

## OAK HILLS PARK CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - FALL 2016

As a West Norwalk neighbor we are pleased to provide you with this update on the happenings at Oak Hills Park. Here are some stats and thoughts on our just finished fiscal year, which we wanted to share with you:

- Total rounds for our FYE were 41,349 up 8.53% from the 38,106 rounds we achieved in FYE 2015. This is the first time Oak Hills had over 40,000 in rounds played since FYE 2010. The national round average for a municipal golf course is about 33,000 rounds.
- Course Utilization is almost 63% which is a 14% increase in three short years. 60% is considered good by industry standards.
- Based on our long term round seasonality index and assuming no bad weather we should have over 41,000 revenue rounds for the calendar year – which is an 8.2% increase over 2015. Nationally rounds are up 3.3% for public golf courses.
- Total Revenue for the year is up over \$110,000 to over \$1,680,100. This was our third best year ever.
- Many initiatives were started and expanded this year. These include implementation of a capital improvement program for many of our physical assets not covered by our grant, and expansion of our web based reservations and marketing system and social media.

Over the past three years the Oak Hills Park Authority has been working hard on many fronts to improve course operations, improve physical conditions, and expand offerings for our members and guests and the community at large. That is reflected in our improved operations.

I am pleased to report that these changes will accelerate over the next few months. For example Oak Hills Park is the second municipal golf course in Connecticut to offer Golf Boards for use by our members. Those were introduced in early August. We will also have new "smart" golf carts beginning next spring featuring the latest in GPS technology.

We are also pleased to report that the full implementation of the master plan will begin in October after a year of planning by the OHPA. The OHPA received formal approval from the City of Norwalk Inland Wetland Agency in late April to implement the golf course renovation. That approval process began in early January. Construction plans were finalized in late June with the OHPA and our architect Robert MacNeil. That process began in August of 2015.

The Common Council met on August 9<sup>th</sup> and approved the course improvement work. Turco Construction won the bidding (there were 2 bidders) for a total price of \$980,000 +/- . The goal is to begin construction in mid-October with a completion of all the work by the end of the year (weather permitting).

The course renovation reflects a "transformative" change to the golf course concentrating work on 11 holes. It is our hope that this will take Oak Hills Golf Course to a new level of playability with more challenging holes and a faster pace of play due to improved circulation patterns. Major work is planned for holes 1,3,4,7,8,9,12,13,14,15,18.

- Hole # 1 will feature and new back and middle tee cut into the rock hill immediately to the right of the existing first tee and raised 68 feet over its current level. Select tree work near the tee, and cart path relocation and paving will also occur.
- Hole #3 construction will feature tree removal near upper and lower back tee, and expand by 2,400 sf and laser level the front tee, reroute cart path into woods and

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around 3 green and repair the left greenside bunker. The cart path in front of 3 green will be removed and replaced with sod.

- Hole #4 will feature a continuous cart path from 3 green up to 4 tee and back down reconnecting with cart bath from lower #3 tee cart path in between middle and front #4 tee. The 4th tee will be rebuilt and laser leveled. Drainage repair will also occur at the base of the stairs to #4 tee. The left greenside bunker will now be a grass hollow and the right bunker will be shifted towards the middle front of the green and rebuilt. There will also be tree work at areas behind, left and right of the green.
- Golfers to # 7 tee will be rerouted around the large practice green on a new cart path that will be parallel to #7 tee box. The entire cart path will be continuous. The tee boxes will be laser leveled and drainage near the front of the tee and near the green will be installed. Also grass catchment hollows will be developed within the existing depressions in front of the green to speed play.
- Hole #8 construction will feature laser leveling of the back tee, continuous cart paths, removal of the bunker to right of fairway at about 200 yard mark and convert it to a grass hollow, reposition right fairway bunker at 250 yards, rebuild #8 greenside bunker to left and convert right bunker to 1 bunker instead of 2. Drainage will be repaired where needed.
- Construction on Hole #9 will feature laser leveling of the tee box, continuous cart paths including rerouting the cart path behind #9 green and through to 10th tee, reposition and expand left fairway bunker at 250 yards, remove the fairway bunker and convert to grass hollow on left, removal of the crossing cart path, drainage repair where needed and the laser leveling of the 10th tee box.
- Hole #12 will have expanded and laser leveled tee boxes, a continuous cart path to top of hill and from under power lines to the left of the relocated fairway bunker. The existing cart path will be removed. Also the fairway bunker on right will be made into a grass hollow. Greenside bunkers will be changed. The bunker to left will be moved to the corner and middle front of green and right bunkers will be converted to 1 bunker.
- The #13 hole tee surface will be expanded and laser leveled, drainage improvements will be made, the right bunker rebuilt, and the front will be rebuilt in place.
- The #14 hole tee surface will be expanded and raised on the back tee and the front tee will be laser leveled. The left bunker at 50 yards or so from green will be converted into a grass hollow, the right greenside bunker will be rebuilt in place selective tree removal and pruning. There will also be drainage improvements.
- The #15 hole tee surface will be expanded and raised on back tee and front tees. 2 new left greenside bunkers will be constructed as well as selective tree removal and pruning.
- Hole #18 will feature a laser leveled and expanded back tee. The middle tee surface will be expanded and laser leveled. The right greenside bunker will be rebuilt and new left hillside bunkers will be constructed. There will also be selective tree removal and pruning to expose rock face along fairway and selective draining where needed.

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In addition to the golf course renovation we will also be creating a new feature for the park – a Great Lawn that will be located on vacant land located behind the restaurant parking area and a Fountain Garden that is located immediately adjacent to the Great Lawn and 18<sup>th</sup> Green. Both are intended to provide for additional active areas for non-golfers that can be used for a variety of outdoor events as diverse as Yoga and Tai Chi, meditation, movies, corporate events, or walking paths. We expect to award that contract in late August with construction to start this fall. A rendering of that amenity is below.

