CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
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POKEGAMA GOLF COURSE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 21, 2025
7:30 AM

Chair McDonald called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM.

PRESENT: Chair Rick McDonald, Board Member John Ryan, Board Member Tom Lagergren, Board Member Deb Godfrey (Arrived at 7:34 AM). ABSENT: Board Member Gabrielle Jerulle

STAFF: Tom Beaudry, Kimberly Gibeau, Steve Ross, Cody Alleman

SETTING THE AGENDA: (This is an opportunity to approve the regular agenda as presented or add/delete an Agenda item by a majority vote of the Board members present.)

Motion made by Board Member Lagergren, Second by Board Member Ryan to approve the agenda as presented. Voting Yea: Chair McDonald, Board Member Ryan, Board Member Lagergren

APPROVE MINUTES:

1. Approve minutes for September 16, 2025 Golf Board meeting and September 23, 2025 Special meeting.

   Motion made by Board Member Ryan, Second by Board Member Lagergren to approve Golf Board minutes as presented. Voting Yea: Chair McDonald, Board Member Ryan, Board Member Lagergren

CLAIMS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:

2. Consider approving verified claims.

   Motion made by Board Member Lagergren, Second by Board Member Ryan to approve the verified claims as presented. Voting Yea: Chair McDonald, Board Member Ryan, Board Member Lagergren

VISITORS:

3. Presentation on hosting a major tournament - Matt Prokup

   Matt Prokop met with the Board to discuss the idea of starting a new invitational golf tournament at Pokegama Golf Course, tentatively called the “Pokegama Invite.” The concept is still informal, but the goal would be to create a marquee event that attracts both local players and guests from outside the community while showcasing the course and supporting area businesses. The proposed format would be a three-day match play event, beginning with tee times on Thursday afternoon and Friday morning, followed by a full day of play on Saturday. Participation could range from 72 to 150 golfers, depending on course availability, with separate divisions for men, women, and seniors. The importance of keeping the event inclusive while minimizing disruption to regular golfers was emphasized. The suggestion is to hold the event in July or August when the course is in its best condition and discussed using sponsorships and registration fees to cover costs and fund payouts through the pro shop. Concerns were raised about financial viability and participation, given that other area tournaments have seen declining numbers in recent years. However, the group generally expressed support for trying the event as a pilot, agreeing that if it proves successful, it could become an annual tradition, and if not, it could simply be discontinued. The Board agreed to keep the discussion open and continue working with Tom Beaudry on details, rather than making a formal decision yet.

REPORTS:

Maintenance Report:
Cody provided an update on course maintenance and operations as the season winds down. He noted that the cleanup crew is nearly finished, with only two members remaining through Friday, after which that work will wrap up. The golf cart fleet is generally in good condition, with a few carts requiring repairs. Equipment orders are still on schedule for November, and upcoming discussions will focus on trade-ins and the sale of old equipment. Reviewed damage caused by grubs, although a chemical treatment applied earlier in the year proved effective in treated areas. A new, improved grub control plan is in place for next spring, offering season-long protection. Tree removal work is partially complete but currently on hold pending updated financial reports. Plan is to continue removing and grinding stumps once the budget is confirmed, noting the long-term capital plan includes about $40,000 annually for tree work. Overall, the course was in excellent shape this year, helped by favorable weather conditions. Steve Ross confirmed his upcoming retirement in December and said he will stay on for the next two months to help with transition of leadership, organization of equipment and maintenance areas. The bunker renovation project is fully underway. Work includes filling and renovating bunkers, with John Bauer and Jim Columbus leading the effort. The team is actively addressing challenges, such as water issues on the course, and progress is being closely monitored. Overall, the project is proceeding as planned.

Director's Report:
Tom provided a summary of the golf course's financial and program performance for the year. Revenue is up to $1,087,000, an increase of $87,000 over last year. Junior Golf participation and play increased by roughly 15%, indicating strong growth in that program. Implemented an automatic survey system for players with email addresses, including a net promoter score question; the most recent score was 83%, reflecting high customer satisfaction. Plans over the winter include addressing weak areas in media and website management, potentially through a new position to improve communications and online updates. The budget for next year has not yet been finalized, with possible discussions and approvals to occur in November or at a special meeting.

BUSINESS:

4. Recommend selling used maintenance equipment

   Discussed the process for selling used golf equipment versus trading it in when acquiring new equipment. Cody has been working with MTI to evaluate trade-in values and potential resale on the open market. Some pieces of equipment have clear resale value locally, with one nearby golf course expressing interest. The group reviewed using a sealed bid process for selling the equipment to ensure fairness and compliance, though questions arose about whether a minimum or starting bid could be set. It was clarified that the highest bid would be accepted, but finance will confirm whether a minimum can be established.

Motion made by Board Member Ryan, Second by Board Member Lagergren to move forward with the sealed bid process, with the caveat that if it's later determined a starting bid isn't allowed or feasible, they reserve the right to pull the item from Council consideration. Voting Yea: Chair McDonald, Board Member Ryan, Board Member Lagergren, Board Member Godfrey

CORRESPONDENCE AND OPEN DISCUSSION:

Due to scheduling conflicts, the Board discussed moving the regular November meeting to a day the week prior.

Motion made by Board Member Lagergren, Second by Board Member Godfrey to change the next regular meeting date from November 18, 2025 to Thursday, November 13, 2025. Voting Yea: Chair McDonald, Board Member Ryan, Board Member Lagergren, Board Member Godfrey

Members McDonald and Lagergren have terms expiring March 1, 2026, with McDonald ineligible for reappointment due to term limits. Notifications to the Council about expiring terms is sent in November of each year. The discussion emphasized the importance of encouraging individuals to submit applications if interested.

Motion made by Board Member Ryan, Second by Chair McDonald to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 AM. Voting Yea: Chair McDonald, Board Member Ryan, Board Member Lagergren, Board Member Godfrey

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Gibeau

Kimberly Gibeau, City Clerk