



**AGENDA
GOLF COURSE ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 8, 2022
9:00 AM
CITY HALL COMMISSION CHAMBERS
204 ASH STREET
FERNANDINA BEACH, FL 32034**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ROLL CALL**
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - 4.1 *March 9, 2022*
- 5. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- 6. OLD BUSINESS**
 - 6.1 Recreation and Parks Concept for Changing the FBGC
- 7. NEW BUSINESS**
 - 7.1 **FINANCIALS** - *General Manager Michael Cooney will provide a profit and loss update.*
 - 7.2 Prioritized Capital Improvements / Wish List from Golf Course & "Friends of Fernandina."
 - 7.3 New City / County Proposed Park at FBGC
 - 7.4 Update on Progress of "FRIENDS of the FBGC."
 - 7.5 Attendance at June 21 FB City Commission Meeting
- 8. MGA UPDATE**
- 9. WGA UPDATE**
- 10. MARKETING UPDATE**
- 11. AGRONOMY UPDATE**
- 12. ADJOURNMENT**

All members of the public are invited to be present and be heard. Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations in order to participate in this program or activity should contact the City Clerk at (904) 310-3115 or TTY/TDD 711 (for the hearing or speech impaired). All interested parties may appear at said meeting and be heard as to the advisability of any action, which may be considered with respect to such matter. For information regarding this matter, please contact the Golf Course Manager.

PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA ITEM
City of Fernandina Beach



SUBJECT:

ITEM TYPE: Approval of Minutes

REQUESTED ACTION:

SYNOPSIS:

FISCAL IMPACT:

CITY ATTORNEY COMMENTS:

CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDATION(S):

Caroline Best

Date: May 10, 2022

Submitted By: Caroline Best, City Clerk

COMMISSION ACTION:

MINUTES

GOLF COURSE ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, March 9, 2022

City Hall Commission Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER: 9:00 AM
2. ROLL CALL: Chairperson and FBMGA Member Lee Murray called the roll: Present: Member John Pelican; FBWGA Representative, Sue Simpson; and Member Jim Rauschenberger; FBGC General Manager, Mike Cooney; and FBGC Superintendent, Blaine Ellerbe. Member Jayne Paige was absent.
3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Member John Pelican led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Member Simpson made a motion to approve the prior GCAB minutes and was seconded by Member Pelican. The motion was unanimously approved.
5. PUBLIC COMMENT: Lee Murray recognized a request to speak from Mike Meadows.
6. OLD BUSINESS. In response to Member Pelican's inquiry, Mike Cooney stated that the proposed expenditures for a firepit and landscaping associated with the Toptracer facility would not be made until they are included in the budget for capital expenditures for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2022. In response to questions from Members Pelican and Rauschenberger concerning the funds allocated to the assistant superintendent position in the budget while the position was unfilled, Mike Cooney mentioned that the persons currently employed as a mechanic for the golf course had been appointed to a second position as assistant superintendent - essentially holding a dual position as mechanic and assistant superintendent. In response to questions regarding the ability to use amounts associated with the assistant superintendent position while it was unfilled, City Manager Dale Martin stated that unbudgeted expenditures of \$7,500 or more required approval of the City Commission, while those under that amount

required Mr. Martin's approval. Mr. Martin also confirmed that the process for preparing a budget to present to the City Commissioners is overseen by him in conjunction with discussions with various departments, including the golf course, and that at present plans are for no further subsidies from the City - that the golf course would need to be fully-funded from its operations. Mr. Martin also referenced that the recommendation of the Advisory Board that the Golf Course be managed by the City for another future year would be presented to the City Commissioners at its April meeting.

7. NEW BUSINESS.

7.1 City Manager Martin advised that no bids were received in response to the RFP for third-party management of Food and Beverage, effectively ending that process. Mr. Martin indicated that at this point in time he had no plans to put out any further RFPs on the matter.

7.2 Mike Cooney advised that the golf course received \$34,000 in rental (a 3% increase from the prior year), and close to \$25,000 from food and beverage, with respect to The Amelia Car Show (formerly Bonham's Car Show). A discussion followed as to the steps being taken to repair the 3rd Hole West.

7.3 Chairperson Murray stated that there was a vacancy on the Advisory Board due to Jayne Paige's resignation. Discussion followed as to candidates and confirming that individuals were residents of Fernandina Beach.

7.4 Lee Murray discussed forming an organization to provide financing for the golf course through a support organization. He has tentatively referred to the organization as "The Friends of the Fernandina Beach Golf Course." He referenced Friends of the Library and other similar organizations that could be a template. He will be following up on it.

8. MGA UPDATE. Chairperson Murray said the next tournament would be March 19. He mentioned some new members have joined and he wasn't aware of any leaving. He also mentioned that the MGA was now running the twice weekly Blitz.

9. WGA UPDATE. Member Simpson stated that the WGA was losing members, primarily due to the condition of the course over the last year and a half and due to cost. With respect to cost she referenced being able to play

Amelia River on Monday's for the same cost, and some people joining Amelia River as members. Members had also raised questions about the putting green. Blain Ellerbe indicated that until there were funds in the budget for eliminating contamination of the soil any actions, such as sprigs, would only be a temporary fix.

10. **MARKETING UPDATE.** Mike Cooney stated that the owner of the Golf Club of Fleming Island, Charles Raulerson, visited the Golf Course and discussed how he markets Toptracer at his facility. Mike also referenced steps to be taken regarding marketing the golf course and Toptracer to past customers through Golfnow. One suggestion made by Charles Raulerson that is used at his facility and at Blue Sky Golf is to increase the cost for selling range balls and charge less for using Toptracer. Mike indicated he would follow up with Toptracer to evaluate the differences in charging for range balls vs. Toptracer. Member Pelican observed that the key may be flexibility in all respects - charging, hours and marketing. Discussion followed on various marketing possibilities for Toptracer including loyalty cards, food trucks, happy hours and leagues. Member Pelican discussed having a ball machine to dispense balls without an attendant, similar to what is used at Fleming Island. In response to a question, Mike Cooney stated that the cost of such machines is approximately \$4,000 to \$10,000.

Member Rauschenberger referenced that Golfnow reviews of the course continued to be extremely negative and that there was no response from the golf course, which created the impression that the golf course didn't care and would be a negative for marketing the course on Golfnow. He suggested coming up with some standard response to such posts that would at least indicate that the golf course was aware of the issues and highlight steps being taken. Board Member Rauschenberger read some of the negative reviews.

11. **NON-AGENDA ITEM - FINANCIALS.** Mr. Cooney went over the financial statements. He highlighted a record number in February of rounds played, carts and greens fees. He noted that there were a couple of major equipment purchases in February that negatively affected overall expenses for the month/year to date. There was discussion as to the loss of range balls at the driving range and steps to mitigate it. Mr Cooney also referenced the possibility of renegotiating the Toptracer fee. High golf pro shop expenses were attributable

in part to merchandise purchases that are expensed in stocking up the pro shop. Food and beverage expenses were unusually high due to purchases associated with the car show and would be offset by revenue received in March. Member Pelican suggested membership drives at the midyear mark.

12. AGRONOMY UPDATE. Blain Ellerbe stated it had been a busy month for course maintenance, with all tees and fairways being aerified, compost material being applied, tree work on 1 and 9 South and the upcoming installation of sod on the tee boxes at 1 and 8 South. The focus for the rest of the year on tee boxes will be promoting growth until there is money in future budgets for more involved work such as rebuilding a number of tee complexes. A quote is also being solicited for the cost of root raking fairways and tee boxes to redirect tree roots that are adversely affecting grass growth without adversely affecting the trees' health. He referenced Tree Surgeons coming Friday to determine the schedule for major tree trimming. Member Murray suggested that Blain consult with Jacob Platt (city employee), as well as FB MGA member Ron Ferrell concerning the pictures they had taken of suggested tree trimming. Mr. Cooney discussed the possibility of having an adopt a hole or other program to encourage members to do basic maintenance (fixing ball marks and filling divots) during slow play. In response to a question from Member Rauschenberger, Blaine Ellerbe stated that golf course maintenance would be helped by being able to close a 9-hole course for a full week. He indicated that the current issue with doing so is trying to accommodate various groups playing the course regularly. Member Rauschenberger suggested that the Blitz follow the lead of the Women's Golf Association and be willing to play the North Course on a regular basis. Blain discussed the growing issues on 2 West fairway and stated that the fairway will need to be roped off once the growing season starts and sprigs are applied.

Lee Murray discussed a proposal to paint the monuments on each hole for \$75 per hole, which Blain Ellerbe indicated would be a good price.

13. NON-AGENDA ITEM - ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT: Mike Meadows was recognized and requested followup for the next meeting on the cost of a ball machine at the driving range.

14. ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn was made seconded and approved. The meeting adjourned at 10:12am.

Submitted by Jim Rauschenberger, GCAB Secretary

Lee Murray, Chairperson

Jim Rauschenberger, Secretary

CITY COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM
City of Fernandina Beach



SUBJECT:

ITEM TYPE: New Business

REQUESTED ACTION:

SYNOPSIS:

FISCAL IMPACT:

CITY ATTORNEY COMMENTS:

CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDATION(S):

Date: May 25, 2022

Submitted By: Michael Cooney, Golf Course Manager

COMMISSION ACTION:

Caroline Best

From: Michael Cooney
Sent: Wednesday, June 1, 2022 12:20 PM
To: Caroline Best
Subject: FW: New City/County Proposed Park at the Golf Course - concept

FYI below for AGENDA from Jack Knocke

Michael Cooney
Golf Course Manager
City of Fernandina Beach
2800 Bill Melton Road
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034
(904) 310-3178 | mcooney@fbfl.org
www.fbfl.us



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From: Chip Ross <cross@fbfl.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 31, 2022 3:27 PM
To: Jack Knocke <jack@iotadvisorgroup.com>
Cc: Michael Cooney <mcooney@fbfl.org>; lmurray637@aol.com; Mr. Dale L. Martin <dmartin@fbfl.org>; Chip Ross <cross@fbfl.org>
Subject: RE: New City/County Proposed Park at the Golf Course - concept

Thank you for your e-mail and idea. Perhaps a place to begin discussion is to present your idea to the Golf Advisory Board at their next meeting on 8 June 2022 @0900 @ City Hall. The board is passionate about the golf course, and I assume you would like to have a "tangible discussion" with them.

Chip Ross
Commissioner
City of Fernandina Beach
204 Ash Street
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034
(410) 394-0220 | cross@fbfl.org
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From: Jack Knocke [jack@iotadvisorgroup.com]

Sent: Friday, May 27, 2022 3:49 PM

To: Commissioners; Mr. Dale L. Martin

Cc: Scott Mikelson; Nick Gillette; Mike McClane; phclifford@gmail.com; Francis Lott; Gil Langley; Taco Pope; Marshall Eyerman; alanprescott528@yahoo.com; Tim Poynter (tpoynter@gmail.com)

Subject: New City/County Proposed Park at the Golf Course - concept

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, were expecting this email, and know the content is safe.

City Commissioners and other Stakeholders,

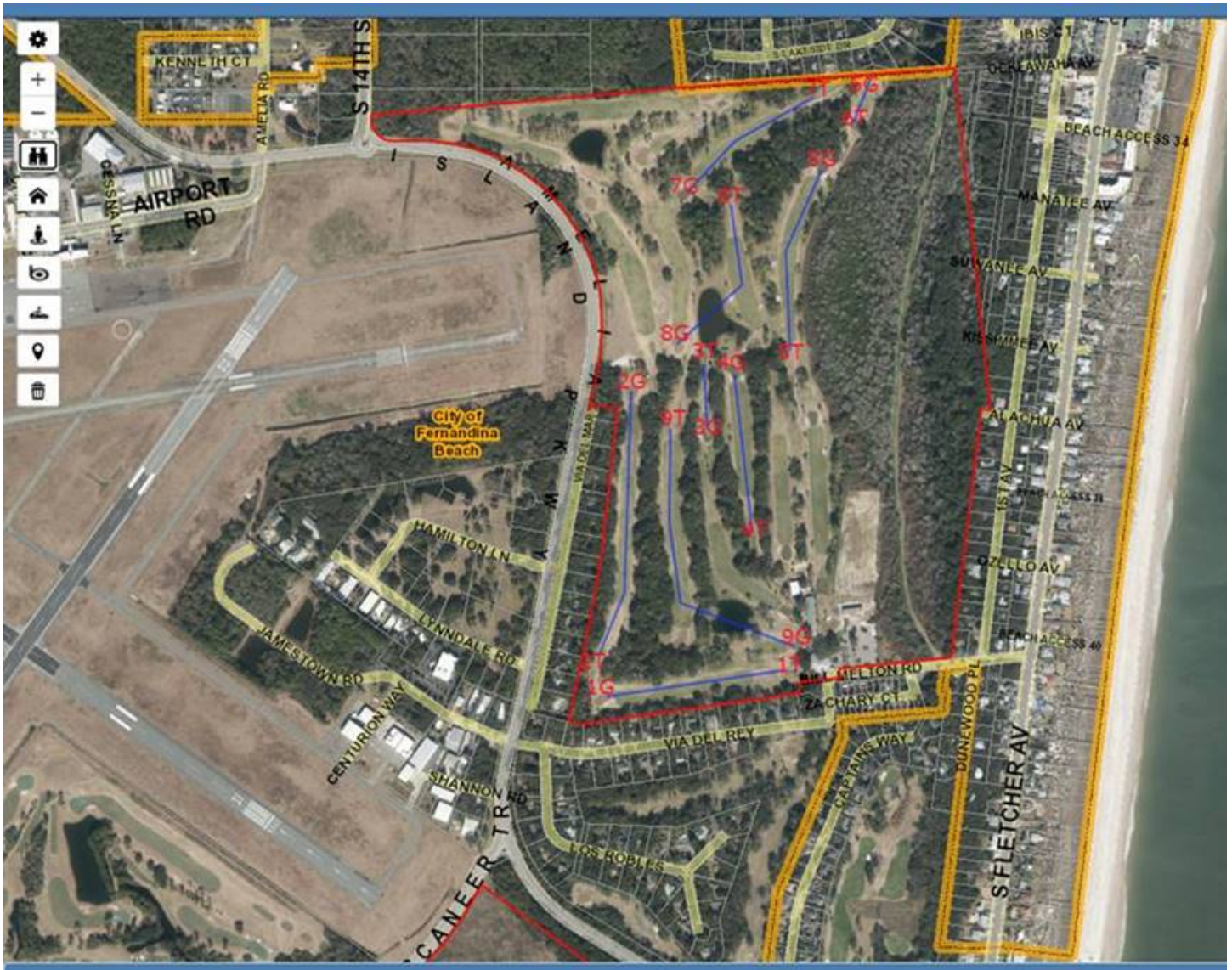
In light of the City of Fernandina Beach's recent central park presentation, I wanted to share a solution that was floated a year ago. To be clear, the proposal is to leave Central Park as is and invest city, county and TDC funds along with private funds to build a self sufficient showcase park on a carve out of roughly 8 or 9 holes of the city golf course that is not adjacent to houses.

There is a passionate group of Common Sense residents who have been seeking to help the City with a recreation alternative that provides a partnership opportunity between the City and County, relieve costs from the golf course to help move it to profitability and design a solution that could be SELF FUNDING so the city would not go under water in costs to maintain yet another park. The County has not had sufficient land on the island to provide active parks for county taxpayers and has relied largely on the City for active recreation. This proposal changes the paradigm with joint funding for development and maintenance of active recreation in the middle of the island. We also believe there could be a private/public partnership opportunity.

The public/private partnership could take multiple forms. A popular option discussed is a centerpiece nice restaurant/clubhouse that overlooks the park. This area could have membership options for preferred member use and amenities. The private partnership option would pay a lease and revenue share to the city to cover ongoing maintenance costs. This "self funding" approach gives the city an opportunity to build a park with little to no ongoing maintenance cost.

The drawing below and attachments are updated drawings of a proposed park.

This proposal/drawing below is a combination of the West and North nine's. This would open up approximately 25-30 acres of park land that is also adjacent to other City recreation lands along Simmons Road. This could be a joint solution with City, County, TDC and possibly other stakeholders. The County can't build a park on the island because they don't have land. The City cannot economically maintain 27 holes of golf. This proposed solution solves the overcrowding of park property within the existing City facilities. This also removes 9 holes of maintenance from the City Golf course. The solution could easily build tennis/pickleball/multi-use fields, petanque, walking/biking trails and use some of the existing holes that aren't being used for disc golf.. Disc golf is becoming popular and requires little maintenance other than occasional mowing. This proposal was prepared to comply with airport runway restrictions.



Holes are as follows (shown below on an aerial):

1. 1 West tee/1 West green – Par 4
2. 2 West tee/ 2West green – Par 5
3. 8 North tee/8 North green – Par 3
4. 7 North tee/7 North green – Par 4
5. 2 North tee/2 North green – Par 4/5
6. 3 North tee/3 North green – Par 3
7. 4 North tee/4 North green – Par 4
8. 5 North tee/7 West green – Par 4
9. 8 West tee/9 West or North tee (9 West shown) – Par 5

3 par 5's, 4 par 4's, 2 par 3's

Could probably convert Hole 5 (old 2 north) to a par 4 since it's short.

8 turns into a much better hole over the lake. 9 would be a great finishing hole using 9 west green over the lake but people may hit the clubhouse going for the green. 9 North green may be a better option for that reason. This would change the last hole into a hard dogleg left onto 9 North fairway and require some tree removal.

T – stand for Tee

G – stands for Green

Commissioners, if you are interested in pursuing additional discussions about the solution proposed, please reply all to the stakeholders. Ideally, we can start tangible discussions soon.

One additional thought for the city to consider is that if the city is collecting parks and rec impact fees, cannot figure out how to refund them when the fees are deemed excessive (now) and has no reasonable ability to spend the money, maybe the city commissioners should immediately cancel Parks and Rec impact fee collections until a plan can be created that can be managed more effectively.

On this Memorial Day weekend, let's all remember and recognize the sacrifice that our United States of America soldiers have made throughout history to defend our freedoms and protect America! Thank you heroes!

Common Sense Fernandina Beach

Jack Knocke