

## **Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

<b>Present:</b>	M Keates	Chairman
	T McIvor	Finance Director
	P Higgins	Golf Director
	E Botham	Ground Director
	G Unsworth	House Director
	T Longden	Marketing Director
	J Bliss	Lady Director
	S Wells	Captain
	A Stewart	President
	PJ Keane	General Manager

Apologies:           A Crawford           Lady Captain

Zoom meeting commenced at 6.30pm with a warm welcome by the Chairman. With no amendments to the minutes of Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March, they were signed as a true record.

### **Action Log:**

#### *Biomass Boiler*

The General Manager confirmed that the additional information requested to support our planning application to Manchester City Council for sighting of the biomass boiler, burner and pellet silo housed in a pod to the corner of the Clubhouse has been submitted:

- A flood risk assessment as the site is located within a designated flood zone (cost £1035. EA have also been approached to see if they can assist)
- Technical specification of the biomass boiler – this has been provided
- A tree survey and arboricultural method statement – this has been commissioned

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, we have been informed that no site visits by MCC will be undertaken and request photographs to be submitted of the site for validation. These have been submitted. Action GM.

We are unable to provide a lead time for the order and installation of the boiler, as the manufacturer based in Northern Italy are in lockdown.

The Chairman stated that any further fuel, rental or service costs may shortly have to be met by the Club as the insurance company will not approve the cost of their extended use because of our requirement to re-site the biomass boiler.

#### *Bank Switch*

The General Manager confirmed that both current accounts for Withington Golf Club and WGC Trading Limited have moved from Royal Bank of Scotland to Santander. Unfortunately, the two Reserve accounts remain with RBS. Following numerous emails and telephone conversations, these accounts should be closed and switch no later than Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May!

The General Manager confirmed that the Direct Debit facility for the collection of members subscription has also not switched. Exchanges between RBS, Santander and AccessPay have

been numerous over the last 4 weeks, resulting in the non-collection of members Associated Costs in April, with subscription renewals scheduled from May. This is becoming a major concern. Tony Longden stated that he would assist in trying to resolve this issue and hope to progress to a satisfactory conclusion.

#### *Drain jetting*

The Ground Director confirm that the drains on 18<sup>th</sup> fairway have been inspected with cameras and jetted. Silt has been removed, these are now free and clear. Additional drains have been installed on the fairway that run directly into the open ditch. All other drain inspection and jetting has been placed on hold.

#### *Holding ponds*

The capacity of holding ponds on 17<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> holes have been extended. Additional feeder pond to the 17<sup>th</sup> and additional storage pond to the back of the 17<sup>th</sup> green have been created. A pond has been created on the corner of the 13<sup>th</sup> hole. All ponds and ditched are to be permanent feature and will hold water.

A drain from the new pond to the holding pond on the 13<sup>th</sup> hole will be commissioned once we are able to purchase land drains (company is closed due to lockdown). The Board acknowledge the work Liam Igoe has undertaken in the landscaping of these areas. This has been well received by followers on Social Media.

#### *Garage Doors*

Replacement up and over garage doors to green keepers shed have been ordered and will be commissioned once lockdown has been relaxed. The two wooden doors have been replaced. These costs will be covered under our insurance claim against EA.

#### *Guttering*

Quotation is pending but will be placed on hold due to the lockdown.

#### *Service lift and disable bays*

Service lift is now working and signage for disabled parking and Pro car parking is in place.

#### *Furlough Staff*

In line with the Government Job Retention Scheme, all bar and catering staff have been placed on furlough which has been extended until the end on June. This will need to be reviewed and changes may need to be implemented subject to guidelines and other factors!

The House Director suggested that holiday entitlement should be spread proportionately across the furlough period in a fair manner. Action FD.

#### *Family Offer*

£75 for a parent and up to 2 children for same period which gives them:

- 3 lessons from Steve
- 1 playing lesson from Steve on Blue course - including guidance on basics of golf, simple rules, health & safety, supervision
- Free twilight with access to Blue course
- £75 off Parent's annual subscription and each child given 1 year's free membership should they join

This is a unique offer and has the full support by the Marketing Committee. However, the timing is not to be right with other issues taking priority. The Marketing Director will convey this back to Colin Webb instigator of this initiative.

#### *Insurance Claim*

The Chairman confirmed we have received a further interim payment of £110K in terms of the claim made to date and receipts. This represented 50% of the balance of our claim that we have set out to include:

- Members rebate
- Material Damage
- Revenue Loss

The revenue loss claim is to the end of December 2019, so a further claim will need to be made under this heading. Action FD.

Please note that none of the payments made by the insurer to date are allocated, so no item of claim has been accepted as such - other than the 50% rebate which has been accepted as being payable (or paid, depending on final allocation once the claim is finalised).

In addition, no calculation has been made for any uninsured loss of the club, such as:

- Increased insurance premium
- Excess on insurance claim 1 & 2
- Loss adjusters fee

**Finance Director's Report:** Figures for the months of February and March are as follows:

*Income* for February £22.9K – last year £27.7K

*Expenditure* for February £42.5K – last year £33.9K

*Summary:* a deficit for the month of £19.6K – against a loss last year of £6.2K

Notes: £6K accrual for balcony repair

£1.5K replacement of emergency lights

£1.2K PPE

*Income* for March £25.4K – last year £27.4K

*Expenditure* for March £42.7K – last year £35.5K

*Summary:* a deficit for the month of £17.3K – against a loss last year of £8.1K

Notes: £2.6K plant hire

£1K water pump hire

£6K accrual for balcony repair

£1.3K repair of service lift

£1.8K drawing for new entrance/foyer & lounge

The Finance Director stated that the accounts are not a true reflection of the trading of the Club. Income is inflated as a result of the profit incurred of the stolen tractor and two tractors that have been replaced as a result of the 2019 flooding.

The Finance Director stated that our cash reserves are diminishing as we are not trading at usual levels of business due lockdown from COVID-19 pandemic, the second interim payment will help!

The Finance Committee have produced a Cash Flow Forecast for financial year 2020/21, based on the following assumptions:

<b>Income</b>	Subscription	280K – includes insurance claim
	Green Fee	50K
	Highways England	20K
	Other – this is uncertain – no bar and catering operation	
<b>Expenditure</b>	Ground	188K
	House	71K
	Administration	160K
	Contingency	21K – relocation of boiler
<b>Loss</b>		90K

This is clearly non sustainable. The Board cannot stand still and do nothing, consideration to the restructure of the Club may be necessary. Options need to be explored, solutions need to be implemented to reduce bottom line expenditure and reduce or eliminate the forecast deficit. The Captain will set up a sub committee and report back to the Board. Action SW.

Equally, we cannot store up liabilities, bills need to be paid. The Finance Director will set out an action plan on how this is to be achieved.

The Chairman thanked the Finance Committee for their input, but it was clear that without 2020/21 budget proposal/forecasts we are unable see the bigger picture. He requested budget forecasts showing income and expenditure on existing basis in ALL areas from:

- Ground Director
- House Director
- Finance Director – administration

#### *Bank overdraft*

The General Manager confirmed he is in receipt of Terms & Conditions that form the Agreement for £26K overdraft facility with Santander. This was reduced from the £50K we had in place with RBS as deemed it was never used. Follow discussion this was approved, with a new application to be submitted to secure a £50K. overdraft limit. Copy of the Agreement will be forward to Finance Committee.

#### *Membership retention & resignations*

The Chairman confirmed that the Club has experienced a high level of membership renewals, with the number of resignations not being atypical to previous years. We attribute this to several factors:

- the availability of the 50% rebate
- the loyalty of the membership base
- the exciting work being carried out on the course

The Chairman was pleased to report that the Club has received £40,000 in pledged donations, which is a very good result considering the course and Clubhouse is closed, which is down to the loyalty and generosity of our members. This will cover the estimated course drainage improvement work of approximately £15K and we will consult appropriately about how to spend the balance.

The General Manager has been able to provide some information on the reasons why members have resigned (33% relocation, 33% finance) but what is disappointing is the lack of communicate via Membership Exit Survey Form. Marketing will pick up on members who have not confirmed reason for resigning. MD.

**Ground Director's Report** for the month has been circulated and a copy has been posted on the Club's website. Brief summary of work that has been carried out in the last 2 weeks as follows:

Verti drained all fairways

Second over-seeding of all damaged areas as a result of August 2019 flooding.

Tees have been verti drained & top dressed

Fairways and rough are being cut once a week

All drainage work is complete except for a drain connecting the new pond on the corner of the 13th to the holding pond on 13th

Crossing points on 17th & 18th have been re-turfed.

*Greens have been:* -

Verti drained

Scarified

Over-seeded

Top dressed

Application of – Compost tea, feed with Green Lawngr and Granular fertiliser.

Irrigation system has been commissioned

Water moisture content inspection & watering is being carried out

Some of the greens have dry patch - application of wetting agent was to be applied

In general, cutting and tidying of the course is a priority

The course will be ready for play, as and when the ban is lifted - Full 18 holes

All staff holiday entitlement for 2019/20 has been taken

Approved overtime for March and April will be reviewed signed for payment at month end

**Golf Director's Report** for the month has been circulated.

The focus for M&H Committee has been to determine a safe practise in playing social and competition golf once the lockdown is relaxed. This will be subject to Government Guidelines and input from England Golf. Consideration as follows:

- M&H will prioritise Board Competitions, and Summer Medals
- St George Medal & Queen Elizabeth Medal cancel for 2020
- Exchange Day(s) for 2020 cancel
- 2019/20 Winter Stableford Final to be postponed until the beginning of the 2020/21 Winter Season
- Further consideration will be given to holding Knockouts in 2020.

Membership Demand/Restriction on playing numbers i.e. 2 balls only/Increased gaps between groups. (Any reduction in available tee times that would leave members disappointed).

- M&H preference is to extend playing times and maintain competitions to same day. Start time 7:00am last tee time 3:00pm E.g. 6 groups of 3 players per hour = 144 players. If groups limited to 2 players only 96 players could be accommodated, potentially tee could be extended to 4pm adding 12 extra places
- Competitions Golf spread over two days i.e. Friday afternoon/Saturday or Saturday/Sunday afternoon
- Additional competitions during the week and on Sundays i.e. Starkey Salver on a Sunday or 3 Man Team event on a Friday
- Consideration for restricting visitors/societies to ensure members competitions are prioritised

The General Manager will circulate guidelines on access, booking, play and social distancing for Board approval prior to resuming play. Action GM.

Whilst it is too soon to confirm if Captain's Day, scheduled for Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June will take place, an alternative date should be considered. It is unlikely that any form of social event will take place following play!

The Chairman asked the Captain and President if consideration had been given in extending their Year in Office during these unusual circumstances. The Captain stated that he would discuss this with the President and Lady Captain, provide feedback to the Chairman. Action Chairman.

**Marketing Director's Report** – no report for the month.

Current Focus for the Marketing Committee are as follows:

*Ladies Academy* – this has been postponed. Alternative date will be found.

*Spring Campaign*

Join Withington and play 3 courses until the end of April 2021

- £188 ages 12 to 20
- £182 ages 21 to 24
- £449 ages 25 to 29
- £650 ages 30 plus

The Marketing Committee have been actively promoting our offers on social media, by email and website, in addition we have posters, flyers and banners at the club and Trafford Centre. In addition, we have the Palatine Road banner.

*Trial Membership Offer*

Bob Ganley has engaged with all TMO stating that their offer has been seriously compromised, both by appalling weather conditions in February and that of the coronavirus. They have all been given the option of deferring to 2021 or taking up membership from May at a reduced subscription rate. Action GM.

## **Any other Business:**

### *Health & Safety*

Following receipt of our latest H&S Audit, the following points need to be action:

- Create new H&S planner for 2020
- Update H&S Policy and display
- Complete full list of hazardous substances Clubhouse COSHH register
- Update Fire Evacuation Drill for January on 2020 planner

**All in place**

The following action points to be deferred pending the re-opening of the Clubhouse:

- Fire evacuation training for all staff to be completed and noted
- Fire Evacuation Procedure to be displayed
- Appropriate PPE is in place for use in the cellar
- Bar steward and staff are familiar with correct working practices
- Correct signage is in place
- Clubhouse Risk Assessment
- Introduction and compliance with Clubhouse toolbox

### *Members Update*

It is several weeks since we sent a Newsletter to the membership. Whilst engagement on Social Media has been very positive, it would be prudent to send an update with images and videos.

Action MD.

### *Green Fee Rates*

Following discussion, it was deemed that our green fee rates for visitors and guests are too cheap. The Board would like to see an increase of at least 25% on all rates before any relaxation in Social activities and commence with social golf. Action MD.

### *Funerals*

The Ground Director suggests that this would be an opportunity to engage with local funeral directors informing them of the Clubs facilities to offer their clients the use of the Clubhouse for family wakes once lockdown has been relaxed. Action MD.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm. With no further business, the Chairman thanked all for attending. The next Zoom meeting will be Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May at 6.30pm.