

**RICHTER PARK AUTHORITY**  
**Employee Evaluation Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, August 18, 2020, 4:00 PM**

**DRAFT**

*In compliance with Connecticut General Statute § 1-225, these minutes are being provided for informational purposes and are subject to approval of the Richter Park Authority Board of Directors at its next regular meeting.*

Chair Wendy Grispin opened the meeting at 4:02 PM.

Members present: Wendy Grispin, John Priola, Don LoRusso, Pete Siecienski, Bob Eberhard, Leroy Diggs and Judy Griemsmann.

Also present: Karen Madaus, Business Manager, Jonathan Pinto, Head Professional and Rob Dorsch, Golf Course Superintendent.

Ms. Grispin started the meeting by stating that she has spoken to Rob Dorsch, Jonathan Pinto and Karen Madaus, and that they should all be commended for adjusting so well to running the business during the pandemic.

Mr. Dorsch's contract is due at the end of 2020 (not in 2021, which was a previous typo that has since been corrected). Mr. Dorsch is very comfortable with renewing his contract for three more years without a salary increase, but would like the car allowance reinstated (\$500/mo) to cover the costs for using his personal vehicle for work-related issues (hauling generators, etc.)

Ms. Grispin asked about the possibility of obtaining a City vehicle. Mr. Priola noted that the surplus list is currently available, however, Mr. Dorsch added that nothing worthwhile is on the list.

Ms. Grispin supports renewing his contract for three years. Mr. Diggs would like to look at several contract options. Mr. Eberhard endorsed a three year contract. Mr. Siecienski asked about goals and objectives relating to Mr. Dorsch's job.

Mr. Siecienski brought up the issue of raises or bonuses for these staff members due to how well they handled the pandemic and recent hurricane damage. Mr. Eberhard stated that he was in favor of bonuses, as did Ms. Grispin. Mr. Siecienski added that he supports the proposed contract.

Mr. Eberhard made a motion to recommend a three year contract renewal with the same compensation for Mr. Dorsch. Mr. Siecienski seconded. Mr. Diggs was nay, the rest were aye. Motion passed to present a three year contract renewal to the RPA at tomorrow night's meeting.

Mr. Pinto is also interested in a contract for his employment. He feels that he has more than proven himself during his tenure at Richter Park. He stated that his starting salary was fair two years ago, but he is worth more now with his experience at Richter Park, and he would also like a percentage of the Pro Shop revenues.

Mr. Eberhard stated that Mr. Pinto has exceeded his expectations and said that he deserves at least a reasonable compensation and at least a two year contract. Mr. Siecienski asked if the industry standard for a Golf Pro is a contract, which it is. Mr. Pinto stated that most Golf Pros also have full control of the Pro Shop.

Mr. Siecienski asked Mr. Pinto what the most difficult personnel issue has been for him. Mr. Pinto stated that it would be finding and retaining good employees and letting other employees go. He is ecstatic to have Mr. Pinto as the Golf Pro.

Mr. Diggs stated that a salary increase may be effected by the number of rounds next year, although a two year contract would be good.

Mr. Eberhard added that he agrees with a contract (two years minimum) and appropriate compensation.

Ms. Grispin asked for someone to assist with researching comparable information at similar golf courses. Mr. Siecienski offered to assist.

Ms. Madaus stated how the uncertainty of business in winter is unsettling to her, and that she would like to feel more comfortable knowing that her job was not in jeopardy if it wasn't a good year for the golf course. She explained many facets of her job to the Committee. Mr. Siecienski mentioned a discussion with Mr. Priola and the Mayor to look at a possible option that would not negatively affect her position or salary in the winter months.

Ms. Grispin mentioned that she will let the RPA know that the Employee Evaluation Committee supports bonuses to these staff members to acknowledge the efforts of a particularly difficult year. Mr. Eberhard agreed with Ms. Grispin. Mr. Siecienski agreed as well, and stated that it would probably occur during the October/November timeframe.

Meeting adjourned at 5:20pm.

**RICHTER PARK AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES** **DRAFT**  
**Virtual meeting via Zoom**  
**TUESDAY, August 18, 2020, 6:00 PM**

*In compliance with Connecticut General Statute § 1-225, these minutes are being provided for informational purposes and are subject to approval of the Richter Park Authority Board of Directors at its next regular meeting.*

Chairman John Priola opened the meeting at 6:01 PM.

Members present: John Priola, George Radachowsky, Don LoRusso, Al Mead, Bob Eberhard, Leroy Diggs, Wendy Grispin, Pete Siecienski and Judy Griemsmann.

Also present: Karen Madaus, Business Manager, Jonathan Pinto, Head Professional and Rob Dorsch, Golf Course Superintendent.

Absent: Paul DiNardo and Felix Bonacci.

**Approve minutes of previous meetings**

Mr. Mead made a motion to approve the minutes from the July RPA meeting. Mr. Diggs seconded. Ms. Grispin was a nay. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**Public participation**

none.

**Correspondence**

There were four letters submitted which were very complimentary of Mr. Dorsch, from Gary Driscoll, Tyler Hammett, Noah Pilipski and Mike Janavey. There were also two letters submitted which were not very complimentary of Mr. Dorsch, from Chris Wilbur and Don Fossi. Mr. Dorsch stated that he will address these letters during the Grounds and Greens portion of the meeting.

**Arts Association Report**

Email received regarding updates on the Richter House. The bidding process may have to change due to the high bids during the initial bidding.

**Musicals at Richter**

Two summer fundraisers will be online, Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup> and Friday, September 11<sup>th</sup>. Hoping to have a song from every year. They are also starting to work on the 2021 season.

**MPC-Richter House**

The Mayor discussed delays caused by Covid-19, etc., but still trying to make things happen.

## **FORe**

No report.

## **Business Manager's Report**

There is a photo of Richter Park's groundbreaking ceremony that is missing. Ms. Madaus was contacted by the Danbury City Museum and they are currently working on finding the photo. The outing calendar will get much busier starting at the end of August into September and October.

## **Head Golf Professional**

July was a great month! The Danbury Amateur had 151 golfers and there were lots of great comments received. July surpassed the roadmap by over 400 rounds of golf. The driving range was up to \$130k through the end of July as well. The Pro Shop sales are a little slow due to it being closed for 2 ½ months during Covid-19. It has been doing well since reopening.

The storm in August set us back a bit, as we lost three days due to tree damage and power outage. Otherwise, it has been a great month so far.

## **Grounds and Greens**

After the storm, the staff came together to clean up the course and opened by Friday of that week. The cooler weather lately has been good, and the Air2G2 was just used on the course.

Regarding the positive letters submitted, Mr. Dorsch doesn't know three of the four authors. He wanted to respond to some issues from the negative letters. Primarily, he had agreed to cut \$70K out of the budget and told the RPA that details around the course would be lacking due to this cut. Many things that were discussed in the letters were detail issues directly related to the budget cuts. Board members should not be looking for negative letters from the golfers, they should be supporting the decision to cut the budget and ask unhappy golfers to come to RPA meetings.

From 3/1/20-7/14/20, Mr. Dorsch has been onsite every day. He (and Mr. Pinto) also deferred their paychecks and 401K contribution for January and February 2020 to help with the lack of income that Richter Park was dealing with in the winter. It's disheartening to see Board members asking for letters of concern when he is doing everything in his power to do things right. The Board should be supporting the staff, not working against it. Mr. Mead expressed his support for these comments.

## **Financial report**

Mr. LoRusso mentioned that there was a delay in the monthly reports due to the power loss from the recent storm. He then discussed financials through 7/31/20.

Mr. Mead made a motion to accept the financial report and have it put on file. Mr. Diggs seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

### **Finance Committee Report**

Mr. Diggs discussed employee medical insurance options and possible changes to the current 401K program.

- a) Employee medical insurance: keep the same plan without an increase to the employee 33% contribution
- b) Recommendation for 2021-22 medical insurance renewal: offer employee-only starting October 1, 2021 with an option for family members to join Richter's policy but pay for it
- c) Current 401K is a 4% employer contribution. The suggestion is to change that to a 4% match.

Mr. Diggs will talk with the full Finance Committee to discuss these options and may request a vote at the September RPA officer elections meeting.

### **Chairman's Comments/Report**

In the first week in September, we will hold a special RPA meeting for officer elections. The Nominating Committee is: Bob Eberhard, Leroy Diggs and Al Mead (Chair). The meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6pm.

We as the RPA need to be ambassadors and cheerleaders to make Richter Park a better place. We should try to discuss issues with concerned golfers rather than to have them write letters to the Board. We need to work together and not against each other and we should all be on the same page.

### **Old business**

Mr. Priola spoke to Dan Rosemark recently. Sprint and t-mobile have merged. We may look at getting out of the current agreement we are in.

### **New business**

There was an Employee Evaluation Committee meeting yesterday, and the fact that Mr. Dorsch's contract is up this year was one of the matters discussed. Ms. Grispin (Chair) gave accolades to Rob about deferring his salary and 401K contributions early in the year to help Richter Park get through the winter, and how he hadn't taken a day off in months during the pandemic. She also praised how he and Mr. Pinto paid for a staff holiday party when there wasn't any money in the budget to hold a party. Mr. Dorsch also has not had a pay increase in 11 years. She was also disheartened by the negative letters presented at tonight's meeting.

The Employee Evaluation Committee would like to recommend that the RPA renew Mr. Dorsch's contract for three years and discuss the possibility of reinstating the car allowance. Ms. Grispin made a motion to approve the Employee Evaluation

Committee's recommendation of renewing Rob Dorsch's contract as is for a full three years. Mr. Mead seconded. A discussion followed:

Mr. Siecienski stated that the letters should be responded to, and that Mr. Dorsch is a lightning rod for comments regarding the golf course. The RPA bears some responsibility for some of the issues due to budget cuts. He would like to know what a typical car allowance per diem is, and continue to look at the City vehicles in surplus. He advised the RPA to support the Committee's recommendation to renew Mr. Dorsch's contract.

Mr. Eberhard agreed with Ms. Grispin and Mr. Siecienski's support of renewing Mr. Dorsch's contract and would like to add the car allowance to the renewal.

Mr. Priola touched upon the positive correspondence received regarding Mr. Dorsch.

Ms. Grispin made a motion to extend Mr. Dorsch's contract for another three years. Mr. Mead seconded. Ayes: Mr. Siecienski, Mr. Mead, Ms. Griemsmann, Ms. Grispin and Mr. Eberhard. Nays: Mr. Radachowsky, Mr. Diggs and Mr. LoRusso. **Motion passed.**

Mr. Pinto would like a contract and a portion of the Pro Shop proceeds. He will review other salaries and packages of other Golf Professionals at other municipal courses.

Ms. Madaus brought up the uncertainty of her employment position during the winter months. There was some discussion of possible restructuring of the position, which can be explored in the future. Ms. Grispin noted that Ms. Madaus is utilized more than usual during outings.

Ms. Grispin also discussed year-end bonuses for these staff members, who have all stepped-up during the pandemic. She would like to keep the dialog open as the season progresses. She also suggested that each submitted letter should receive a response.

Mr. Mead moved to adjourn at 8:16pm. Ms. Grispin seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**