TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD - GOLF COMMITTEE

There was a regular meeting of the above-mentioned committee held on **Wednesday, March 25, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.**

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

Absent - Lynette Easmon

Non-Committee Members: David Melesko, Ciaran Carr, Alex McGann, Chris Strand, Jim Ritorto, Dennis Petruzzellif

Meeting called to order at 6:03 pm.

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

- Financials (Off-Season Month - February): NOI ~$67k (close to budgeted ~$70k). Strong cash position with $1.5 million in bank heading into season.
- New Hires/Improvements
    - New Chef: Andrew Testo — highly impressive; deep cleaning completed, menu planning underway, returning chef being trained. Small menu at opening, full menu later in April.
    - New golf carts delivered: Positive feedback on color, roofs, logo, GPS system, safety features (gear shift relocation, automatic braking), and storage. Beverage cart also delivered (full setup for food/beverage service).
- Golf shop: Product (balls, shirts, outerwear) arriving; shop looking good.
- Outings and Events: Smaller groups (20-75 players) common; 5-6 requests per week. Focus on maintaining pricing/value. CSGA event (early April/27th) and Connecticut PGA Section Championship scheduled — good exposure.
- Opening Plans: Course opening Saturday, March 28, 2026; restaurant to open this weekend. Gradual ramp-up next week (Good Friday/Easter). Newsletter going out with April updates

Superintendent's Course Update – Dennis Petruzzelli
Weather:

- 4° below normal temperatures; below-average precipitation (1.37 inches, 2.47 below average for year-to-date). 11.5 inches snow in February; 37.6 inches total over two months

Routine Winter Work:

- Shop cleaned/reorganized for better flow/efficiency. Equipment maintenance and rehabilitation of accessories ongoing. Minor snow clearing as needed.
- Tree on 8th Fairway: Discussion on downed tree (visible from road, in native area/out of play, parallel to fairway traps). Bob expressed aesthetic concern. Dennis noted it has been

dead for some time; further review planned. Inland Wetlands approval obtained for tree work on holes 2 and between 16-17 (off-season project). Balance between aesthetics, wildlife, and minimal disruption discussed.

Marketing Update

- First newsletter of season prepared (opening day Saturday, March 28, 2026; April info) - to be sent tomorrow or Thursday.
- GolfPass Ratings: Facility ranked #2 in Connecticut (behind Manchester Country Club). Strong accolade for the team; noted as user-review driven. Last year ranked #43 nationally. Push for more reviews planned as part of social/email campaigns.

New Business – FY 26/27 Budget

Ciaran Carr (with input from Alex McGann & Chris Strand) presented a detailed overview of the proposed budget. Key points included:

Revenue Highlights:

- Focus on Net Operating Income (NOI) as the primary bottom-line metric.
- Growth in green fees (resident and non-resident) despite budgeting for fewer rounds (~31,500 rounds projected vs. ~34,000 actual/forecast for current year).
- Increased cart fees (up ~10-11%) to offset higher cart costs and generate additional revenue.
- Modest growth expected in golf shop and food & beverage (new chef anticipated to help revive F&B).
- Member/pass holder dues expected to remain stable despite some attrition (aging out, relocations, only offered to returning pass holders); system change in financial reporting adjusted historical comparisons (e.g., member dues line shifted due to mapping issues, comparable to prior ~$61,900).

Expense Highlights:

- Cost of Goods Sold: ~70% for golf shop, 30-32% for food & beverage.
- Payroll: Increase of ~$70,000, primarily in maintenance labor to uphold high-end course quality (course charges up to $120 dynamic green fees on weekends). Additional funds for clubhouse presentation/entrance improvements. Routine labor and plant-related costs included. Minimum wage increases create ripple effects across scales.
- Fertilizer, Chemicals, and Fuel: ~$10,000 buffer added due to global events/war impacting costs and shipping (chemicals already secured at lower rates).
- Benefits: Slight increase (new chef and golf shop assistants enrolling).
- Repair & Maintenance: Down slightly due to new equipment and strong preventative maintenance by mechanic.
- Employee Relief/Payroll Taxes: Increased as expected.
- Operating Expense: Relatively stable; forecast slightly lower than recent high but aligned with 4-5 year average (~$261k prior year).
- Utilities and Operating Leases: Cart fleet lease showed a significant increase (new carts delivered). Utilities up due to general cost pressures.

- Other: Taxes on carts (state/local) remain despite municipal status (prior challenge unsuccessful). Management fees (Troon) included.

Overall Financial Outlook:

- Projected Gross Operating Profit ~$569k; NOI ~$341k — similar to recent years after accounting for added labor and cost pressures.
- Conservative round count (31,500) to build in buffer for weather variability (hot/wet days). Emphasis on average rate growth (~$2+ increase, from ~$53 to $55) and dynamic pricing over chasing volume.
- New financial system/reporting format implemented (more detailed, web-based tools like Power BI for real-time trending). Transition required line-by-line review; expected to improve initiative-taking monitoring.

Discussion:

- Questions on taxes, repair/maintenance trends, employee relief (payroll taxes/benefits roll-up), cart lease vs. utilities, new cart features (GPS, touchscreen, safety improvements, storage changes), and benefits increases.
- Positive feedback on new financial format and transparency.
- Acknowledgment of conservative budgeting and focus on quality/experience over aggressive round growth.
- Capital budget deferred to next month.

Motion:

- To approve the 2027 budget as presented, moved by Jon Colman, seconded by Robert Berman with Unanimous approval

Other Items
None

Public Comments
None

Approval of Minutes

- February 25, 2026 minutes were unanimously approved

Adjournment Meeting adjourned at 6:53pm

Next Meeting Wednesday, April 22, 2026