TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD - GOLF COMMITTEE

There was a regular meeting of the above-mentioned committee held on **Wednesday, January 28, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.**

Committee Members

Attendance – Committee Members: Bradley Klein, Lynette Easmon, Robert Berman, Jonathan Colman, Frank Merblum

Non-Committee Members: David Melesko, Ciaran Carr, Alex McGann, Chris Strand, Dennis Petruzzelli

The committee noted ongoing efforts to recruit additional members, particularly from Republican or Independent affiliations. A recent application was received from a new town resident involved with the men's club at Wintonbury Hills Golf Course. The application was forwarded to the Town Clerk's Office and Office of Strategic Communications. No appointments have been made yet, but receipt was confirmed.
It was noted that a former member (John Gunning) remains listed on the town website; David will address the removal from the website

Wintonbury Hills Golf Course Update – Ciaran Carr (General Manager)
Financial Performance

- Fiscal half-season: Revenue beat budget by ~$151,000 and last year by ~$123,000.
- Payroll increased due to minimum wage rises (causing ripple effects across wages).
- Repair & maintenance and utilities exceeded budget/last year slightly due to inflation in propane, electricity, gas, and diesel.
- Fixed operating expenses remained on budget.
- Net Operating Income (NOI): $67,000 ahead of budget; slightly behind last year.
- Cash on hand: Just under $1.7 million.

Rounds Played (Calendar Year)

- Total rounds: 34,645 (record high).
- Resident rounds: 2,972 (8.8%) but understated due to online bookings by residents being recorded as online rather than resident; actual resident participation is higher.
- Pass holder rounds: 656 (accurate figure).
- Outing rounds: ~3,200.

Discussion occurred regarding the challenge of accurately tracking resident online bookings through GolfNow. Alex will follow up with GolfNow for potential workarounds.

Other Revenue

- Golf shop sales: ~$133,000 (slightly higher than prior year).
- Golf car revenue: Just under $400,000.
- Driving range: ~$10,000 below last year (possibly due to early-season rain).
- Food & Beverage (F&B): ~$565,000.
- Total revenue (calendar year): Over $2.9 million (significant growth in recent years).

F&B Profitability F&B generates positive contribution margin. Food costs ~33%; F&B labor ~$145,000; cost of goods sold ~$115,000. After direct costs, net contribution estimated in the $150,000–$200,000 range (20–25% margin before allocated overhead such as utilities). Pre-pandemic, F&B was a strong profit center.

Maintenance & Operations (December) Routine winter issues included:

- Power outage causing generator/pump compressor failure (repaired; fire department attended).
- Heat loss in pro shop (repaired – motherboard replacement).
- Minor line repairs and ongoing building monitoring. All buildings reported in good condition.

Superintendent's Course Update – Dennis Petruzzelli

Weather (December 2025)

- Temperature: 3°F below average.
- Precipitation: 0.1 inch below average.
- Year-end 2025 precipitation: 4.17 inches below average.
- Snowfall 2025: 25.5 inches; 2026 (to date): Already 26 inches.

Winter Activities

- Course cleanup, accessory removal, mowing native areas, top-dressing greens/collars.
- Intensive shop cleaning, reorganization, and equipment maintenance/repairs.
- Review of maintenance programs and preparation of labor/operational budgets for next fiscal year.
- Snow clearing, final plant protectant applications, final robotic mowing of range, winterizing water coolers and ball washers.

Equipment

- Approved purchases: New sprayer (arriving soon) and riding bunker rake (to reduce hand labor in larger bunkers).
- No other major capital purchases planned for calendar 2026.
- Fairway mowers to be evaluated at upcoming superintendent show; current units underpowered for hilly terrain.
- Triplex mowers (greens, tees, approaches) aging (~300 hours/year); monitoring closely for future replacement.
- New greens mower performing well; walk-behind mowers available but underutilized due to staffing constraints.

Tree Removal – Hole 15 Tree crew to begin removing 13 trees inside the cart path on hole 15 starting January 29, 2026. Purpose: Eliminate root competition damaging rough/turf; prevent future damage to planned cart path work. Work expected to take 5–10 days (weather permitting); stumps may require later grinding.

Marketing Update

- Goals being finalized for 2026 digital marketing.
- New website template launched; new photography to be integrated within weeks.

- Plan to increase social media presence (aiming 2–3 posts/week on Facebook, Instagram, and X/Twitter).
- Leverage on-site staff for content; utilize Troon's social media calendar; consider modest paid boosts.
- Focus on promoting awards, lessons, F&B, events, and overall facility.

Old Business – Golf Pass Rates for 2026 Discussion on pass rate increases to maintain equity with recent general rate adjustments (senior walking up 20%, regular resident up 16%). Only ~25 pass holders remain (mostly residents; a few grandfathered non-residents).
Options considered:

- Flat $240 increase across all passes.
- Varying percentage increases.
- Uniform 20% increase.

Motion (Robert Berman, seconded by Frank Merblum): Approve a flat $240 increase across all golf passes for 2026. **Vote**: Unanimous approval.

Motion (Robert Berman, seconded by Jon Colman): Increase unlimited cart fee from $600 to $680. **Vote**: Unanimous approval.

Capital Projects & Long-Term Planning

- **Bunker Renovation**: Bunkers approaching 12–15-year lifecycle; drainage and maintenance issues noted. Troon/Indigo offering design/master plan services at no design fee (travel reimbursement only). Plan to rationalize bunkers (remove superfluous ones, combine small ones, preserve iconic features), improve pace of play, and ease difficulty for higher handicappers. Possible additional back tees. Work targeted for fall 2027; RFP process to begin soon.
- **Tree Removals – Bridges (Holes 11 & 16–17)**: Public hearing scheduled for February 17, 2026 (Inland Wetlands). Proposal to remove dead/dangerous trees (mostly ash) within ~50 ft of bridges (~100 trees total, many already dead/fallen). Trees to be dropped in place to minimize wetland disturbance. Safety concerns (golfer/equipment/bridge damage) primary driver.

New Business
None

Public Comments
None

Approval of Minutes
Minutes of the December 10, 2025 meeting approved as amended (minor formatting correction noted regarding dollar signs on round counts).

Adjournment Meeting adjourned. Informal discussion followed regarding potential future clubhouse reconfiguration to accommodate a golf simulator.

Next Meeting Wednesday, February 25, 2026