

Val Halla Golf Association - Notes from Fall Annual Meeting

Sunday, October 11, 2020

President Mark Franco called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 pm.

Roll call/member count established that we had 23 member present and 5 executive committee members present (all 5 officers). Quorum was established.

Executive Committee: Mark Franco (President), Karen Moody (1st Vice President), Tony Polito (2nd Vice President), Neil Williams (Treasurer), Meredith Koerner (Secretary)

Past Presidents Recognized: Mark recognized past presidents present: Scott Johnson

Moment of Silence: We had a moment of silence to honor the memory of Richard Ingraham and Bruce Ricker, both of whom have passed since our previous meeting in the fall of 2019.

Secretary's Report: Reading of the minutes from last fall's meeting were waived. Motion was made to accept minutes, seconded, and approved.

Treasurer's Report: Neil reported that all bills that have been received have been paid. He is expecting an insurance bill shortly. It will be for about \$512. Will pay promptly upon receipt. Neil noted that we have 3 accounts:

Money Market account with a balance of \$13,606.15

Scholarship account with a balance of \$5,548.38 of which \$2,325 was money that was sent in memory of Richard Ingraham

Checking account with a balance of \$451.47

There is some additional money from a couple of events that will be added to the Scholarship account.

Pat Bouton moved to accept the Treasurer's report, it was Seconded, and all voted in favor to approve.

Committee Reports

Tournament and Rules

Men's: Chris King (Chair), Steve Landry, Tim Matthews, Tony Polito, George Seamans, Sean Fennessy, Joe Gildart, Phil Ingraham

Women's: Kate Harris & Deb Towle (Co-Chairs), Karen Moody, Celeste Ross, Sue Wilson

Tony reported for the men that there was great participation, and that Toby had done an excellent job in always having the course in great shape for the events. They had spaced the tournaments out this year and that was well received. They purchased 21 flags to be used this year and ongoing for the Member/Member Ingraham Memorial Tournament.

Karen reported for the women that the year went well, but that it is a challenge to get people to commit to both playing consistently in the weekly league and also on in the weekend events. The women need to identify the Committee Chairs for 2021 in advance of the spring meeting.

Handicap Committee

Scott Johnson (Chair), Jay Burrell, Kate Harris, Judy Ingraham, Karen Moody, Wayne Schaab, Steve Sloan, Neil Williams, Dan Wood

Scott reported that the change in the World Handicap system and all the automation of posting and adjustments has made the responsibilities of this Committee much easier to manage. He also stated that with this system handicaps are much tighter. He questioned whether it is worthwhile to chase down those who play just casually to ensure they are regularly posting their scores.

Twilight Leagues

Men's: Mo Fisher & Bill Shane (Co-Chairs)

Women's: Karen Moody (Chair), Linda Varrell

Nick reported for Men's Twilight that they had a very good year. They had 96 players who were divided into 8 fights of 2 person teams. Because of COVID and the limits on gatherings, they had a staggered shotgun start, with half going off at 5:00 and the other half starting at 5:30. It was a successful year and he believes that it drummed up some new memberships.

Karen reported for the Women, that there were 31 participants with awards for both Individuals and Teams. There were some new participants this year, resulting in some new memberships, and also we drew some participants from other courses (Portland CC). Committee chairs for 2021 will be Meredith Koerner and Linda Varrell.

Scholarship Committee

Tony Polito (Chair), Nick Bartlett, Jon Campbell, Mark Franco, Joe Gildart, Greg Palmacci, Paul Severino, John Hadwen (Treasurer)

Tony reported that there is still some money to be added to the Scholarship account from a couple of events.

Last year we awarded 6 scholarships, each in the amount of \$500. The idea being to do our best to support all who apply. He mentioned that he would like to consider a couple of mixed Friday afternoon events in 2021 to have fun and support the Scholarship fund.

Greens Committee

Mark Stadium (Co-Chair), Sally Williams (Co-Chair), Mike Steinberg, Tony Polito, Wayne Schaab, Steve Sloan, Meredith Koerner

Mark reported that the Greens Committee has had 2 meetings so far and has a 3rd planned for the 1st Thursday in November. November meeting will be focused on prioritizing the suggestions that have been solicited from the members. In previous meetings we have had a report from Toby on work done and work planned, and there has been discussion regarding the financial position of Val Halla. There is concern that because those currently on the Town Council are not involved with Val Halla, there will likely be more scrutiny regarding the financial position. We currently operate with a \$150K deficit annually.

Important to note that Toby has done an excellent job and that the course is in as good shape as anyone can remember.

Old Business

Holes 5 and 9 - Bill Shane is getting the sense that we won't need to make any changes to the men's tee on #5 for probably 3 years, so no planned changes to that hole in the near future. Regarding the tee box on Hole 9, Toby is waiting for assistance from the Dept of Public Works. So this will be done probably over the course of the winter or early spring.

Award items for the Championships have been ordered. Women's are in, and the Men's proof was recently approved and the order confirmed.

New Business

Proposed an increase of dues from \$35 to \$40 to cover the increase in the GHIN fee. Tony motioned to approve, Mark Stasium seconded it, all voted in favor - no one was opposed.

Discussion regarding establishing a Paypay and/or Venmo account so that GHIN and tournament fees can be handled through this account rather than through the town. Processing through the town is a complicated process for both the town and for VHGA. There were no objections to moving forward with this plan, and all present agreed that this was simply an administrative process and didn't require a membership vote.

Neil Williams has requested that someone replace him as Treasurer given that he is planning to be out of state for a good portion of **the** winter and spring.

Eligibility Criteria for the Club Championships - There was a good deal of discussion around this topic. Most discussion was in favor of keeping this simple and open to all members who meet the following criteria:

VHGA Member

Active GHIN member with a handicap in good standing

Eagle Member/College Member/Junior Member

Some encouraged that we consider adding qualifications of tournament participation in order to encourage more participation. There was concern that doing so would negatively impact those whose jobs impact their ability to participate and thus be a motivation for people to leave VH.

Mark Stasium made a motion to continue on with the 3 criteria outlined above (VHGA member, GHIN Member, Eagle/College/Junior Member). Meredith Koerner seconded it. 11 were in favor and 5 were opposed. The motion passed.

For the Member/Member Memorial Tournament Pat Bouton suggested that women be allowed to participate in order to also be able to honor members who have passed. To this end, Nick suggested that the Men's and Women's Tournament Committees meet together at least once a year.

Nick Plummer, Head Golf Professional -

Nick reported on Toby's behalf. He said that key changes Toby made this past year were to lower the rough cut, lower the fairway cut, and mow more frequently (2x per week). Completed projects were tree removal, extended tee areas and fringe areas around the greens, and improved air flow. Planned projects are fescue management, more slit drainage, drainage on #4, more tree removal, bunker near #3 green to catch balls and improved drainage opportunities, maroon tees to become their own tees, expand some greens, tee boxes, and collars, and do the trop dressing more frequently.

Scott Johnson suggested making adjustments such that par can be the same from all tees.

Nick's report - Membership revenue was about the same as last year, while greens fees were up. The spring portion of the Junior Program was canceled, but overall Junior Program revenues were up compared to last year. Tournament participation from the men was up as was Pro Shop Action. Nick noted that he very much appreciates this support.

Requests/Suggestions from Nick:

- Men's and Women's Tournament Committees provide him with the tournament schedule by the 1st of the year - this gives him time to get things set up in the computer prior to the start of the season
- Better communication regarding conditions of play and would like to be involved with a meeting regarding the establishment of local rules
- Would like tournaments/leagues to be golf genius compatible (examples of incompatibility are Women's Twilight where 2 lowest scores are dropped, Sadie Hawkins where golf genius can't handle points and gross/net, and the Member/Member format that the Women used this year (ringer scores)
- Would like the membership to consider paying the fee associated with premium golf genius. This is \$2300 annually with the bill coming in June. (Need to make this an item on the spring agenda). Nick noted that VHGA has about 297 members and that while the town currently pays for this, we operate in a deficit, and this is a system that is only used by the Val Halla membership.

The spring meeting will be planned for the 1st Sunday in May, May 2.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:32.

Respectfully submitted,

Meredith Koerner