

**TOWN OF BERLIN**  
Timberlin Golf Commission  
230 Kensington Road • Berlin, CT 06037  
**Thursday, September 21, 2023**  
**6:00 p.m.**

Topic: Golf Commission Meeting 9/21/23  
Time: Sep 21, 2023 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86493384695?pwd=NDZrNi8vQzh0TjJ4RVkxVFE0MHBLZz09>

Meeting ID: 864 9338 4695  
Passcode: 715730

Via Telephone 929 205 6099

Commissioners Present: Nancy Berger, Peter DeFazio, Jim Green, Gale Lemieux (arrived at 6:56 p.m.), Jim Norton, Joe Pulcini, Bill Richards, Seb Senia

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present:  
Sol Guerrero – Director of Golf  
Mark Bayram - Golf Professional (arrived at 6:13 p.m.)

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Norton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS**

None

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Aug 18, 2023**

Commissioner Senia moved to approve the August 18, 2023 meeting minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner Green.

Those voting in favor: Commissioner Berger, Commissioner DeFazio, Commissioner Green, Chairman Norton, Commissioner Richards, Commissioner Pulcini, Commissioner Senia

Vote being: 7-0. MOTION CARRIED.

**5. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Bridge Update

Chairman Norton said I had a meeting with Golf Pro Bayram, Director of Golf Guerrero, Finance Director Delaney and Town Manager Jayawickrema. There is some bonding available to the town from OPM, but other departments will be fighting for those funds too. Director of Golf Guerrero will get quotes for hiring an engineer to access the bridges. Director of Golf said

we received approval from Town Council to hire an engineer, they gave \$10k. We spoke with Atlas Concrete engineers to get a game plan on how to renovate the bridges and what kind of work we need to put into it. The bid will then go out for quotes and hopefully the work will get started before winter.

Chairman Norton asked if we have a timeline? Director of Golf Guerrero said we should be done with the engineering part by the end of the month. Chairman Norton said we could lose out on the funds if this is not done quickly. The RFP process takes about a month. Director of Golf Guerrero said we will have a better update by the end of the month.

Commissioner DeFazio said this has been going on for a couple of years now and I thought we already did the engineering part and everything else about these bridges. Are we saying that nothing has been done up until this point? Chairman Norton said that Superintendent Salvio had already contacted these people. Commissioner Senia said that Superintendent Salvio had talked to the Town Engineer about the bridge. I'm not sure that he talked to anybody else. Director of Golf Guerrero said Steve Waznia and Mike Ahern had looked at our bridges and said they need updating. I can only look at the timeline since I've been here, but things have been moving forward. The bridges and the clock are moving forward. We are trying to move forward with a lot of things from our meetings about long term planning.

Commissioner Senia said if the Town Engineers came out and looked at it, why do we need to go outside again? Commissioner Pulcini asked if we can go to Central Connecticut State University or University of Hartford. Both have big civil engineering programs. It could be done free or for very cheap and it could be done sooner than by going out to bid. Director of Golf Guerrero said I have a meeting with some students about a bridge. Commissioner Green said we have engineers in town. Director of Golf Guerrero said you are assuming that engineers in town have time. They have other projects. They were nice enough to look at where we are and suggest where we have to go. The engineer we are hiring now is really going to tell us what kind of bridge we should have and make suggestions. Commissioner Richards added that you need someone who is qualified to sign off on it with an engineering license. Commissioner Senia asked which bridges are we talking about? Chairman Norton said all of them. We talked about doing them piecemeal, but now we are doing them all. Emergency vehicles have to make their way across.

## 2. Prioritizing Improvement List

Chairman Norton said this came up at my meeting and I asked Gerald Paradis from the Board of Finance to attend tonight. I put together a list of items from the Commissioners and then Finance Director Delaney compiled it into a couple of different categories. There are 4 or 5 items that would need to be bonded.

Mr. Paradis said that a Joint Board of Finance and Town Council meeting will be held on September 25 to discuss bonding over the next 5 years. I asked Chairman Norton to have your top items in before this meeting takes place. You need to be on this list saying these are the things that we need. Things get thrown out by a lot of different departments and there needs to be prioritization. If you are not on the original list, it is going to be that much harder to get on the list afterwards. I want to hear what it is you are talking about for when questions come up at the meeting. Chairman Norton asked if you need a formal list? Mr. Paradis said you should present that to Finance Director Delaney. Chairman Norton said the first item is the course redesign must be changed, it needs improvements. Then cart path replacement and the bunker work, both could be eligible for bonding. Also, there is irrigation replacement, it is unclear how long that is supposed to last for. How do we set up reserves even with CIP funds. We have to

put CIP aside and not spend it. A new clubhouse, replacing the bridges and a cart barn are also on the list. There are prices for some of the items. Bridge replacement and updating equipment our priorities. This is a start and we have something on paper.

Commissioner Green asked if it's better to lease equipment? We would make out better by leasing it. Mr., Paradis said generally we do not bond equipment and would not suggest putting it down on the list. Leases and annual payments would come from your operating budget.

Commissioner Senia said he's concerned about the irrigation because we had a lightning strike this year and the system needed immediate work done. Chairman Norton said the work was \$20k. Are we putting a band-aid on the irrigation system and how long is it supposed to last? It is 50 years old. We should be good for another 10 to 15 years according to Sol.

Chairman Norton said the front and back cart paths needs to be done over. Commissioner Senia said we talked about the cart paths on a temporary basis and did all that work with the tennis courts. We want to bring some of that milling to the areas that need to be extended and phase in the cart path. It will look decent. Chairman Norton asked if we should make it cart path only throughout the whole course - this will avoid the destruction at the end of the paths.

Commissioner DeFazio said that grant money is needed for the cart barn to avoid bonding for it. Chairman Norton asked is the bonding specifically for projects? Mr. Paradis said it is usually for projects. The cart paths, irrigation and bunkers could be a project. Chairman Norton asked what if we change our mind and want to re-prioritize? Mr. Paradis said that has everything to do with how it comes across with Finance Director Delaney. You could do something broad like golf course improvements and all of those items fit under that definition. The bond authorization has everything to do with what is included. If you want to pick and choose, or say we want to do improvements such as. That is a bigger, broader thing. Chairman Norton said the more general the better. Commissioner Berger asked if they would ask for specifics? Mr. Paradis said if you are looking for \$1.2M for golf course improvements, you would add that we think it is going to cost \$400k for the irrigation and \$300k for the bunkers, etc. You must have some detail behind it. If we are going to do improvements, you should have some flexibility within it. If the grant money from OPM is not used for bridges, we need to bond it. If the grant does come through, then we would bond less of it.

Commissioner Green asked about the insurance money for the bunkers. Director of Golf Guerrero said the insurance company received the square footage cost from when we re-did it 10 years ago. They have to update an estimate to current costs and will then reach out. Chairman Norton asked do we have any idea what we are looking at moneywise? Director of Golf Guerrero said the last one was maybe \$250k to \$300k. Commissioner DeFazio asked if we are using the same company again? The last time we had this problem and they repaired the fabric on the bunkers, it was the same company that created the first problem. It should be three strikes you are out. They have to get somebody else.

Chairman Norton said using sod vs. fabric is one way to do it now and to tie in to the drainage that is out there, put sod over it and then sand over that. The sod is between 42 cents to 46 cents per square foot - without the other costs. It is either that or do concrete capillaries, which we can't afford. Those are the two things trending right now. Commissioner Senia asked if we are going to get the money from the insurance company? Director of Golf Guerrero said they have not said yes or no yet. Chairman Norton said we can put it on the list, but it doesn't mean that it has to stay on the list. Commissioner Senia said the conditions of the bunkers right now are awful. Hole number 9 is bad. We are asking people to pay top dollar to play at the golf course

and we are not doing anything. Bunkers are a top priority. Commissioner DeFazio added that now is a good time to eliminate some of them. Director of Golf Guerrero said the insurance claim will only get us to where we were at. Commissioner Senia asked who decides which bunkers need to be eliminated? Do we need to get an architect? Director of Golf Guerrero said the architect that you bring in will depend on what you want to do. Commissioner DeFazio said to put your ideas on paper, present them and we will look at them. Director of Golf Guerrero said that goes for all of the options. Chairman Norton said bunkers will go on the list.

Chairman Norton asked can we put money into a reserve? Mr. Paradis said any capital appropriation has to be spent within 3 years. The CIP is a special revenue fund. It was originally instituted to pay for debt service for the original irrigation system. It may be that whatever you are funding out of your CIP would not be available if those are operating expenses that you are doing now. That money would not be available because it could possibly be required by the town to go to debt service. Chairman Norton asked if there is a limit on what can carry over from CIP? We could save money in the reserves to build the barn for example. Mr. Paradis said yes, it would have to be appropriated. Chairman Norton said he will put something general in place and send it out to everybody. Mr. Paradis said to send it to Finance Director Delaney.

### 3. Scheduling of Ordinance Meeting

Commissioner Senia said he spoke with Town Clerk Wall and the right protocol is to have the commission send the request to Town Manager Jayawickrema saying that you want to get on the Ordinance Meeting agenda. Commissioner Berger said they do not meet every month. Commissioner Senia said when they do meet, we want to be put on the agenda. Chairman Norton said he will send a letter to the Town Manager. Commissioner Senia said that he would speak at the Ordinance Meeting.

### 4. Golf Course Union Contract input

Chairman Norton said this is the first time that we have any input. The contract is on the town website. We are concerned about the number of work hours and number of part time seasonal employees. Per the terms you can hire at least 4 people. What is a seasonal employee? Chairman DeFazio said those are summer help. Director of Golf Guerrero said they are allowed to work 120 hours for the season. Chairman Norton asked why can't we have a laundry list of seasonal employees even now - we need more staff, Jerry should not be mowing? Director of Golf Guerrero said those are usually high school students. We have been looking to hire more. Joe, Anthony and Kyle are still there, they are your 9-month blue collars. They are not seasonal. Chairman Norton said that we have the ability to have more people there.

Commissioner Senia asked how do we compare to other courses? How many people do they have working in their maintenance area compared to what we have. Director of Golf Guerrero said I think it is more than just about the hours. Our 9-month blue collars have 29 hours per week and 6 of those hours are on weekends. They are limited on the weekdays. We are trying to figure out all of that in the new contract. Chairman Norton said maybe now is a good time to revisit Brightview and outsourcing. Commissioner DeFazio said there is only a crew of 3 or 4 working on the weekends, but they get things done. Commissioner Green said if you do 40 hours a week, you eliminate some of the overtime. Commissioner DeFazio said these guys are working hard. If we are not allowed to spend the money in our budget, we should get more help. Chairman Norton said our concern is that you don't have them year-round and limiting them

hampers us. The golf course has to come first. Commissioner DeFazio said these guys are locked in with the whole town. It is not just the golf course. Our blue collars are not separated.

Chairman Norton said we understand the hours of golf operations, but why do we need someone there in the middle of the winter at 5 a.m.? Director of Golf Guerrero said they work 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. Commissioner Senia said in the middle of winter you have snow removal and things to do. Director of Golf Guerrero said the golf course is responsible for the grounds and that includes plowing the driveway to get into the building. Chairman Norton said the blacktop is the town. Commissioner DeFazio said the town comes in and does the blacktop and parking lots.

Director of Golf Guerrero said the one thing we are trying to get is more hours. We are looking to hire a 4<sup>th</sup> 9-month blue collar. They work 29 hours with no benefits. Chairman Norton said that he will put something together and send it out to Director of Golf Guerrero.

#### 5. Plaque on #5

Chairman Norton said Superintendent Salvio stated that the work on hole number 5 is done, yet the plaque is still sitting on its side. Director of Golf Guerrero said he will take care of that.

#### 6. Acknowledgement to Men's Club for Soil Boxes

Chairman Norton said thank you to the Men's Club for their donation. The little things mean a lot. There are bottles in front near the Starter Shack and boxes on the Par 3.

#### 7. Goosinator

Commissioner DeFazio said the Men's Club bought \$1,200 worth of parts. It is due for an overhaul and that is going to be a winter project for me. The Men's Club had donated the cart to the town, but it is now broken and there was talk about selling it. It works, but is unable to go up a hill. No one knows what is wrong with it. We purchased the cart used for \$4k. I would like to see that cart sold, or traded and get one that I can modify. We could even take an existing cart out of service and modify it. The add-on's just bolt on. For whatever reason our unit just stops and that is why I do not use it anymore. Superintendent Salvio had tried to fix it several times, but it is not a priority and the parts are expensive. It is a pain to use now and that is why it is not getting done as often. There are two Goosinators, one is under the stairs and I have the replacement parts for that one. Director of Golf Guerrero said he will talk with E-Z-Go.

#### 8. Timberlin Aug FY23 P&L

Chairman Norton said the rounds are down. Golf Pro Bayram said overall they are not down. Just for the last two months. Commissioner Lemieux said year to date we are still up by \$124k. Director of Golf Guerrero said it's a lifesaver how Golf Pro Bayram handles the tee sheet with leagues and maximizes our potential profit daily. That helps us a lot. Golf Pro Bayram added that it was my first time losing an outing due to weather, but it has been rescheduled for October.

#### 9. Open Discussion

Director of Golf Guerrero asked to discuss Brightview as a group. Chairman Norton said we don't have enough help. Director of Golf Guerrero said there could be a lot of changes in the next year or two, from turnover to outsourcing. I want to get to the winter and see how this year ends and then see what next year brings, but I'm sensing a lot of changes.

## 10. Account Balances:

- Tee sign account (\$5,578.56)

Chairman Norton asked if the clock is coming in December? Commissioner Lemieux said yes and we should get the pad up this fall. Director of Golf Guerrero said he is working with Earth Contractors on getting the pad up. Commissioner Lemieux said I'm hoping to do the dedication on Opening Day in the spring.

- CIP Budget balance (\$33,912.10), encumbrances (\$2,820.97)

Chairman Norton asked Director of Golf Guerrero what are your plans for the fall besides the bridges? Director of Golf Guerrero said the commission always says they are never involved in how we spend the CIP. Chairman Norton said we have always been using CIP funds for tree cutting - it should be coming out of O/E. Commissioner DeFazio said if it is a dangerous tree, why are we paying for it when the town pays for cutting the dangerous trees at Sage Park. Director of Golf Guerrero said we took a few trees down over the winter. If it is not CIP, it has to go on my outsourcing expenditure line. Chairman Norton said there are things to fix along hole 16 and 17. We started a project there but have not completed it. Commissioner Senia said we have stacks of wood laying around from all of the trees that we've cut. Chairman Norton added that 16 and 17 need to be done. Also, what are we going to do with the lower tee at 17? Commissioner Senia said he would like to see another set of tees on the left side of 12. Golf balls fly by you when standing next to 11.

Director of Golf Guerrero said the driving range needs some work. I'd like to get some sort of chipping area. Chairman Norton asked about the netting that we need. It would prevent hitting some of the cars. Commissioner Green said as you come up the road near the driving range there needs to be a stop sign to slow down the traffic. Commissioner Lemieux said people don't slow down, they fly through. That is a good idea.

Commissioner Lemieux said there are two CIP plans, a 10-year plan and a 5-year plan. Chairman Norton said I think it is up to us to come up with a plan. Director of Golf Guerrero said they should be modified by us now. Mr. Paradis said to give the Board of Finance our top 3 projects. Chairman Norton said he will send something out to everybody. The top items are bridges and bunkers and equipment. We will need to start looking at the bathrooms on the course too. Director of Golf Guerrero said I would like to move the dump truck money to equipment. Chairman Norton said you can rent a dump truck or plan ahead when you will need it. Director of Golf Guerrero added that the seniors would like to put the big flags on the ball cups. Commissioner Senia said whoever is cutting the cups is not consistent. Some are crooked and not really round. Director of Golf Guerrero said it comes down to paying attention to detail. Golf Pro Bayram said it's probably not sharp enough. Commissioner Lemieux said maybe it needs to be sharpened more than once a year. Director of Golf Guerrero added that we have a couple of them.

## 11. Reports:

- Directors Report, to be given at meeting
- Golf Pro Report, to be given at meeting
- Superintendent Report

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Green motioned to adjourn at 7:42 p.m.

Seconded by Commissioner Senia.

Those voting in favor: Commissioner Berger, Commissioner DeFazio, Commissioner Green, Commissioner Lemieux, Chairman Norton, Commissioner Pulcini, Commissioner Richards, Commissioner Senia

Vote being: 8-0. MOTION CARRIED.

Submitted by,  
Alina Brown

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BERLIN TOWN CLERK



9/25/2023, 1:36:13 PM

# Director of Golf Report

## September 21, 2023

### **30-Day Recap of Operations and Benchmarks**

- We had a decent month of operations for the Golf Course and Driving Range.
- The Golf Course lost Mila, Braden, Matt, Josh, Joey, and Jonah to school. They were tremendous help throughout the season and were very nice young adults to have around. They were all told that they are welcome to come back next season.
- We were able to hire two new staff members. Alannah will be in the Golf Shop counter. She has been through training and has begun to work shifts on her own. Nick just started his training program. Nick will work with carts, as a starter, or in the Golf Shop.
- The Men's Club donated a divot bottle container and 4 divot mix buckets for each of the par 3 tee box. The divot bottle container is located next to the water fountain by the starter shack.

### **Looking Ahead/Goals**

- Continue to work with Golf Commission on new, innovative ways to increase play and revenues.
  - Working with Jerry and rest of maintenance crew to pay attention to small details such as cup cutting, green speed, rough length, and divot mix program.
  - Get consistency with pace of play during normal play and for tournaments.
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# Golf Pro Report

To: Golf Commission

From: Marc S. Bayram, PGA

## **September 2023**

### 30-Day Recap of Operations and Benchmarks

- See attached revenue comparison report for 2022-2023.
- Summer Junior Golf Programs have been completed. Fall program dates have been established and promoted.
- Aeration was successful.
- Weather has been a big issue of late, especially for outings. Both the Lamay and CCARC outings have been postponed to October due to weather conditions.
- Our PGA Jr League 17U All Star Team made it to the Regional Finals eventually losing to the team from Bethpage Golf Complex in New York. It was an amazing run that included beating the 2 strong teams from Lyman along with the team from the First Tee of the Bronx NY. We had the youngest team with 5 of the players 14 years old and 1 player 15 years old. They were playing against players who were 17 years old and Division 1 commits and I couldn't be more proud of them for their performance. This is definitely a preview of things to come, I expect we will see many more junior accolades over the next 5-10 years from players representing Timberlin GC. It will be fun to watch!
- The majority of weekday afternoon leagues have completed their seasons successfully. The new point of sale system makes it very easy to set up leagues and make sure scheduling issues are minimized. The afternoon starters did a great job managing the leagues. I have already received 5 inquiries to move leagues to Timberlin. Unfortunately for us we are tapped out with course access from existing leagues who are likely coming back. A good problem to have but we are certainly giving up potential revenue by only having 18 holes compared to Stanley, Lyman, and Tunxis. The good news is that we are the hot spot for leagues because of their experiences with our organization, food and beverage, and staff.
- Our marketing team is doing a fantastic job highlighting our outings, club organizations, and jr programs at the course. Big props to them as they continue to make it known Timberlin is the place to be.
- We hosted our final Mixed League event, we averaged 32 players for each event.

### Successes and Challenges

- Many of our college age staff members have gone back to school, so staffing always becomes a challenge in the Fall.
- Weather has posed some big problems for outings and leagues. Poor year for weather, but on nice days we are very busy.
- Eliminating Golf Now barter has definitely helped our revenue stream.

### Customer Satisfaction

- I encourage the golf commission to go to Google Reviews to see how customers view our facility.

### Looking Ahead/Goals

- Prepare for September outings schedule which is very busy.
- Host night golf.
- Start Fall Junior Programs.
- Continue to keep the tee sheet organized daily with the number of leagues, organizations, outings, and regular play traffic we get each day.
- Create fall outing schedule for Remzi.
- Continue updating the website and blast email marketing.