

Today's date
Mayor Paul Soglin and Alders.

The Golf Subcommittee met on August 8, 2017 to take public input, review and discuss the recently released 2016 Golf Enterprise Annual Report. We appreciate the detailed nature of the report and look forward to working with policymakers and staff in the future to ensure that municipal golf in Madison is able to meet its mission of providing affordable quality golf for the public.

Our golf program is critically important to our community. Madison's municipal golf courses continue to be the most used parks in the system. It enhances the quality of life in Madison in a variety of ways:

- Recreational and social opportunities for more than **100,000 participants** every year.
- Players of all age groups including a large numbers being **youth and seniors**.
- Golf promotes **physical and mental health**, learning, social interaction and networking.
- Our junior programs in partnership with The First Tee of South Central Wisconsin **help instill the core values like honesty, respect and perseverance that will last our young golfers a lifetime**. These programs are open to anyone regardless of their ability to afford the programs.
- Our senior citizens use our golf courses to stay **physically active and to connect socially** with their peers.
- Our affordable municipal golf program is an important **amenity that our local businesses use to attract talented professionals** to Madison that keep our community strong.
- Many "hidden" benefits like **increased property values** of homes surrounding our golf courses translating into increased tax revenue, green spaces within neighborhoods, water run-off to protect neighborhoods against flooding among others.
- **Financial support for other park amenities** like bike paths, soccer fields, community parks among others.
- **Tourism**

In short, we feel the Golf program provides significant community benefit and is a valuable amenity for Madison residents, both now and in the future.

However we know the Golf Enterprise has been struggling financially for years and been unable to fund necessary capital reinvestments in the courses for years. This lack of reinvestment, along with growing competition in the market, has made it nearly impossible for the program to be fully self-sufficient. The subcommittee feels strongly that it is time to **reinvestment in these capital improvements** that is critically important to provide for both maximum recreational value and revenue generation for the program. Failure to do so will put the golf program's future in jeopardy.

We know we can do more. We believe that with these improvement the golf program can do much more to serve our community, whether you play the sport of golf or not. **Imagine using our four clubhouses as community centers serving their surrounding neighborhoods**

and beyond all year long. Imagine using these clubhouses for after school programs, seniors' activities, neighborhood meeting spaces and even wedding.

The potential is exciting. But we need to make changes to these facilities to reach their full potential.

We know that money for such municipal projects is tight. We have heard from staff that there is limited likelihood of the City providing financial assistance to the Golf Enterprise. However, we feel that such support is warranted given the benefits to our City from having four quality and affordable municipal courses for our residents and guests. With the current situation in golf we feel it is imperative that golf be reinvested in to expand on recent successes of the program.

With prudent investment today, the City can reap the benefits of these facilities for generations to come.

We request your guidance and direction in regard to the potential for either direct capital or operational support of the Golf Enterprise. We feel that it is important to recognize the importance of golf in our community and that no other city supported recreational activities are operated as an enterprise. We are committed to a long-term sustainable solution to meeting the mission of the golf program and we await your direction on the matter of potential support from the City towards this goal.

It may not always be obvious but these civic gems we call golf courses are an important ingredient to what makes this the great city it is.

Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or comments.

The Golf Subcommittee