

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: August 20, 2021

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Guy Smith, Executive Director, Milwaukee County Parks

Subject: Par 3 Golf Course Planning

File Type: Informational Report

REQUEST

Informational report outlining the need for future planning and changes to two Milwaukee County Par 3 golf courses at Doyne and Noyes Parks.

POLICY

| | |
|--|--|
| Wisconsin State Statutes: | |
| Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances: | |
| Specific Adopted Budget: | |
| Specific Adopted Budget Amendment: | |
| Specific Adopted Capital Project: | |

BACKGROUND

Milwaukee County Parks golf courses have, in general, seen a dramatic increase in usage since the Spring of 2020 and throughout the summer of 2021. Despite the growth in attendance systemwide, overall usage and attendance at two par three courses continues to decline and remain very low. In addition to the decline in usage and attendance over recent years, the par 3 golf courses at Noyes and Doyne parks have mounting capital needs such as future irrigation system replacement, and ongoing operating and maintenance needs that are challenging to keep up with and pulling resources from other golf courses.

Parks views it as important to continually assess our service offerings to make sure that we are providing recreational amenities that the public wants to use and we strive to provide those services in a sustainable manner. A similar assessment was conducted within the past few years to determine that a disc golf course be installed at Madison Par 3 to provide a new amenity that would get more use than the golf course. For the past several golf seasons it has become apparent that change is needed at these two courses and our staff have identified the need for a planning process to support a new direction.

Many Milwaukee County golf courses have practice facilities – driving ranges and iron-only chipping areas, but one amenity that our park system currently does not offer is a true golf practice course that allows the public to practice and become comfortable with the sport without having to commit to a full 9 or 18-hole round of golf. Golf in general has struggled with increasing the diversity of golfers in all aspects, one area that can be addressed to increase diversity is to lower the barrier to entry for new golfers. Courses can be intimidating, equipment can be costly, and the time required to play a round of golf can be significant. A new facility that encourages practice and not competition could help golfers of all skill sets, but especially newcomers, to improve their game and level of comfort with the sport.

Doyme Park contains a landfill and a methane gas migration control system, any changes to the use of the site or landfill cap will require further coordination with DAS-A&E-Environmental Services and due diligence to ensure that the landfill continues to be properly maintained.

| | |
|---|--|
| Related File No's: | |
| Associated File No's (Including Transfer Packets): | |
| Previous Action Date(s): | |

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Describe how the item aligns to the objectives in the [strategic plan](#):

2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity - improve access to the sport of golf by creating a donation-based practice facility

2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions - Parks Equity Index will be employed in all decision making

3A: Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities - plan for a new use at Doyme that results in more park usage and greater access to green space

3B: Enhance the County’s fiscal health and sustainability - both concepts would likely save the County money and be more financially sustainable

3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities - support efforts to increase diversity in golf

FISCAL EFFECT

None, this item is informational only

TERMS

N/A

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

None

PREPARED BY:

James Tarantino, Interim Deputy Director

APPROVED BY:

Guy Smith, Parks Executive Director *Guy Smith*

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – 2010-2020 Golf Revenue and Rounds

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk
David Crowley, County Executive
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Sheldon Wasserman, Parks, Energy & Environment Chair, Supervisor District 3
Steven Shea, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Vice-Chair, Supervisor District 8
Felesia Martin, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 7
Sylvia Ortiz-Velez, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 12
Liz Sumner, Parks, Energy & Environment Committee Member, Supervisor District 1
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board
Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services
Joseph Lamers, Fiscal & Budget Director, DAS
Vince Masterson, Fiscal & Strategic Asset Coordinator, DAS
Pamela Bryant, Capital Finance Manager, Comptroller's Office
Justin Rodriguez, Capital Finance Analyst, Comptroller's Office
Kelsey Evans, Committee Coordinator, Office of the County Clerk
Emily Peterson, Research & Policy Analyst, Office of the Comptroller
Anthony Rux, Budget & Management Analyst, DAS-PSB
Stevan Keith, Environmental Services Unit Leader, DAS-A&E E&S