

**CITY OF MASON  
WORK SESSION  
JUNE 21, 2010**

Mayor Prince called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE**

The following members of Council were present: Michael Gilb, Christine Shimrock, Rich Cox, Tony Bradburn, David Nichols and Don Prince. Char Pelfrey was absent.

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

Perry Schwartz of 6309 Tartan Fields Lane addressed Council and stated he thought the topic of the golf course management was the purpose of this meeting. He said as he has reviewed this issue, he has learned the purchase was done to avoid the land being developed into 400-500 condominiums. He said as you work the numbers, you realize that many condos would have cost the City millions of dollars to provide the services. He added he has observed that revenue is down and he personally has observed the number of golfers is less. He feels the current management should be given a revenue target and if that is not met, demands should be placed on them. He also stated an audit is needed to report the accuracy of the internal procedures. Councilmember Bradburn said he appreciates Mr. Schwartz's comments. He has met with Springboro's City Manager as they also have a public golf course. He said they fully endorse having an external audit and they do it on a monthly basis. He noted the voters of Mason agreed to a full income tax credit and that has caused the City to sharpen its' pencil. He said as Chair of Finance, we will continue to do so. Mayor Prince also stated his comments are appreciated and are being heard.

**COUNCIL ITEMS** None

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion to adjourn into executive session for the purpose of discussing land acquisition was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Vice Mayor Nichols. VOTE: ALL YEAS

Councilmember Pelfrey joined the meeting in executive session.

A motion to reconvene into regular session was made by Councilmember Gilb, seconded by Councilmember Cox. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

Jim Ashworth and Peter Ryan addressed Council and asked about opening the negotiations for extending the contract on the management of the golf course. Mr.

Ashworth asked what process will be followed and whom should he work through on these negotiations. He distributed a one page listing of the items he wished to review. He said he was requesting a three-year renewal with any further renewals based on the performance goals set. Councilmember Gilb asked for clarification of a letter Mr. Ashworth sent to the Mayor. He asked if this is an agreement. Jim Ashworth responded no, this is not an agreement. Mr. Bradburn asked about the operation hours of the restaurant. Jim replied it is open in the summer every night. He stated the new restaurants that opened on Mason-Montgomery Road have hurt the restaurant business but it still makes money. Councilmember Bradburn stated as Chair of Finance the City must see belt tightening and goals must be hit quarterly. He added he would like to ask for several request for proposals to provide a comparison.

Mr. Ashworth stated the current agreement says they have a renewal option. He said they have submitted a proposal to the City and have not received a response. Mayor Prince agreed, milestones or targets need to be set for the remainder of the current contract period. He stated nothing has been confirmed. Councilmember Shimrock asked how Mr. Ashworth would handle questions from residents on revenue losses. Mr. Ashworth stated he will only provide realistic and achievable figures. He said he has 25 years in this business. He added you could look at Blue Ash and Springboro and see the state of their business. He also stated packaging with the Community Center can be done. He has not included the impact of that in his projections. Peter stated additional revenue options include adding a driving range. He stated this with the academy course could attract entire golf schools. Councilmember Pelfrey stated the Community Center Committee have been meeting often and they just have not had time to look into this matter. She said he should not lose heart. She suggested this be assigned to that committee for review. Mayor Prince stated he will establish a Golf Course Committee and he would like it to include someone from Finance and the Community Center Committees to be on it.

Councilmember Gilb asked for clarification from Mr. Ashworth on what he is wanting. Jim Ashworth stated a three-year extension with goals established is desirable. He stated for each year the goals are met, the contract is extended. He stated they have the long-term interest of the City at heart. He also said they will forgo the expense for the secret shopper. Vice Mayor Nichols stated the purchase of the golf course occurred knowing it was losing money. He suggested a time line be established to move this forward. Councilmember Pelfrey suggested the Community Center review the driving range proposal. A general discussion took place among the Councilmembers and after much deliberation; it was decided to allow the driving range acquisition to be researched by the Community Center Committee. They will report back to Council with a recommendation.

**ADJOURN**

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Vice Mayor Nichols. VOTE: ALL YEAS

TIME: 9:20 p.m.

  
Clerk of Council

  
Mayor