



WASHOE COUNTY

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PARK COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: January 5, 2021

DATE: December 17, 2020

TO: Open Space and Regional Parks Commission

FROM: Dave Solaro, Assistant County Manager
Office of County Manager, 328-3624, dsolaro@washoecounty.us

SUBJECT: Presentation, discussion and possible recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners to direct staff, with the District Attorney's Office's assistance, to begin stage two of the unsolicited-proposal policy by completing all necessary documents including leases and a term sheet for the proposal from MAZZ Golf Management for the continuation of golf operations at Wildcreek Golf Course.

SUMMARY

Washoe County, through its Community Services Department, has received an Unsolicited Proposal from MAZZ Golf Management for a continuation of golf operations at the Wildcreek Golf Course. After review of the proposal and discussions with the proposer, Washoe County staff recommends moving to stage two of the Unsolicited Proposal Policy which entails possible development of a long-term agreement or lease for ongoing operations as proposed.

The Open Space and Regional Parks Commission is being asked to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners (Board) that staff be allowed to continue discussions and negotiate a long-term solution for continued golf operation at the Wildcreek Property.

Strategic Objective supported by this item: Safe, secure and healthy communities

PREVIOUS ACTION

June 23, 2020 – The Board approved a Professional Management Services Agreement with MAZZ Golf Management to operate and maintain Wildcreek Golf Course.

January 12, 2016 – The Board approved an updated Unsolicited Proposal Policy and Guideline to be included in the Rules and Procedures for the Board of County Commissioners.

BACKGROUND

Washoe County is committed to implementing a clear policy and framework for considering unsolicited proposals for developing or using County-owned land or infrastructure and associated service delivery. The approved policy and guideline indicates a willingness on the part of the County to partner with the private sector to deliver innovative infrastructure and

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associated service delivery outcomes and provides a gateway for the private sector to deal directly with Washoe County on unique proposals.

The County has no obligation to approve an unsolicited infrastructure proposal no matter how much contribution the project proponent has offered. The County recognizes that a number of issues must be considered in evaluating such proposals and that even considering a significant upfront commitment, that commitment may be dwarfed by ongoing costs to the County in operating or maintaining the facility, which could otherwise be used by the County for other initiatives it deems of greater value.

Washoe County has title to Wildcreek Golf Course and related improvements at 3500 Sullivan Lane in Sparks. The Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitor's Authority (RSCVA) developed and operated Wildcreek Golf Course, but the RSCVA's modern focus on attracting overnight visitors to Washoe County lodging properties through tourism marketing, convention sales and facility operation did not include the operation of golf courses and the RSCVA transitioned its property interest in the Wildcreek Site to the Washoe County School District for public benefit and use. The Washoe County School District identified the Wildcreek Site as a desirable site for a new high school given the proximity to student populations and necessary infrastructure and the needs of the School District. The School Project will be constructed on 87.02 acres of land.

The School District's preliminary plans allow for the continuation of a redesigned and reconstructed public golf course on a remainder portion of the Wildcreek Site which will continue to be owned by Washoe County.

Washoe County staff continue to review the sustainability of the Wildcreek Golf property and the golf management agreement with MAZZ Golf Management, which has allowed for a review of actual costs to operate the existing course and will be used in making future determinations related to the property with the current proposal.

With the approval of the agreement for temporary management and after the golf season of 2020 Washoe County staff would like to provide the Board of County Commissioners with a report and options for the future of the Wildcreek property which includes further exploration of the proposal from MAZZ Golf Management.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact at this time to Washoe County, staff time will be allocated for the review of this proposal as necessary and is currently budgeted.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Open Space and Regional Parks Commission recommend to the Board of County Commissioners to direct staff, with the District Attorney's Office's assistance, to begin stage two of the unsolicited-proposal policy by completing all necessary documents including leases and a term sheet for the proposal from MAZZ Golf Management for the continuation of golf operations at Wildcreek Golf Course

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners to direct staff, with the District Attorney's Office's assistance, to begin stage two of the unsolicited-proposal policy by completing all necessary documents including leases and a term sheet for the proposal from MAZZ Golf Management for the continuation of golf operations at Wildcreek Golf Course."



December 2, 2020

Washoe County Manager's Office
Dave Solaro, Asst. County Manager
P.O. Box 1130
Reno, NV 89520

RE: Proposal to Washoe County for Continuation of Golf at Wildcreek Golf Course

Background and Summary

On June 23, 2020 the Washoe County Commission unanimously approved a short-term operating agreement with Mazz Golf Management to operate Wildcreek Golf Course until November 15, 2020. Wildcreek had been closed in April when the previous operator opted out of their contract during the Covid-19 golf business closures mandated by Governor Sisolak and the State of Nevada. On July 1st, Mazz Golf Management (MGM) officially re-opened Wildcreek with six of the existing championship golf holes and the par three golf holes available for play.

During this period MGM was committed to determine the feasibility of continuation of golf at Wildcreek. Over the summer months and moving into the Fall, golf rounds exceeded expectations and it indicated that usage generated revenue that would financially support a golf operation at this location. During this time, Mazz Golf Management came to the conclusion that affordable golf is not only feasible at Wildcreek, but a necessity with the limited public golf now available in Washoe County.

At the beginning of the process of building a new High School on the Wildcreek site, it was the intention of the Washoe County School District and Washoe County to develop a plan that would allow for the continuation of golf. MGM has developed a conceptual plan that will show a path to renovation of the golf elements and infrastructure at Wildcreek that not only will fill the great

need for affordable golf in our community but also be a facility that will be financially sustainable.

After Washoe County committed to Washoe County School District to transfer part of the Wildcreek property to them for construction of a new high school they entered into a contract with the Knott & Linn Golf Course Design Group to come up with several design options for the future. These conceptual design options were delivered to Washoe County by Linn & Knott in March of this year. MGM reviewed these plans and it was determined that these conceptual plans were not feasible because of the lack of a driving range and practice facilities. In July of this year, MGM retained the services of Schmidt–Curley Golf Design and Brian Curley visited the site to work on other options.

Brian Curley has completed a conceptual design that MGM believes would be the best available re–purposing of the golf portion of the Wildcreek site. This Schmidt–Curley plan includes keeping the existing par three course, a new driving range and a new nine–hole regulation course. A concept to get this plan in motion was then developed by MGM.

The Brian Curley design addresses the golf element to this project but it was evident that the infrastructure needed to be considered. Wildcreek’s buildings, parking areas, utility services and other elements were in a condition where everything would have to be either be replaced or renovated. It was with that in mind that MGM approached the First Tee of Northern Nevada to solicit a possible partnership for the future of Wildcreek. First Tee Northern Nevada (FTNN) is a local non–profit that’s part of the national organization consisting of 141 chapters. They are officially *Northern Nevada Youth Golf Foundation* a twenty–year old 501 C–3 Nevada Non–Profit Corporation that does business as First Tee Northern Nevada. Currently, FTNN is the #1 ranked chapter nationally and delivers Like Skills Education Program, the National School Program (in 30 local elementary schools) and delivers annual programming to over 32,000 Northern Nevada youth. Financial assistance is available and no children are ever turned away because of the inability to pay for this program. In addition, FTNN participants have access to National Participation Opportunities with the First Tee organization. For more information visit First Tee Northern Nevada’s website at www.firstteenorthernnevada.org

With all that’s involved in the concept of renovating and rebuilding the golf facility at Wildcreek it’s expected that an approximate budget of \$5 million dollars will be needed for outside golf

improvements. Depending on building design and other infrastructure needs an additional \$2 million dollars could be needed. Roughly \$3 million dollars has been committed to this project to Washoe County from WCSD leaving an estimated \$4 million dollars needed.

Recently, The Board of Directors of the Northern Nevada Youth Golf Foundation Dba First Tee Northern Nevada officially approved the concept of this plan. MGM would like to request that Washoe County consider deeding the buildings and leasing the land on a long-term basis to this non-profit. FTNN would then enter into a contract with MGM to design, develop and manage a facility at Wildcreek Golf Course. FTNN and MGM will commence fundraising immediately through public grant opportunities, private foundations and individuals known to support public golf and The First Tee.

If Washoe County chooses to commit to this concept it's understood by FTNN and MGM that much would still be needed to be worked out by all parties involved. A more detailed and a multi-phased plan would be presented to the Washoe County Board of Commissioners for final approvals.

Meeting the EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR A UNSOLITED PROPOSAL TO WASHOE COUNTY

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. This proposal is unique and innovative. It's unique because First Tee Northern Nevada has continually provided golf and life skill educational programs that no other non-profit can do. It's innovative because it brings together the First Tee program with golf management administered by Mazz Golf Management and the landholder Washoe County. Three entities with common goals to provide youth programs, affordable golf and recreational golf for our community.
2. This proposal aligns with the mission of Washoe County's *Regional Parks and Open Space*
Mission: "To provide exceptional parks, open space and recreational opportunities while preserving our natural, historical and cultural resources."
3. This proposal represents value for money for the investment required by Washoe County and provides benefits to the community by meeting the following principles;
 - a. This proposal is cost-effective on a cost-benefit basis. Assuming that Washoe County provides the land and the dollars originally earmarked for the continuation of golf on the Wildcreek site, they will not be required to provide any additional funds.

All additional funding for this project will be provided by First Tee Northern Nevada through public grant opportunities, private foundations, corporations and individuals known to support public golf and First Tee.

- b. This proposed use of the land is the best option. It will become an operation that will financially sustain itself through a partnership between Washoe County, First Tee Northern Nevada and Mazz Golf Management. A place that will not require annual funding from either Washoe County's Community Services Department and/or Regional Parks and Open Space. Building any other kind of recreational facility or community park on this site will most certainly require annual operational funding in perpetuity.
 - c. This method of development is less expensive than any other option.
 - d. Three entities coming together to create a facility that none of them could do independently. Cooperation between Washoe County, First Tee Northern Nevada and Mazz Golf Management provide all necessary expertise to bring this project to fruition.
4. From the inception of Mazz Golf's operation at Wildcreek they have demonstrated that the local golf community will support a golf facility at this site. Even without a driving range and limited holes of golf, it has not kept the public from playing a lot of golf or First Tee from providing programming.
 5. There are no apparent obstacles to this proposal. It is feasible in every way, financially, legally, economically, socially and technically.

Unique and Innovative

Like mentioned previously, it is not likely that this type of concept could be publicly bid by Washoe County. The uniqueness lies in the fact that combining these three entities of public, non-profit and private organizations a certain synergy is accomplished that could deliver this significant project at Wildcreek.

Strategic Objectives and County Policy

The Mission of the Washoe County Strategic Plan is: "Working together regionally to provide and sustain a safe, secure and healthy community." Since 2006, ninety-nine holes of public golf have closed in Washoe County. It is in the best interest of the public golfers of Washoe County to generate a feasible plan like this that will ensure continuation of additional and much needed affordable golf in our community. The public benefit of having a facility of this type in

our community that offers affordable golf and a substantial teaching element are a real benefit. First Tee Northern Nevada teaches young people ages 7–17 life skills including honesty, respect, confidence and sportsmanship through the game of golf. Without doubt, this project checks all the boxes in the Strategic Objects and Goals in the Washoe County Strategic Plan that include Fiscal Sustainability, Economic Impacts, Vulnerable Populations and Innovative Services.

Project Benefit

This project delivers a concept that brings significant value to the community. It will sustain itself, provide recreational golf, provide youth golf instruction with life skills and adult golf classes of all kinds (senior, veteran, college, etc.).

Through the process of re-claiming this site from the RSCVA and closing a deal with Washoe County School District (for the Hug High School property) it was promised by Washoe County that the dollars provided by WCSD would be utilized for continuation of golf at Wildcreek. This proposal makes it possible to hold good on that promise.

This method of development is less expensive than if the County were to develop the property itself. The combination of First Tee Northern Nevada and Mazz Golf Management makes the enhancement of this golf facility financially feasible. Utilizing a design/build format with relationships in the design and construction business bring together a team that will make this project possible. Over the years, Mazz Golf Management has demonstrated their operations can operate in a way the public sector cannot with the ultimate goal of affordable golf, good service and excellent golf course conditions.

Need and Support

First Tee Northern Nevada and Mazz Golf Management believe that since the re-opening of Wildcreek in July that the need for public golf at Wildcreek has been clearly demonstrated. Both organizations would fully support commissioning a public survey, public testimony or a third-party consultant to verify the level of support in our community.

Feasibility

As the Assessment Panel considers the financial, legal, economic, social and technical feasibility of this project, we believe they will agree with our determination that there are no real obstacles. If a green light is given to move to STAGE TWO, all three parties will work together to bring this proposal to the next level and create a detailed plan and timeline.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Mazzaferri". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Mazzaferri, PGA
Mazz Golf Management