

**TOWN COUNCIL FACILITIES TOUR OF THE
JAMESTOWN GOLF COURSE
March 26, 2019**

I. ROLL CALL

Town Council Members present:

Michael G. White, President
Mary E. Meagher, Vice President
Nancy A. Beye
Randall White
William J. Piva, Jr.

Also in attendance:

Andrew E. Nota, Town Administrator
Michael C. Gray, Public Works Director
Joseph Mistowski, Jamestown Golf Course Operator
Jon Mistowski, Assistant Golf Course Operator
E. Michael Montoya
John A. Clarke
Cheryl A. Fernstrom, Clerk

II. CALL TO ORDER

President White called the Facilities Tour session of the Jamestown Town Council to order at 10:01 a.m. at the Clubhouse of the Jamestown Golf Course, 245 Conanicus Avenue, Jamestown.

**III. TOWN COUNCIL TOUR/SITE VISIT OF THE
JAMESTOWN GOLF COURSE**

- A) Tour/Site Visit led by Joe Mistowski and Jon Mistowski, Golf Course Operators

Golf Course Operator Joseph Mistowski and Co-Operator Jon Mistowski explained their credentials and certifications in turf management and golf course operations. Both are graduates of Montana State University.

Discussion ensued of water issues at the golf course that began in the 1990's, Town Administrator Robert Sutton's suggested use of effluent for irrigation, and the 1996 RIDEM Grant to build an irrigation system for use of effluent that included sprinklers and related equipment. Review of water sampling and compound levels for the period 1996-2019 proceeded.

Discussion ensued of sod used for the greens (Bent Grass) and the need for an alternate water source to replace the effluent. Over time the greens were damaged due to the high chlorine content in the effluent created during the disinfecting process required by RIDEM regulations. Mr. Mistowski explained the need for fresh water and his desire to double the size of ponds fed by groundwater and runoff. He is concerned the continued use of effluent will damage the fairways and tees and he no longer wants to use it as a water source.

Public Works Director Gray provided additional explanation of disinfecting requirements established by RIDEM for effluent discharge due to the proximity to a coastal feature. Lengthy discussion of effluent testing ensued. During the season the golf course uses 200,000 gallons of water daily. Comparisons of water use by customers of the water system and wastewater created by customers of the sewer system to that of the golf course ensued. Mr. Mistowski expressed appreciation for the work done by Town staff at the course.

Discussion involved installation of the irrigation system, USGA standards, and using two systems – one for fresh water and one for effluent. Mr. Mistowski noted the window of time available for the trenching of 1.4 miles or 7,000 linear feet for the 8 miles of pipe and 30 miles of wire. He also noted it may take until the end of April to complete the work required to open the golf course for the season.

Greens Construction. A diagram of greens construction was distributed. Mr. Mistowski proposes to change the surface not rebuild the course. Discussion ensued of sod work including reuse of greens and the process involved, time requirements to build the ponds, and that work cannot be done once the golf season begins. The process to rebuild the greens and ponds will take two years to complete. Discussion ensued of grass from seed vs. turf, controlling Poa Annua in the Bent Grass greens, use of seed head suppressor, and re-grassing.

Council members asked if the golf course did not open on time and/or had to close for a period of time would the golfers come back and how many leagues use the golf course during the season? Mr. Mistowski stated he was unsure if all the golfers would come back and there are four leagues golfing per day during the season. Town Administrator Nota expressed the need for a timeline for restructuring of the golf course, as all parties have to review what is needed – personnel, funding, time. Council members asked if the golf course could make it through the season and close early for construction, review of grass vs. sod and costs, process, and timelines. Mr. Mistowski stated September is their busiest segment of the season for tournaments. The operation officially closes down for December 1st, but there is little if any activity after Columbus Day. Discussion ensued of budgeting and funding elements, procedures, planning of resources, doing the work over the next three to five years, and closing the course during renovations.

Mr. Nota noted the existing lease terms specify the Town (Lessor) has a clear responsibility for the building structure and other specific course elements, like the effluent pond and pumps and that the Maintenance of the Course is the sole responsibility of the Course Operator (Lessee/tenant). It was mentioned that the Town had been working on the Town Council Golf Course Tour/Site Visit

Building replacement plan for many years and that if the timeline remains intact, that the construction should begin later this fall. Mr. Nota also noted that due to the severity of the impact on the greens, scope of work involved and the financial burden associated with the needed improvements, along with other facility upgrades, it would be beyond the ability of the business operation to fund all improvements. A partnership of some degree between the Town and Operator can be justified in this case.

Discussion of the water, chemical content, and irrigation proceeded. Town Administrator Nota stressed the importance of getting a one-year lease agreement in place, and Mr. Mistowski stated he is uncomfortable with the uncertainty of negotiations for the lease agreement extension with the time and financial investment required on his part. Lengthy discussion ensued of the schedule of costs, the lease amount, the building is the Town's responsibility and the course is the operator's responsibility. Mr. Mistowski stated it would be hard to get \$175,000 for an annual lease based on current conditions at the golf course. Discussion ensued of a \$125,000 lease for five years with option for renewal. Mr. Mistowski noted concern for an increasing lease payment, how it would work, he wants to make money and keep the people happy, and charges \$19 for a round of golf.

Discussion ensued of Mr. Mistowski's expectations and Council support for the operator. The 118 year-old greens were never reconstructed, proper funding was never applied to the golf course, the quality of the course, and service to the public were noted. Town Administrator Nota stated both sides have to do their part on the financial and maintenance side. Discussion ensued of the Town's contracting for an appraisal and the need for updated comparisons. The important factors needed are value with existing conditions, and value with the new building and improvements. Mr. Mistowski noted factors that decrease his revenue such as water problems, bridge construction, and traffic delays.

Public Works Director Gray reviewed the ponds, CRMC applications and expected completion, and a synopsis of recent conversations involving the operator. Mr. Nota stressed the need to articulate conditions of the agreement, limits of the investment, and value of the course with the new building. Discussion involved a lease cost evaluation of the first five years of the lease during course improvements and construction of the new building estimated to take 1 ½ years to complete, variables and parameters, and once the lease is in place the irrigation project can begin. Mr. Mistowski stated he would like more definite figures before signing an agreement.

Jon Mistowski gave a PowerPoint presentation showing conditions of the golf course from 2015 to present.

Discussion ensued of scheduling a meeting regarding a proposed agreement prior to the April 1st Council meeting with potential dates/times. Discussion ensued of a lease proposal and the need to address conditions, restructuring plan, options for an additional five-year lease agreement, costs, and the current operator's willingness to continue.

Site Tour. At 11:40 a.m. an outside tour of the greens, fairways, tees, ponds, pumping facilities, storage facilities, cart storage, and other locations proceeded using golf carts that included:

- 1st Tee, practice green – with explanation of conditions and additional tees proposed
- Public Works Director’s review of the building design, plan to keep course open during construction, operator’s recommendation to move building location, site-specific location of the proposed facility, including entrances/exits, patio, and cart storage
- Views from the proposed club house
- Current cart storage area
- Old storage area
- Maintenance building
- Ponds, operation, current conditions and future plans for improvements and enlargements, including potential future pond site
- Pumping Station, conditions, and needed improvements
- Irrigation system, conditions, and needed improvement/replacement
- Tees, at various locations, with observance of conditions, relocations, challenges, and planned improvements
- Greens, at various locations, with observance of conditions, recent work, challenges, and planned improvements
- Fairways, at various locations, with observance of conditions, challenges, and planned improvements
- Conanicut Yacht Club Tennis facility noted (shared land with golf course)

Mr. Mistowski invited Council members to visit in July during peak season for flowers and shrubs when the course is at its best. Council members thanked Joe and Jon Mistowski and others for the tour.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no more golf course locations to observe, the Tour/Site Visit was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Attest:

Cheryl A. Fernstrom, CMC, Town Clerk

Copies to: Town Council
 Town Administrator
 Finance Director
 Town Solicitor