





- Torrey Pines South Course: 80,189

For FY21, the Golf Division actually did 414,572 rounds making it the highest rounds recorded for the Division. John Howard also noted that the North Course was closed for two months as well in FY21 for the 2021 US OPEN.

Devin Cullen was promoted to Program Manager/Senior Superintendent for Torrey Pines Golf Course.

Roy Burchill asked how many citizens and how do we decide who participates in the Customer Satisfaction Survey? Mr. Howard replied that the Golf Division contract with an independent third party company called "True North". They do a combination of internet, email and or phone survey of our data base with the appropriate sample size. Mr. Howard said that last survey was done over a 1,000 people.

### **INFORMATIONAL ITEM**

#### **101. Brown Act Training**

The Municipal Golf Committee received and completed their annual Brown Act Training via a YouTube presentation given by Mr. Reyes.

Mr. Reyes stated there was no public comment on this informational item.

### **AGENDA ITEM**

#### **201. Letter of Support for Mission Bay Golf Course**

Mr. Reyes stated there was no public comment on this agenda item.

Mr. Carlson stated that the letter of support for the Mission Bay Golf Course has been in process for the past two years. The letter has been sent out and received support from Craig Kessler, Director of Public Affairs, Southern California Golf Association. Mr. Carlson asked if there has been any updates on the De Anza Cove master plan from the City Staff. Mr. Howard replied there has not been any new updates on the De Anza Cove master plan.

Mr. Carlson would like to know if the Campland lease renewed? Mr. Howard stated the lease started in November 2017 to June 30, 2023 when Campland lease expires. Mr. Carlson expressed his concern if Campland was going away and make it easier for Mission Bay Golf Course to also be removed.

## **202. Advanced Reservation Program**

Mr. Burchill led the discussion and stated that it is his understanding the Committee's role is to advise the City on matters pertaining to the operations of the City's municipal golf courses. He also believes our role is to be an advocate for San Diego citizens who golfs at the City golf courses. Mr. Burchill is concerned we are not representing citizens as it pertains to the cost of golf at Torrey Pines.

At our December meeting, we received a report that almost 60% of the tee times at Torrey Pines are reserved using the advance reservation program. It is my assumption that a few people would pay the \$30.00 advance fee for the later tee times, so percentage of the more desirable morning tee times reserved in advance must be significantly higher than 60%. My own personal experience is probably more like 90%.

Mr. Burchill spoke with a lot of municipal golfers and told them I served on this committee. I received very positive feedback about our municipal courses and golfers expressed how passionate they are about playing Torrey Pines. These golfers are pleased the City maintains the courses in good condition throughout the year.

Mr. Burchill stated the common frustration and complaint he hears is the inability to reserve a tee time without paying the advance reservation fee. Prior to 2019, it was difficult but possible to secure a tee time on the Torrey Pines website and now it is pretty much impossible.

Mr. Burchill expressed it was his understanding the City Council approves green fees for municipal courses including Torrey Pines. With more than half of tee times reserved at Torrey Pines are reserved with an advance reservation fee the City affectively increased the cost of playing golf at Torrey Pines without Council approval and I presumed without Council awareness. Mr. Burchill sighted if you are walking Torrey North during the week and less than 62 years-old, the rate would be \$45.00. Then with a \$30.00 advance reservation fee is affectively a 67% increase and if you are taking a cart, it will cost you about \$100.00 to play Torrey North.

Mr. Burchill stated what Mr. Carlson said we need to keep golf affordable and I do not know if we are doing that. Many of our citizens cannot afford to pay this much and are shut out of playing Torrey Pines. It affectively denies equal access to all citizens when only privileged citizens with means can affordably play Torrey Pines. Mr. Burchill stated he was not opposed to the advance reservation system, but I am opposed to having a majority of tee times reserved that way. I think there should be reasonable limit to the number of tee times available for advance reservations similar to the percentage of tee times made available to the Non-Residents.



Mr. Howard expressed he did not like the idea of making policy decisions in an environment where it is artificial to where we have been from quite some time. Mr. Howard stated the Division knew there was going to be an increase in demand after exiting the US OPEN and make restrictions as we move into a recession market is not a good idea. We do offer this as a service. We have seen every tee time does not go out with a booking fee. Mr. Howard stated the Golf Division have been operating on the same business plan since 2012. There are goals to provide golfing opportunities for all skill levels at the best value with excellent customer service.

Mr. Howard stated when we look at resident golf fees, we want to establish these fees with consideration of keeping rates as low as possible taking into account: local market rates, operational costs at each facility, and long term sustainability of the Golf Division. Mr. Howard highlighted that Torrey Pines subsidized all the rounds of golf at everyone of our facilities. We had over 400K rounds of golf this past year, Balboa had over 150K and by making this type of revenue, we are able to keep those rates low and keep golf accessible across the industry.

Mr. Howard noted when discussing about capital improvement projects, limiting our opportunities and access to residents, he felt it would not be in the spirit of protecting municipal golf in San Diego. Mr. Howard appreciates keeping rates as low as possible, but it is not be something he would recommend.

Mr. Burchill asked did the City Council approve green fees and advance reservation system?

Mr. Howard confirmed the City Council did approved the advance reservation program and the rates have not changed in many years. In the 2012 Business Plan came about, advance reservations rates were \$30.00 for residents and \$43.00 for non-residents. We only made a \$2.00 increase for non-residents. Mr. Howard stated the change was the demand from the public with this service which did not exist in the past. In 2005, the Division had an automated IVR phone system. This was the same problem people complaining about tee times and systems grabbing tee times.

Mr. Howard expressed his understanding it is different than in the past and we come from two very challenging years when it comes to access to any golf courses. This is not a unique situation to City courses. It is hard to get a tee time industry wide. Mr. Howard stated he anticipates this will change and have seen a decline of demand at Balboa Park and Mission Bay. This is more a cyclical problem if anything.

Susan Casagrande expressed her appreciation of being recognized and the last time this topic was brought up she voted against it. Ms. Casagrande felt doing away with any source of revenue at the golf course is detrimental. She noted what Mr. Howard stated with operational cost and capital improvements, the green and advance

reservations fees have not increased, but operational cost have literally skied rocketed. Ms. Casagrande would not want to see course conditions declined and capital improvements curtailed. She asked, "How many resident advance reservations are sold and those that are not could they go back to the system?"

Mr. Reyes stated any unsold resident or non-resident tee times do go back at the appropriate window to be available seven days out at 7:00 pm. We have been seeing a decline and trying our best to track it. Mr. Reyes reiterated what Mr. Howard mentioned about how impacted the golf industry is in the current market. These demands are cyclical for tee times and materials for goods in golf.

Larry Barron expressed his family's experience of getting a tee time to play Torrey Pines back in 1959. Mr. Barron asked, "Is there a significant number of tee times for the call in system? If there are no tee times, then there really is not a call in system."

Mr. Walshok believed there are two issues at Torrey Pines: one is historically hard to get at tee time at Torrey Pines, second the cost and rates at Torrey Pines is to be done incrementally basis. Mr. Walshok's concern is there has been an end around and now you pay an additional fee to book a Torrey Pines. This is something that is never heard until the advance booking system was put into place. These two issues of availability and costs are worthy of an evaluation and consideration.

Marty Block expressed the same concerns of what Mr. Burchill and Mr. Walshok stated on the unavailable tee times for Torrey Pines at an affordable rate. He thinks the solution is not reducing the number to advance tee times, but the cost is the issue. Mr. Block feels are we need drastically reduce the costs of advance reservations. He also understands what City Staff and Ms. Casagrande talked about the profit margin and revenue being made. Mr. Block proposed of making things revenue neutral. This is to charge resident less and non-residents more.

The discussion continued about increasing the costs and fees to non-residents. Ms. Casagrande mentioned it would a huge increase in green fees tremendously. Mr. Block expressed they are non-residents and not their golf course. We represent taxpayers in San Diego. Mr. Block asked Ms. Casagrande, "Is she is representing Staff or taxpayers?"

Ms. Casagrande said, "She represents lease holders, Torrey Pines Club Corporation, Torrey Pines Lodge, and Hilton."

Mr. Carlson stated there should be more public comment on this topic. Ms. Casagrande suggested a motion to continue this on the next meeting to give staff time to prepare and the committee to be more respectful to different opinions.

