

Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks

Golf Subcommittee Meeting

October 8th 2020 via Zoom

Introduction of Task Force

- ▶ Established in September 2019
- ▶ Purpose of Task Force:
 - ▶ To make recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, and the Board of Park Commissioners regarding the future of the City's Municipal Golf Courses.
- ▶ 9 Member Body:
 - ▶ An Alderperson appointed by the City Council President
 - ▶ One Current or Former Member of the Board of Park Commissioners appointed by the Mayor
 - ▶ One Member of the Golf Subcommittee appointed by the Mayor
 - ▶ Six Residents appointed by the Mayor, to include representation of golfers, parks users, non-golfers, potentially impacted neighbors, and youth residents

Duties/Actions of the Task Force

- ▶ Solicit input from local stakeholders,
- ▶ Prioritize equity, public health, financial sustainability, and environmental sustainability,
- ▶ Review available research, best practices, and operational models related to municipal golf,
- ▶ Discuss and evaluate all options for the use of the land currently occupied by Madison's public golf courses
- ▶ Consider how to balance the allocation of resources among various parks uses
- ▶ Recommend if the City of Madison ought to provide municipal golf to the public; if so recommend how much, where, and how
- ▶ Develop recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, Committees or Commissions, on the future of Madison's Municipal Golf Courses that provide for both Golf and the City of Madison to be in a long-term financially sustainable position. At least one recommendation should not require an annual general fund operating subsidy and no tax levy supported debt

Information Gathering and Deliberation

- ▶ Tours of all four courses were offered to members
- ▶ The Task Force met for a total of 11 meetings:
 - ▶ Six (6) in-person meetings between October 2019 and February 2020
 - ▶ Due to COVID-19 the work was delayed and deadline extended to July 31, 2020
 - ▶ Five (5) virtual meetings between May and July 2020—all are available for viewing on the City's legislative page

Information Reviewed by Task Force

- ▶ Current Operations of City of Madison Golf Courses
 - ▶ Including partner presentations from Change Golf Instruction and The First Tee of South Central Wisconsin
- ▶ Golf Enterprise Budget and Financial Reports
- ▶ Operational Models of Municipal Golf Courses and Market Comparison
- ▶ Land and Resource Management
- ▶ Capital Infrastructure Needs
- ▶ Previously Explored Concepts and Processes
- ▶ Racial Equity and Social Justice Comprehensive Tool



Community Engagement

- ▶ Over 4,300 contacts were made and shared with Task Force Members
 - ▶ All emails/public comment from discussions prior to 2019 were shared with members
 - ▶ All emails/public comment received between October 2019 and July 2020
 - ▶ All meetings were open to the public for comment
 - ▶ Comment cards were gathered and are available in the legislative files
 - ▶ Two Public Engagement meetings were held in early March
 - ▶ Attended by approximately 150 people total
 - ▶ Focus Group consisting of 7 golfers

Initial Findings

- ▶ Affordable and accessible municipal golf is important to residents
- ▶ 72 holes of golf is too much for demand and competition
 - ▶ Not all members agreed to a hole reduction and had interest in exploring additional options first
- ▶ Task Force requested closure scenarios, which were presented
 - ▶ Closing eighteen, twenty-seven, thirty-six, and forty-five holes.
- ▶ Task Force determined capital infrastructure needs were significant and many quite pressing.
 - ▶ Concerns over how capital needs would be funded
 - ▶ Sale of land discussed, supported by some, but strongly opposed by others
 - ▶ Creative partnerships should be considered towards funding necessary improvements
- ▶ Adequate and well-maintained greenspaces are important to the community
- ▶ Enterprise fund should be evaluated

Final Recommendations

1. The City should provide Municipal Golf in Madison Parks.
2. The City should remove the enterprise fund designation from its golf courses.
3. The City should update the mission of the golf program.
4. The City should issue a Request for Proposals to evaluate the option of a private or non-profit operator for Monona and establish a plan and timeline to eliminate eighteen holes at Yahara Hills.

Final Recommendations

5. The City should work with the University of Wisconsin, including the OJ Noer Ag Research Station, to develop Integrated Pest Management protocols that are at the forefront of managing public golf courses sustainably.
6. The City should work to promote positive ecological outcomes at the golf courses through reducing reliance on limited natural resources and providing ecological assets.
7. The City should work with stakeholders and staff to develop a specific action plan to promote equity and inclusion at all courses.

Final Recommendations continued.

8. The City should work with Residents, stakeholders, and partners to promote wider utilization by the community of the golf courses to better integrate the courses into the wider park system for uses other than golf.
9. The City should ensure that if City resources are used to invest in capital projects at golf courses it is done in an equitable and fiscally responsible manner to reduce negative impact on park services across the system.
10. The City should not sell park land to fund capital improvements of the golf courses.

Next Steps in the Process

- ▶ The Task Force was dissolved upon the submission of its recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, and Board of Park Commissioners on July 31, 2020.
- ▶ The [Final Report \(File 61936\)](#) has been referred to the following virtual meetings. Public comment is welcome at any of the future meetings and by email.
 - ▶ Introduction at Common Council - September 1
 - ▶ Report was referred to other committees
 - ▶ Board of Park Commissioners (BPC) - September 2
 - ▶ BPC accepted the report and referred to other committees*
 - ▶ Finance Committee - September 8, referred to a future Finance Committee meeting
 - ▶ Request for additional information around budget implications of recommendations
 - ▶ Finance Committee - TBD
 - ▶ Madison Common Council - TBD

Note: Acceptance of the report by entities does not mean adopting the recommendations.

Questions
or
Comments?