



Legislation Text

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The proposed resolution establishes a Golf Task Force. No expenditure is required at this time. Parks staff will be primarily responsible for staffing the task force with existing resources. Additional City staff will also assist the task force using existing budgeted resources. Recommendations will impact the City's financial condition and position subject to future Common Council approval.

SUBSTITUTE - Establishing a Task Force on Municipal Golf in Madison Parks to make recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, and the Board of Park Commissioners regarding the future of the City's Municipal Golf Courses.

The City of Madison Parks Division currently operates a municipal golf program at Yahara (36 holes on 451.08 acres); Odana (18 holes on 171.27 acres); Monona (9 holes on 85.45 acres); and Glenway (9 holes on 41.98 acres). The courses have all been in operation since at least 1968. Over the past four years, the golf program has hosted an average of 100,000 18 hole equivalent rounds (a 9 hole round is 0.5 rounds). The golf program has been structured within the City's financial system as an Enterprise Fund since approximately 1980 and the program is budgeted for as a separate budgetary agency as the Golf Enterprise Fund ("GEF"), which is intended to be a fully supported business type activity fully funded via user fees. This includes funding all operating and capital expenditures related to the courses.

WHEREAS, the Adopted 2018-2023 Park and Open Space Plan ("POSP") provides the vision, mission, strategies, and goals for the Parks system for the next five years and beyond; and,

WHEREAS, the POSP aligns with the *Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan* update through the use of guiding lenses of equity, public health, adaptability, and sustainability; and,

WHEREAS, the POSP contains twelve strategies to meet the needs of the community which, along with the guiding lenses are the basis for park planning and development during the next five years; and,

WHEREAS, the twelve strategies are:

- Improve Public Access to Lakes
- Design Park Facilities to Accommodate Diverse Activities and Populations
- Protect and Enhance Natural and Cultural Resources
- Acquire Parkland to Reduce Parkland Deficiencies and Address Increasing Residential Density
- Ensure that New Park Development Occurs in a Fiscally Sustainable Manner
- Ensure That Existing Levels of Service Are Maintained and Supported Through the Park System and Are Increased as New Parks and Facilities Are Developed
- Create Equitable Access and Funding For Parks
- Improve the Park System's Capacity to Withstand Future Environmental Changes
- Increase Connectivity Between Parks to Enhance Access
- Develop a Healthy and Diverse Urban Tree Canopy Within Parks
- Increase Engagement with Groups and Organizations and Develop New Ones
- Pursue Regional Solutions to Regional Issues, and;

WHEREAS, the mission of the Golf Enterprise is to provide the Madison area golfing public with the finest

possible golfing conditions at reasonable prices and for all levels of play; and,

WHEREAS, the POSP classifies golf courses as a Special Use park use, the classification that is used for “parkland whose primary function serves unique recreation opportunities” based upon the model of the GEF being independent of tax levy support; and,

WHEREAS, the GEF has had a negative net income in nine of the last ten years and had liabilities exceeding assets in the amount of \$888,442 as of the close of 2018; and,

WHEREAS, to address this deficit, an advance to the golf courses enterprise fund of \$813,848, was made from the general fund on the City’s 2018 financial statements with 1st quarter projections for 2019 indicating an additional loss of approximately \$400,000 by the end of this year; and,

WHEREAS, this liability on the City’s financial statements creates real and significant financial and budgetary concerns for the City of Madison moving forward; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Common Council need to recognize, through resolution adopted in 2019, the advance from the general fund to the golf courses enterprise fund and identify the source(s) and schedule for its repayment,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Common Council direct the creation of a taskforce on the future of the City’s municipal golf courses that will be primarily staffed by the Parks Division and comprised of the following members: .

- 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, if possible; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the taskforce shall conduct and complete the following actions/duties:

- 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,
- Consider the highest and best use of the land currently occupied by Madison’s public golf courses,
- **Dicuss 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; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the taskforce complete its review and make final recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council and the Board of Park Commissioners; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the taskforce will be dissolved upon the submission of its recommendations to the Mayor, Common Council, and Board of Park Commissioners **by May 1, 2020**.