

# MEETING NOTICE

## TOWN OF BREWSTER

### GOLF COMMISSION

**Location: Remote Participation Only**

**Date: January 5, 2021**

**Time: 4:00 PM**



This meeting will be conducted by remote participation pursuant to Governor Baker's March 2020 orders suspending certain Open Meeting Law provisions and imposing limits on public gatherings. No in-person meeting attendance will be permitted. If the Town is unable to live broadcast this meeting, a record of the proceedings will be provided on the Town website as soon as possible. The Town has established specific email addresses for each board and committee so the public can submit comments either before or during the meeting. To submit public comment or questions to the Golf Commission, please email: [golfcommission@brewster-ma.gov](mailto:golfcommission@brewster-ma.gov). To view the:

- Live broadcast: Tune to Brewster Government TV Channel 18
- Livestream: Go to [www.livestream.brewster-ma.gov](http://www.livestream.brewster-ma.gov)
- Audio/video recording: Go to [www.tv.brewster-ma.gov](http://www.tv.brewster-ma.gov)

### **AGENDA**

- Call to Order
- Director's Report (Mark O'Brien/Jay Packett)
  - Update on Consultant Study
  - Course Operations Questions and Concerns
- Golf Course Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Memo
- Questions and comments from Associations and Liaisons
- Review and approve Minutes
  - 12/22/20
- Topics the Chair did not reasonably anticipate
- Future Agenda Items and Meetings (1/19)
- Adjourn

**Mark O'Brien**  
Director of Operations

**Colin Walsh**  
Course Superintendent

*Golf Commission*

**Anne O'Connell**  
Chair

**Andrea Johnson**  
Vice Chair

**Carl Blanchard**

**John Kissida**

**Wyn Morton**

**Jeff Odell**

**David Valcourt**

The Captains Golf Course  
1000 Freemans Way  
Brewster, MA 02631  
**(508) 896-1716**

[www.CaptainsGolfCourse.com](http://www.CaptainsGolfCourse.com)

Date Posted:

Date Revised:

Received by Town Clerk:

## MEMORANDUM

To: Director of Golf Operations Search Committee  
From: Mark O'Brien  
Date: November 13, 2020  
RE: Captains Golf Course Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

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As requested, I have drafted this document to identify what I perceive to be the Captains Golf Course's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats:

### Strengths:

1. Single site 36-hole facility – The Captains GC is the only public golf facility on Cape Cod with two courses located on one location. Allows for flexibility in scheduling events, convenience for the golfers, efficiency of operations (both maintenance and operations), etc.
2. Debt Free – Although it is inevitable that future debt will be required for major projects, our current status will allow us to build significant reserves for the future.
3. Clubhouse facility – The Ellsworth Pavilion gives us a significant advantage over our competition in attracting golf outings. The large parking lot also provides growth opportunities for attracting events. The clubhouse is well situated to serve the golfers.
4. Experienced Staff – The key employees in both the operations and maintenance staffs have extensive experience in their fields.
5. Course Layout – Both courses start and finish in close proximity to the clubhouse. The layout is interesting and provides an enjoyable experience for golfers of all abilities.
6. Reputation – The Captains Golf Course is considered one of the premier, if not the premier, public golf facility on Cape Cod. This is due to customer service, course conditions, and amenities.
7. Restaurant – The current operator has upgraded the operation and proven to be a draw to the facility, for both golfers and non-golfers.
8. Location – I view our geographic location as both a strength and a weakness. With no other regulation golf courses located beyond us on Cape Cod, we are positioned well to attract members from the Outer Cape Towns as well as the summer daily fee visitors staying on the Outer Cape.
9. Membership Support – The way that the Captains membership has demonstrated their enthusiastic support of the Captains through their willingness to participate in the 2-year member program, volunteerism for course projects, and support of the Freemans Grill in this pandemic year is a major strength.

### Weaknesses:

1. Location – Day trippers to Cape Cod must travel past many other public golf courses before they reach us.
2. Driving Range – The location of the driving range is a challenge. Inconvenient for the golfers.
3. Safety Training – We need to improve our training and procedures in this area.
4. Cart Paths – Our cart paths are in disrepair and may reflect negatively in regard to the customer experience.
5. On-Line Booking System – Our booking engine for non-members is not as user-friendly as it should be.

#### Opportunities:

1. **Golfer Growth** – The pandemic has identified various demographics that can potentially grow the game, mainly young adults. Juniors and women are other demographics that show potential for growth.
2. **Solar Energy** – The recent projects at the golf course demonstrate the potential revenues/cost savings that can be realized from solar energy. Future projects could include solar panels on the clubhouse roof and cart storage roof.
3. **Promotional/Advertising** – As we start to ramp up on our capital improvements, this provides an opportunity to promote “what’s new” at the Captains Golf Course.
4. **Non-Golfer Reach** – Our efforts in the Pleasant Bay Watershed nitrogen reducing initiatives will be a great way to highlight the importance of the Captains Golf Course to the overall Brewster community.

#### Threats:

1. **Older Age Demographic** – In past years, especially as it pertains to memberships, as older golfers were playing less and dropping their memberships, they were not being replaced by younger members at the same rate.
2. **Environmental Concerns** – We have seen in the Town of Barnstable the impact of banning any synthetic product use on the golf course. It greatly increases the cost of maintenance and negatively impacts course conditions. This is something we need to be cognizant of as pressure grows to go in this direction.
3. **Competition** – The other area courses are continuing to improve their facilities and the Captains must continue to reinvest to at least keep pace.
4. **Cost Increases** – The current trend in the golf industry has shown that costs are increasing at a faster rate than revenues. The Captains must find a way to balance this out.
5. **Maintenance Building** – The current maintenance facility has many significant shortcomings, many of which could be considered safety hazards. This must be addressed.
6. **Irrigation Wells** – The irrigation wells do not pose an imminent threat, however, we must be proactive in making sure that we continue to have a sufficient water source for the irrigation system as it is the life-blood for maintaining the asset.
7. **Tee Time pressure** – This year there was significant pressure on the tee time availability from the members. Careful consideration must be given when contemplating any adjustments to the member/non-member tee time allocation ratio as it could have detrimental impacts on revenues.
8. **Future Debt** – There will undoubtedly be a need to bond for future large capital expenditures. Careful planning is needed to ensure that there will be sufficient cash flow to maintain solvency for the golf operation over the life of any debt undertaken.
9. **Sink Holes** – I have come to view this as less of a threat over the last few years. They do pose a hazard in some “in play” areas. However, I believe that they can be managed through in-house maintenance and repair, although they do need to be monitored closely.

From: Mark O'Brien  
To: Golf Commission  
Date: January 3, 2021

RE: Member Tee Time Allocation

*C. Tee Times and Reservations*

*1. AFP Tee Times:*

*m) The Golf Commission may adjust the ratio of AFP tee times to DFP tee times after the number of AFPs is known and the amount of revenue that has been collected is known. At no time shall the percentage of AFP tee times be lower than the AFP revenue divided by the budgeted golf course expenses.*

\$,964,825            Est. FY2019 AFP Membership Revenue (thru. June 30, 2019)

\$2,981,109            FY 2020 Total Budgeted Expenses  
(wages, operating expenses & fringe benefits)

32%                    AFP Revenue divided by budgeted golf course expenses

The minimum tee time allocation allowed by our policy would be 50% of the tee times on one course and 13% of the tee times on the other course.

Our current allocation is 50% on one course and 12.5% on the other course. I recommend that we maintain this same allocation.

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Had we gone through this procedure in June 2020, the result would have been:

\$1,044,504            FY2020 AFP Membership Revenue (does not include two-year membership fees covering 2021)

\$3,144,381            FY 2021 Total Budgeted Expenses  
(wages, operating expenses & fringe benefits)

33.2%                    AFP Revenue divided by budgeted golf course expenses

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Based on FY22 budget projections, the tee time allocation will be:

\$1,095,756            FY2021 AFP Membership Revenue projected (adjusted to include \$250,000 from two-year membership program)

\$3,590,231            FY 2022 Total Budgeted Expenses  
(wages, operating expenses & fringe benefits)

30.5%                    AFP Revenue divided by budgeted golf course expenses



**TOWN OF BREWSTER**  
Brewster, Massachusetts 02631  
(508) 896-3701

**GOLF COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of December 22, 2020**

**Commissioners Present:** Anne O’Connell (Chair), Andrea Johnson (Vice-Chair), Carl Blanchard, John Kissida, Wyn Morton, Jeff Odell, and David Valcourt

**Others Present:** Colin Walsh, Golf Course Superintendent, Jay Packett (Asst. Oper. Mgr.), Rob Harris (CCMGA), Sarah Robinson (18-Hole Women’s Assn.) and Donna Potts (9-Hole Women’s Assn.).

THIS MEETING WAS HELD REMOTELY WITH AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDED. The meeting may be viewed at: <http://video.brewster-ma.gov/CablecastPublicSite/show/5108?channel=1>

Anne O’Connell called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm after reading remote meeting guidelines and procedures.

**Superintendent’s report:**

- It snowed recently, giving the course a break. The Port Course is closed for the duration of the winter, the Starboard Course will be open. The greens on Port have been deep-tined. Staff has been reduced to half schedule due to the increase in Covid. Colin received mail from Sarah Robinson regarding some work needing to be done. Winter staff is working.

**Director’s report:**

- Jay Packett reported on requests for the following events to be put on/removed from the calendar: Brewster White Caps, June 29; Harwich Chamber of Commerce, May 26; the Men’s Association would like to give up June 16; Pals for Life, October 6. Jay Packett clarified the rates.
- Jeff Odell made a motion, seconded by Andrea Johnson, to approve the additions to the calendar as outlined by Jay Packett. Discussion followed as to which course will be used for each event. Motion passed unanimously.
- Jay Packett advised he and Mark O’Brien discussed advanced reservations and suggested the following: hotel reservations will be accepted starting December 28. Advanced reservations for daily fee players will be accepted starting February 1. All groups will be restricted to a maximum of twenty players. Cranberry Valley is not doing events. Discussion followed. This will be discussed again at the next meeting.

- Back 9 tee times are again on the calendar. Anne O'Connell asked for the commissioners' thoughts. Discussion followed. This matter will be revisited when/if tee time restrictions are lifted by the governor.
- Carl Blanchard asked for the status of the HVAC system in the clubhouse. Mark O'Brien has been trying to get in touch with McDonnell Mechanical and has not heard back.

#### **FY2022 Budget Review and Vote:**

- Jay Packett discussed the budget for FY22, figures based on those from this year. Membership numbers were discussed. Greens fees are based on the figures from 2019. Regarding expenses, staff is difficult to find, the numbers are reflected from a fully-staffed golf course. The increase in the minimum wage was also considered. There is no contract currently in place regarding the unions. There is a figure at the bottom of the spread sheet indicating contractual obligations in the event of union increases.
- General expense line items are generally based off historical data. The largest increase is for marketing and advertising.
- Some line items have increased due to additional greens applications needed due to the Pleasant Bay Watershed.
- Fringe benefits are figures from town hall.
- Peter Lombardi will be reviewing indirect costs as related to the golf course.
- Discussion followed.
- Jeff Odell moved approval of the FY 22 budget requests as published under the December 18, 2020 revision, total amount \$3,690,231. Seconded by Andrea Johnson. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats memo:**

- Jay Packett reported from an operational standpoint, the computer screens are small making it difficult for the clerks to see names; the computer is slow printing receipts. Mark O'Brien has started the process of getting new computers. Jay Packett will be talking to Chelsea regarding making booking tee times more efficient and finessing computer functions

#### **Questions and comments from Associations and liaisons:**

- Sarah Robinson thanked Colin for his attention to the 18-hole members' letter. Discussion followed.

#### **Review and approve minutes:**

- A motion was made by Jeff Odell, seconded by Wyn Morton to approve the minutes of 12/8/20 as written. Carl Blanchard said bullet on top of page 2 should read the pro shop is closed to all but staff. Jeff Odell withdrew his prior motion and made a motion to accept the minutes of 12/8/20 as revised, seconded by John Kissida. Motion passed unanimously

#### **Topics the Chair did not reasonably anticipate:**

- None.

**Future agenda items and meetings:**

- Chelsea point allocation system for back 9 afternoon and back 9 play.  
Conversation with Mark O'Brien.

A motion to adjourn was made by John Kissida, seconded by Dave Valcourt to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy Vesperman  
Department Assistant