

Council Meeting Staff Report

January 4, 2022

Agenda No.:	A.
Indexes (Council Goals):	* 2020 Council Goal - Investing in Infrastructure
Presenters:	Jaime Aslin; Eric Martinez; Jon Bulthuis; Cory Styron
Legislative File:	14992-21

Title

Consideration and Possible Approval of a Revised Scope of Work for the Golf Course Site Improvements Project

Recommended Action

Motion Option 1:

I move that Council direct staff to use the currently available remaining CIP funds to issue an RFP (potentially design/build) for a golf course designer/construction contractor to:

- **Rehabilitate/add bunkers, tees, greens, trees and areas in disrepair on holes four (4) through eighteen (18);**
- **install two (2) new restrooms (one on the Front 9 and another on the Back 9); and**
- **continue the use of restricted flight balls to temporarily address the safety concerns at the driving range while a new design can be developed.**

I further move Council consider a [future] budget revision for a new golf course design consultant to complete revised design concepts; conduct public involvement; apply for necessary rezoning approvals to the Planning and Zoning Commission and Council; and complete technical design and bid documents for the following improvements to the golf course:

- **Expand the course to accommodate one or two new holes so not to shorten the overall course length for holes one (1) through three (3);**
- **expand the driving range to minimize or eliminate safety netting and include driving and short game practice improvements; and**
- **design additive alternatives for cart path upgrades.**

OR

Motion Option 2:

I move that Council support securing the design services of a new golf course design professional to:

- **Develop bid ready documents (technical drawings and specifications) to make improvements to holes 4 through 18 as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Board;**
- **simultaneously develop concept design options for improving holes 1 through 3 and the driving range/practice tee areas including cost estimates;**
- **seek public feedback in coordination with the Parks and Recreation Board; and**
- **return to Council with recommendations for a phased implementation of golf course improvements including associated budgetary proposals.**

I further move that, to address the golf course safety concerns, restricting ball or club use at the driving range should only be a temporary solution. The concept design options will

consider permanent improvements that address safety without impacting the teaching and learning quality of the facilities, and include evaluating the following:

- **Expanding the course to accommodate one or two new holes so not to shorten the overall course length while minimizing impacts to existing trails and open space to the greatest extent possible;**
- **expanding the driving range to minimize or eliminate safety netting and include driving and short game practice improvements; and**
- **practice area improvements, cart path upgrades and any other course improvements identified during the design process.**

County Manager's Recommendation

The County Manager recommends that Council approve Motion Option 2 as presented.

Board, Commission or Committee Recommendation

The Parks and Recreation Board (PRB) recommends Motion Option 1 based on the white paper submitted by the Los Alamos Golf Association (LAGA) representatives included as Attachment A.

Body

Background

On December 5, 2017, Council approved a \$4.524 million budget for Golf Course Improvements with the primary goal of replacing the irrigation system with other elements to be prioritized as funding allowed with safety netting improvements at the driving range identified as a project consideration. Subsequently, the design and construction of the irrigation project was successfully completed in February 2021.

On May 13, 2021, a design concept was presented by the County's design professional to the Parks and Recreation Board (PRB) during a public meeting. The design included an expanded driving range that proposed to renovate holes 3, 4, 5, and 6 and improve bunkers on the front 9. The design professional and staff addressed questions, and with no apparent objections or further suggestions regarding the design, the golf course architect completed design documents in June 2021 in accordance with the project schedule and the services agreement. As the project was prepared for construction bid advertisement, staff received numerous concerns over the design from Los Alamos Golf Association (LAGA) members. As a result, staff paused any further activities on the project and held a public meeting with LAGA members on July 16, 2021. Through this process staff learned and more fully understood LAGA's response and opposition to shortening the golf course associated with the proposed design.

On October 12, 2021, a public input and information meeting was held followed by a presentation to the PRB on October 14, 2021, to continue dialogue, address concerns and feedback received by members of LAGA, and obtain further input. At these meetings staff provided an overview of the project history, existing conditions and reported on various scenarios developed including budget impacts for consideration by the Board. Staff also received recommendations from LAGA supporting the use of restricted flight balls at the driving range as a method of addressing safety. On October 19, 2021, staff also met with members of the Los Alamos Youth Golf Association (LAYGA) and received input. The comments received from LAGA and LAYGA members through this process are included in Attachment B.

During the public meetings with LAGA and PRB, the design consultant requested to be released from the services agreement. The reasons stated were the project entered into a direction beyond the original scope and any additional services associated with restricted flight balls places his company in an uncomfortable position of making recommendations beyond the professional expertise ordinarily provided by golf course architects.

In November 2021, with public input received, staff obtained new technical information from Tanner

Consulting that included a ball flight study of the Pointfive 60% restricted flight/low compression ball recommended by LAGA to address safety issues at the driving range. The ball flight analysis does illustrate the current netting layout is sufficient with the use of this type of ball and may even allow for some partial removal or lowering of the existing netting.

Also during this time, LAGA also provided Pointfive balls for use by golf course patrons and a customer survey was conducted. The results show mixed results by patrons on the proposed use of this ball at the range. Additional feedback on the use of this specific restricted flight ball was offered from Tanner Consulting; Mr. Eric Reinser, General Manager of Shamrock Hills Golf Club in Lee's Summit, Missouri; and Mr. Duane Peterson, Pointfive Golf Company representative. Ball flight information, customer survey results, and additional feedback on restricted flight ball use are also included in Attachment C.

Other design options were considered over the last six months, however there was no consensus reached during the public outreach efforts. These options are outlined in the staff presentation dated October 12, 2021 and included as Attachment D.

Parks and Recreation Board Recommendation

On December 9, 2021, staff presented this information to the PRB and provided a recommended path forward. However, the PRB chose an alternate recommendation provided by LAGA which is represented in Motion Option 1. The Budget Revision amount is unknown currently and considers additional design costs only. Jaime Aslin, member of PRB, will be in attendance to represent PRB and their recommendation.

Staff Recommendation

Staff crafted alternative Motion 2 in an attempt to honor the intent of the PRB recommendation but has a different process approach for specific reasons: (1) although the former design consultant put together bid documents to make improvements, they differ from what the PRB recommended improvements and need to be revised; (2) a design consultant is needed to oversee the construction standards and quality; and (3) the overall design and cost options for all of the needed golf course improvements should be understood before the current project funds are expended.

Furthermore, golf staff does not support the use of restricted flight balls at the driving range as a permanent safety solution as it would result in a profound operational change to the use and customer experience of the course.

Alternatives

Council could choose Motion Option 1 or 2, make an alternative motion, or choose not to progress the golf course improvement project any further at this time.

Fiscal and Staff Impact/Planned Item

The remaining CIP budget for the project is approximately \$1.9M. The remaining CIP budget was never expected to improve the entire golf course and additional funds will be required to do so. The December 5, 2017 Council minutes and staff presentation is included as Attachment E.

Attachments

- A - Kurt Anast Submitted White Paper Received December 3, 2021
- B - Golf Course Site Improvements Public Input Received in October and November 2021
- C - Tanner Consulting Pointfive 60% Restricted Ball Flight Study and User Feedback
- D - Staff Presentation, October 12, 2021
- E - Council Minutes and Staff Presentation, December 5, 2017
- F - Staff Presentation, January 4, 2022