



**City of Spokane Park Board  
Golf Committee Meeting**

8:00 a.m. Tuesday, Apr. 07, 2026  
Hybrid in-person and WebEx virtual meeting  
Mark Poirier – Golf Manager

**Committee Members**

- X Barb Richey – Chair
- X Gerry Sperling
- X Doug Kelley – arrived 8:10

**Parks Staff**

- Mark Poirier
- Jennifer Papich
- Josh Morrissey
- Kris Behr

**Golf Staff**

- Rob Decker
- Doug Phares
- Steve Conner
- Rob Sanders
- Kyle Kelly
- Michelle Grafos

**SUMMARY**

- The committee approved to recommend the Park Board accept the following agenda items:
  - None
- Mark Poirier revisited old business items.
- The upcoming Golf Pro contracts were discussed.
- Josh Morrissey presented the golf marketing report.
- Mark Poirier discussed the financial reports.
- An overview of What's Happening at the Courses was presented.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is 8 a.m. Tue., May. 12, 2026.

# MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by committee chair Barb Richey.

**Public comment** - None

**Action items:** None

**Discussion:**

## 1. Old Business Update – Mark Poirier

- a. To recap how capital projects work and where the money comes from, Mark indicated Golf has a one-million-dollar capital budget which includes all on-course projects, such as the Indian Canyon bunker project, HVAC, equipment leases and purchases, etc.
- b. At the top of the list nearly every year is equipment replacement. The intent is to keep and repair equipment as long as possible, often keeping old equipment to use for parts before purchasing new and/or gently used items. Although it is more expensive in the long run to lease, Golf is not able to purchase outright all the necessary equipment. This would take up much of the capital budget. Mark indicated that he is currently working on lease options with Rich Lentz in Finance and Jason Conley.
- c. A late fall project is the Esmerald sewage line. The public restroom connected to the maintenance building is on a drain field, which is not up to City code. There is already a design in place, and Mark is working with other department within the City for assistance with this project, such as Sewer. A trench needs to be dug from the maintenance building up E. Rich Ave. along the maintenance road.
- d. Dan Hixson will be coming out to all the courses to design the tee box renovations and then it will be sent out to bid. This will probably not be happening in 2026 as the first few items will consume the capital budget.
- e. Small projects that develop throughout the year include items such as the door to the Pro Shop at Indian Canyon. It is a custom-fit commercial door on a rock building, which will be very costly to replace. The stairs leading up from the 10th tee and from the putting green at the 18<sup>th</sup> tee at Indian Canyon also need replacing. Mark is currently looking for someone to evaluate them. Every course has a roughly \$15,000 maintenance budget that allow for smaller repairs, but with increasing costs, it's difficult to stay within this budget. Once revenue begins to flow in late spring, these items can be addressed.
- f. There was a recent discussion about erecting signage at Indian Canyon honoring legendary golfer Ben Hogan. Mark has been talking with Josh Harty about the best location for signage, as well as the type of signage. Gerry Sperling suggested Mark talk to Al Vorderbrueggen or Jon Moog regarding the standard policy for monument/memorial/signage placement within the parks.

## 2. Golf Pro Contracts – Mark Poirier

- a. Mark Gardner, from the Creek and Qualchan, has announced his retirement at the end of 2026. He has been the pro at Qualchan from the day it opened to the public. Mark P. has been working with Purchasing for a Request for Proposal (RFP) which should be going out nationwide shortly. Mark G.'s contract does not expire until December of 2027. The buyout will be up to the incumbent along with negotiations with Mark G. as to what he/she wants to do with the remaining year as well as the all the equipment, etc. Mark P. indicated he would like to see a person hired by August.
- b. The five year + five year renewal contract for Rob Sanders from Esmeralda will be completed at the end of 2026. A nationwide RFP will be going out for this position shortly as well.
- c. Doug Phares explained that especially with the new City procurement requirements, the

application process for a golf professional is quite intense. It also comes with a steep financial investment. The current golf professionals have set an extremely high standard of excellence. Spokane City Golf intends to continue raising the bar to have a competitive advantage over similar courses in this region. Jennifer Papich also stated that the City's RFP process is extremely thorough so that candidates know exactly what is expected of them, through many avenues, such as pre-bid meetings. Both RFP's will go out to at least 3,000 professionals across the US.

## Standing reports

### 1. Golf marketing report – Josh Morrissey

The Ad buy with DH Marketing from January-May focuses on discount passes, gift card and course improvements. The contract with DH marketing ends mid-May. An informal RFP is in place. Parks has had a great relationship with DH and would like to continue if possible. Looking forward, the Moms, Dads & Grads promo will be running soon, along with educational in-house produced videos about golf course standards and etiquette. Marketing has been working on signage to highlight course improvements, currently water conservation and efficiency, and recent capital improvements. Several other options were discussed.

### 2. Golf financial report – Mark Poirier

The annual year over year comparison report shows a round count increase at all 4 courses. Esmeralda had an astounding 95% increase over 2025. The adopted budget for 2026 is \$6.8M and, compared to 2025 March actuals, we are up \$230,000. Year to date there is an increase of \$250,000 over 2025. The season at all 4 courses began earlier than previous years, which is reflected in the financial report.

### 3. Superintendents' reports - What's Happening at the Courses – Mark Poirier

- a. Mark states that Park Operations recently hired a new plumber and new electrician, which Golf has already been utilizing. The plumber will be looking at Indian Canyon's restaurant to repair a small leak. The electrician was at Esmeralda yesterday working on some lighting issues.
- b. Downriver – Steve Conner reports a great start but are experiencing growing pains with the ForeUp system.
- c. Qualchan – Rob Decker reports he has half his crew on board with the remainder coming on shortly. Last week the Heights crew, Nick Jeffries and the DNR came out and removed the worst trees remaining on the course and did a phenomenal job. Irrigation will be turned on Friday. Kyle Kelly reports still having growing pains with the new ForeUp system. They just had night #1 of the Par Tee 9-hole ladies' night.
- d. Indian Canyon – Doug Phares stated he's never started this early before. He also reports struggles with ForeUp. His season actually starts next week with instruction, etc. He reports that the course is in great shape.
- e. Esmeralda – Michelle Grafos reports that the course is in great shape. The community has been thrilled with the improvements. The junior programming begins this Saturday. A men's and women's league with instruction will begin next week. She also reiterated that rounds are through the roof.

- a. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 a.m.

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