

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF KEY COLONY BEACH CITY COMMISSION**  
**WORKSHOP MEETING – REVIEW OF GOLF COURSE PROPOSALS**  
**Tuesday, October 6, 2009 9:30 a.m. City Hall Auditorium**

The Key Colony Beach City Commission was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Mayor Sutton. *Present were:* Mayor Ron Sutton, Vice-Mayor Geraldine Zahn, Commissioner Jeff Vorick, Commissioner Tucker DeGraw and Commissioner Mary Schmidt. *Also Present:* Attorney Thomas D. Wright, Building Official Edward Borysiewicz, Police Chief Robert Petrick and City Clerk Vickie Bollinger. Public: 15

Mayor Sutton stated the workshop meeting was called to discuss the proposals that had been received regarding the lease and operation of the golf course. Commissioners discussed:

- The city should receive enough in lease payments to cover the expenses to the city. The city should not subsidize the operation of the course. City currently pays for reuse water, taxes, and insurance among other things. None of the proposals are at break-even for the city.
- Lease should be for a period of one year with an option to renew for 2 years or something similar. A 5-year lease is too long. This will give the new operator a chance to see if money can be made and then the lease could be amended based on the experience.
- The lease payment should be realistic and based on actual experience. However, the city should not subsidize a private business.
- There is risk associated with all businesses and the prior operator was not successful in the last couple years.
- The business will have to be built up after the last couple years. It is hoped the new operator will have new ideas to improve the course and the financial picture.

Each applicant was asked to discuss their approach to improving the course and operations.

Buddy Blauth stated his main focus will be on the product; the infrastructure needs to be straightened out. New golf bags and clubs should be purchased. Promotional activities could include classes and mixed doubles play. The greens and fairways need improvement. He rated the current condition of the course as high poor or a low fair.

Mayor Sutton said he and Building Official Borysiewicz took a tour of the Sombrero County Club course and found the KCB course to be in better condition.

Daryl Rice stated he agreed with Mr. Blauth, but that the course has lots of character and potential. It should be marketed better than in the past. He agreed the greens and fairways could be improved. He said he would be the full-time grounds keeper and hire outside help when needed. In response to questions he said the security deposit was no problem, he will fix the sprinkler system if the city buys the parts or he is willing to discuss other arrangements, some of the inventory purchased by the city has been used, and some new equipment is needed.

Commissioners agreed that if the sprinkler system is not functioning properly, the city should have that repaired before the new operator takes over. There may be negotiations regarding other improvements that could be made to improve the operation of the course.

Terry Elver said she is a meticulous person who would take care of the upkeep and maintenance of the course. She would like to add services not provided at this time like food and beverages. She has help and support from several people when it is needed. She said she would gladly work with the city regarding the security deposit and inventory. She stated she has ideas to increase revenues.

Commissioner Schmidt stated the city received an email from Chuck and Donnie Burkhardt, 14 7<sup>th</sup> Street supporting Ms. Elver and her efforts to operate the course.

Sandra Rishak stated she would keep things the same and continue what the previous owners were doing. She agreed the irrigation system needed fixing. She said that the previous workers had agreed to work with her and that she would improve the advertising. She suggested the city provide additional signage out on US 1 so that people could find the course easier.

Commissioners discussed that advertising is expensive but needed. There is a small green sign on US 1 for northbound traffic, but others had been paid for by the Spanos. A website may be useful as more people use the internet for information.

Charles Lankford was not able to attend this meeting. His representative stated he was there to take notes and report to Mr. Lankford, but was unable to speak for him.

Commissioners and public continued discussion:

- All equipment should be in good operating condition before a new operator is asked to be responsible for it.
- Carts that were kept outside are now inside and not available for use. This was a commission decision. During city hall business hours, the Mayor or Mr. Rice can get equipment for golfers when asked. However, no one is available on the weekends.
- Clubs and bags are not in good shape.
- Many have commented on how good the course is doing now and its maintenance.
- Mr. Rice agreed to fill in when the last grounds keeper quit without notice. He will continue until the new operator is chosen.
- Even though Mr. Rice is doing the maintenance and has submitted a proposal, all proposals will be equally considered.
- References were called and all applicants have excellent references.
- Putting green needs about \$2,000 worth of work.
- Course is a “fun” course not a “professional” one. It is there for everyone to enjoy.
- Various advertising and promotional ideas for family and kids were discussed to increase the number of people who play.
- Before his death, Wayne Spano worked very hard on the course every day and was credited with making the course what it is today, even though the last few years have been difficult.

Recreation Vice-Chair Blanche Hines stated the committee reviewed all the proposals and identified positives and concerns with each one. She said the committee agreed that Mr. Rice has been doing an excellent job maintaining the course.

Attorney Wright stated the lease may need to be amended to include language about fees to play golf to protect both parties. He said the city has set the fees in the past and that the lease has not changed much in the 30 years that the Spanos operated the course. He suggested a new lease be written and that once the commission selects the next operator, negotiations can begin.

Commissioners discussed/commented:

- The new operator should have input to the fee schedule and number of memberships.
- Memberships are now limited to 200, but no one knew why that limitation existed.
- This would be discussed at the commission meeting on Thursday. If an operator is selected, negotiations could begin right away and hopefully the lease could be presented at the last meeting in October for approval.
- This process needed to be completed as soon as possible to give the new operator time to prepare before the winter season.

- Due to the economy this would be a bad time for any fee increases, but maybe the number of memberships could be increased.
- Recreation Committee has done an excellent job of monitoring the golf course, reviewing issues every month, and following up with the suggestion box.
- The tennis courts were reserved through the golf course pro shop. The lease may need to include something about the tennis courts or other provisions made.
- The tennis courts will be resurfaced this month, weed control is done by Public Works, and the Recreation Committee will help with the screens.
- Use of the tennis courts may be increased by offering things like classes or league play. Some fees may need to be charged since maintenance of the courts is expensive.

Commissioners thanked all the applicants who submitted proposals and all those that have provided input during this process. They asked that the applicants attend the commission meeting on Thursday to answer questions. Mayor Sutton encouraged the commissioners to give this a lot of thought so that on Thursday a decision can be made. All agreed it was important to keep this process moving forward.

The workshop adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

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Vickie L. Bollinger, City Clerk

Note: A mechanical recording has been made of the meeting of which these minutes are a part, and a copy is on file in the office of the City Clerk, as a public record.