Associates and outlined the process by which THK completed the City’s Golf Operational Review and Financial Analysis as follows:

- Physical inspection of the three Longmont golf facilities.
- Interviews with the golf professionals and maintenance superintendents at each facility.

- Recommended specific methods to improve market capture and increase revenues.
- Reviewed the historical financial and operating performance of the Longmont golf facilities including staffing, equipment, equipment procurement, professional contracts and other items.
- Conducted a review of the entire four county golf supply in terms of rounds and fees.

Mr. Conway introduced Mr. Elzi, Principal at THK, who presented the report. Mr. Elzi stated to the Board that Longmont's golf staff was a very professional and enthusiastic staff noting that they really seemed to care and he enjoyed working with them.

THK's Findings and Recommendations Summary

Findings:

- Longmont's golf course revenue and expenses are comparable to neighboring communities.
- Golf fees are in line with the competition.
- Staffing appears adequate, but more staff may be needed for marketing to improve.
- Longmont's use of technology is well integrated and functions well.
- The City should consider longer term agreements with its golf professionals.
- The fleet equipment replacement program should be continued.
- Longmont should continue self operation of its golf courses. THK did not recommend privatization or closing any of the courses.
- Golf rounds and associated revenues will need to improve for Longmont to fund any large capital projects.
- Capital projects needed in order of importance are the staging area repair at Sunset, irrigation systems at Twin Peaks and Sunset, Ute Creek clubhouse expansion and Ute Creek maintenance facility.
- Regardless of the future golf market and Longmont's golf system performance, capital investment in the facilities will be needed.
- The report recommended several low cost improvements which are described below.

Recommendations:

- Improve overall staff presentation to the golfer in a consistent, uniformed and scripted manner.
- Keep greens and other fees at current levels to increase market share and golfer loyalty.
- Improve a more consistent reservation system between the three courses to view times at all courses instead of an individual course.
- Increase the online database of golfers to reach a larger number of golfers via email and other methods.
- Improve speed of play, especially at Ute Creek, with maintenance designed to reduce searching for golf balls and increased rangers (volunteer) to assist golfers.
- Provide better signage to the facilities.
- Increase the terms of golf professional/concessionaire agreements to stimulate capital contributions from the private sector.
- Aggressively market the facilities and consider increasing the marketing budget and possibly a position dedicated only to marketing.

Mr. Elzi noted that THK had concerns about the length of the golf pros contracts. THK felt that the need was there for longer than year to year to instill some confidence from the pros. Board member Cain asked Mr. Mills if that was a realistic goal within the City. Mr. Mills stated that there had been quite a bit of change in the City. Because of this change golf pro contracts had been left at year to

year. Mr. Mills felt that the City would be completely open to re-negotiation of the contracts. Board member Hite asked if the golf pros agreed and they indicated that they did.

Mr. Elzi stated that they were asked to look at the possibility of course privatization of the Longmont courses. THK recommended against this as the courses are performing well enough at this time and privatization was not necessary. He noted that the peer review that the NGF completed agreed with this conclusion.

Mr. Cain asked Mr. Mills how the group should approach discussions about the unfunded golf capital projects. Mr. Mills noted that he felt it would be difficult for the City to fund these CIP items. There was some discussion regarding these items, including the irrigation systems, club house addition at Ute Creek, Ute Creek maintenance building, etc. Mr. Mills noted that the City Council would have to make a decision as to the funding source for Golf projects.

Board member Hite asked if these projects are emergencies. His point being "are these CIP projects really a choice" and "are the courses going to be in trouble when these things need to be implemented." Mr. Mills provided an explanation on the life of the irrigation systems at each course. He noted that the Sunset irrigation system was actually 10 years older than Twin Peaks. Mr. Elzi noted that they weren't trying to scare anyone, but there were valid capital projects that would need to be addressed.

Mr. Cannon asked if there were any more questions. Mr. Mills asked if the group had any suggestions for this presentation before it is presented to City Council. Board member Cain suggested that they specifically mention the fact that they had recommended privatization for a New Mexico course. Mr. Davis thought the presentation was too long for Council and it should be shortened. The group thought there was too much information and recommended sticking to the bullet points.

Item 6 – New Business

Mr. Mills informed the Board that there was a joint meeting with the Golf Course Advisory Board and the City Council scheduled for September 30th and asked the Board members if they would be able to attend. He noted that the purpose of the meeting is to go over the THK report, stating that the only request before Council will be to accept the report or not accept the report.

Mr. Mills asked for comments from the Board that they would want to include in the council communication. The Board was generally in support of recommending the report, in that it was insightful and thorough and raised issues that merit more consideration as they consider what to do about the issues surrounding the golf operations sustainability in Longmont. Board member Hite motioned that the Board accept the report and Mr. Davis seconded. The motion passed and the THK report was accepted and moved forward for presentation to Council.

Item 7 – Items from the Board

Mr. Mills informed the Board that Art Adler has resigned his seat on the Golf Course Advisory Board.

Item 8 – Items from the Staff

Mr. Mills stated that he had received two communications and he had passed these letters out to the Board. One Longmont resident wrote on behalf of Sam Linnenburger, commending him for his "tremendous attitude and professionalism in how he runs Ute Creek Golf Course on a daily basis." The other communication was also from a Longmont resident regarding Twin Peaks Golf Course staff and volunteers and specifically Keith Martin and Jeff Weed. This resident wrote, "In a world where so much seems so impossible, insurmountable, there are people making a difference, every day, in so

Golf Course Advisory Board Meeting

August 22, 2011

Page 4

many seemingly innocuous ways. I am profoundly thankful and grateful for this space, Twin Peaks Golf Course, in our community”.

Mr. Mills stated the Annual Golf Outing was scheduled for September and asked if the Board wanted to have the outing considering they would also be attending the City Council meeting in September. The Board agreed that they would like to go ahead with the outing.

Item 9 – Adjournment

Board member Davis moved that the meeting be adjourned. Board member Cain seconded and Vice Chair Cannon adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Minutes Approved:

Jeff Cannon
Golf Course Advisory Board Vice Chair

Sally Helms
Recording Secretary