

**MINUTES OF MEETING
MUNICIPAL PLANNING & PROPERTIES COMMITTEE
October 12, 2021**

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(Meeting starts at 01:12:05)

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A meeting of the Municipal Planning & Properties Committee was held on Tuesday, October 12, 2021 electronically via Zoom due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The meeting was called to order at 8:11 P.M. by the Chair, Marjorie Bonadies.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Marjorie Bonadies, Chair; Justin Farmer, Vice Chair; Dominique Baez; Adrian Webber; Berita Rowe-Lewis; Betty Wetmore; Jody Clouse (arrived @ 8:55pm)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

PUBLIC INPUT: There were 3 speakers who can be heard at Time Code 01:15:30 and 20 written comments: <https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/4783/LC-PUBLIC-COMMENTS---10-12-2021>

<https://www.hamden.com/DocumentCenter/View/4787/LATE-LC-PUBLIC-COMMENTS---10-12-2021>

The following items were addressed:

1. Order to approve and enter into an amendment and extension of Lease Agreement between the Town of Hamden and Triumph Golf Management, Inc. for the Laurel View Country Club Golf Course, 19th Hole and Banquet Facility

Bid Waiver Associating with the amendment and extension Lease Agreement between the Town of Hamden and Triumph Golf Management Inc.

-- Moved by Ms. Bonadies, seconded by Mr. Farmer. DISCUSSION: Mr. Farmer said this isn't breaking even and should be providing us revenue. He also said he has issues with generational contracts and cannot support this because it's not in the best interest of the taxpayer.

Ms. Wetmore said she took a tour and thinks we're in between a rock and a hard place but if he's going to put \$300,000 into it she doesn't know how it's a loss because we have to honor the contract anyway until 2031. She thinks everyone should take a tour and said if we take it back it'll cost the Town a fortune. We had problems in the past but we were at fault and she thinks they should pass this.

Ms. Baez asked if we had an option to not renew (making reference to section E) saying it says if we're not happy with improvements we have to do things and seek reimbursement. She asked for clarification. Ms. Gruen (Town Attorney) said there are two different things going on here, there's the section where you're talking about an automatic renewal and then there's defaulting of the lease, and so the part that the amendment talks about automatic renewal the tenant has the option to renew the lease so long as they are not in default, so there you're right, there is an automatic renewal at the tenants option, but the tenant must be in compliance with the lease in order for that, so we don't get to say no. That's part one, then there's the other in the main lease that is not before you that the tenant must be in compliance with the lease, and I'm not talking about the improvements and there's no waiver of our rights with a lease like any other. Mr. C. Cesare (Public Works & Parks Director) said we can call upon an independent evaluator to go in and make sure that there is some language in the contract that talks about different standards and needs to be met, as far as the quality of the course of turf etc. but they had no need to do that so far. He said the course has been on a tremendous uptick since the 2019 contract and they just received the 3rd \$25,000 payment this year, so they have been compliant, the course is in fantastic shape and so they've had no reason to evaluate it. Ms. Baez asked how much that study would cost. Mr. C. Cesare said he didn't know and would have to get back to her.

Ms. Baez stated she's like to see stronger language and safeguards in this agreement.

Mr. A. Cesare said the golf course was horrendous when the town ran it and Mr. Manchetti did a phenomenal job turning it around.

Mr. Webber asked what we were responsible for other than the water bill. Mr. C. Cesare said in the current contract the entire building and upkeep and repairs over \$500 and the Town pays all the utilities. He said the new proposal wipes us of the \$500 and the (unintelligible) repairs that eliminates his crew, and also takes over the landscaping which we now do. The utilities will still be ours, but the rest is less responsibility for the Town. Mr. Jackson added that the Town is current on all utilities.

There was some discussion on evaluating the golf course.

Ms. Zaehring asked what it would cost the Town under the current contract with no amendment. Mr. C. Cesare said in 2015 they hired a consultant to do an evaluation and there was about 1.3 million needed in repairs. He then went over a list of things that would need an immediate fix.

Ms. Dolan said they are not voting on an expense or anything to do with Laurel View

Country Club and that they are only voting on the Banquet Facility which he's proposing to improve by \$300,000 with a long extension. She said if we choose to do it then the expenses won't come in, but if we choose to not do it the expense will be ours.

Ms. Wetmore asked if they would take over all the landscaping but we will still do the snowplowing. Mr. C. Cesare said that's correct, the plowing would be our only responsibility.

After some discussion on the liquor license Mr. Webber asked what the expiration on it was. Mr. C. Cesare said that info is in his office and he would get it to them. Ms. Bonadies said it's September of 2022.

Ms. Rowe-Lewis asked if this contract was transferable to another person or company. Ms. Gruen replied not without written consent of the Town. Ms. Bonadies asked if the Council could vote that down. Ms. Gruen said it doesn't require it to come to Council. Ms. Rowe-Lewis said that's a concern of hers and she thinks we need the stronger language in there.

After some more discussion on sections of the agreement Ms. Baez said she wants to see this golf course succeed and likes the operator but she doesn't like that they don't have standards or safeguards.

Ms. Gruen asked Ms. Baez if she would send language and Ms. Baez said she would.

Ms. Clouse agrees with safeguards. She said a lot of this makes her uncomfortable, but she would like to see this pass committee so that it can go to the whole Council.

A roll call vote was taken and the item passed with 6 yes (Bonadies) (Rowe-Lewis) (Clouse) (Baez) (Webber) (Wetmore) and 1 opposed (Farmer)

Ms. Baez stated because the lease is being extended, which includes the banquet facility, she thinks they need safeguards on the whole entire picture and to look at complaints from the past and safeguard them.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Renta, Clerk
for Marjorie Bonadies, Chair