

Commissioners:

R. JACK MCKERNAN
Chairman

TONY R. MUSSARE
Vice Chairman

RICHARD MIRABITO
Secretary



MATTHEW A. McDERMOTT
*Director of Administration
and Chief Clerk*

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**Minutes of the Meeting of
February 1, 2016
Board Room, Executive Plaza
Pine Street, Williamsport**

Commissioner McKernan - Present
Commissioner Mussare - Present
Commissioner Mirabito - Present

Solicitor Smith - Present

1.0 OPERATIONS

1.1 CONVENE COMMISSIONERS MEETING. Mr. McKernan convened the
Commissioners Meeting 3:04 p.m.

Marci Hessert read the proposed resolution:

**RESOLUTION REGARDING TRANSITION OF THE OPERATION OF
WHITE DEER GOLF COURSE FROM LYCOMING COUNTY RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
TO THE COUNTY OF LYCOMING**

WHEREAS, on or about November 1, 2006, a Lease was entered into by and between the County of Lycoming ("County") and the Lycoming County Recreational Authority ("Authority") whereby County agreed to lease the White Deer Golf Course ("Golf Course") to the Authority and the Authority agreed to operate the Golf Course for recreational use by the general public and pursuant to the terms and conditions of the Lease;

WHEREAS, the original intent behind the Lease was that the Authority would be able to operate the Golf Course and handle all of the financial obligations related to the Golf Course;

WHEREAS, at the time the Lease was entered, this arrangement between the County and the Authority was believed to be in the best interest of maintaining the Golf Course as a viable operation;

WHEREAS, under the terms of the Lease, while the County owned the Golf Course, the Authority was responsible for the operation of the Golf Course;

WHEREAS, under the terms of the Lease, the Authority does not have the authority to subcontract the management of the Golf Course without the prior written consent of the County (see, Lease, §4.02, at 3);

WHEREAS, the fiscal realities of operating the Golf Course have required the County to subsidize the operation of the Golf Course;

WHEREAS, in addition to the bond, which the County has been paying, which presently has a principal balance of Three Million Four Hundred and Fifty Five Thousand Dollars (\$3,455,00.00), the

Authority is also indebted to the County for approximately Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000.00) and has an additional Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000.00) of lender financed indebtedness;

WHEREAS, in addition to the aforementioned indebtedness, the Authority is in default of its financial obligations to the County under the Lease having failed to make the required lease payments;

WHEREAS, for some time now, the County has been making the payments which allow the Golf Course to operate either through directly paying the required bond payments or advancing additional operating funds to allow the Golf Course to stay open;

WHEREAS, given that the County has been financially subsidizing the Golf Course, the County has reached the conclusion that the County should take over operation of the Golf Course;

WHEREAS, the purpose of this Resolution is to generally detail the transition of the responsibility for the operation of the Golf Course from the Authority to the County and to affirm that the County will be responsible for the selection of the management company to operate the Golf Course following surrender and/or termination of the Lease by the Authority; and,

WHEREAS, upon surrender and/or termination of the Lease, the County will become responsible for the operation of the Golf Course and will finalize the selection of an appropriate management company, with the requisite golf course management background, to operate the Golf Course on behalf of the County.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the County of Lycoming, at a duly advertised public meeting and following public comment, as follows:

1. The County hereby authorizes those actions necessary to obtain a surrender of the Lease either with or without the consent of the Authority through the remedies available under the Lease given that the Lease is in default.

2. In addition to seeking the surrender and/or termination of the Lease, the County hereby authorizes implementation of those steps necessary to assume control of the Golf Course through the authority it has under the Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Act.

3. Consistent with the terms of the Lease, the County will assume responsibility for selecting and engaging the management company to operate the Golf Course.

4. As the County already owns the Golf Course, defined by the Lease as a certain 424 acre tract of land containing two 18-hole golf courses, and one 9-hole executive golf course and the clubhouse, maintenance shed(s) and other buildings and improvements located thereon, this Resolution authorizes those steps necessary to bring operation of the Golf Course back under County control and to terminate and/or otherwise nullify the Lease.

5. The County hereby authorizes the implementation of such steps as are required to effectuate the matters set forth herein subject to such other public action as is deemed necessary to finalize the course of action outlined herein.

1.3 RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY). Mr. McKernan opened the floor to public comment on agenda items only, and the following were received:

Ray Huff of Pentridge Cove Williamsport asked if help from the corrections department would continue to be offered/used at the golf course.

Mr. McKernan said that the management company will have the say in this, and they will look for the most cost effective option that is available.

Mr. Mirabito said the goal in doing this is to save the golf course while being fair to the taxpayers.

Mr. Mussare agreed that the county would like to see that continue.

Doug DeClerk from Broad Street in Hughesville asked what will happen with the Recreation Authority Board.

Mr. McKernan said the authority still exists.

Bob Yowel from West Hills Drive Williamsport is interested in seeing the contract with the management company. He wants more public disclosure of the details of the contract.

Mr. McKernan explained the details are still being worked out.

Mr. Mirabito reiterated that they are trying to save the golf course.

Mr. Yowel explained he is concerned with the contract because he is unaware of details.

Mr. Mussare said that certain changes need to be made. That the Commissioners are not experts at running a golf course.

Alan Cohick, Cogan Station stated he is behind the Commissioners to make the right decision. He said the staff of the golf course should be kept in the loop.

Mr. McKernan stated everyone is impressed with the people who work there.

Mr. Mirabito repeated that the golf course is an asset. The management company will get the golf course on an even keel.

Mr. Mussare stated that since 1988 there has been unsustainable debt. There is no blame being placed, but the taxpayers cannot take another tax increase to support the golf course. The hiring of a management company will give the best chance to success.

Jamie Spencer, Cogan Station asked if a decision was made on a management company.

Mr. McKernan said this is still being negotiated.

Randy Wright of Montoursville, talked about the bond situation and the biggest golf managers association in Pennsylvania.

Mr. McKernan explained that the situation needs to be fixed once and for all.

Robert Leyman from Montgomery commented on the proposed length of contract. He also discussed a restaurant.

Director McDermott explained that the authority is still involved and the golf course is operating business as usual during the transition.

Mike Cashera of Duboistown spoke on the advantages of having a golf course.

Alan Cohick provided suggestions to help tournaments.

Barb Michael of South Williamsport plays a lot of golf and helps with tournaments. She is concerned with the future of the restaurant. She would like to see the lady's association provide input.

Dennis Loner of Williamsport emphasized that the management company must understand the economics of the area.

2.0 ACTION ITEMS

2.1 ADOPT RESOLUTION 2016-04. A motion by Mr. Mussare and seconded by Mr. Mirabito and passed (3-0), adopted resolution 2016-04 regarding transition of the operation of White deer golf course from Lycoming County Recreational Authority to the County of Lycoming.

6.0 PUBLIC COMMENT. Mr. McKernan opened the floor to public comment and the following were received:

7.0 NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING. Mr. McKernan announced the next regularly scheduled meeting as a work session on Tuesday, February 2, 2016.

8.0 ADJOURN COMMISSIONERS' MEETING. A motion by Mr. Mussare and seconded by Mr. McKernan and passed (3-0), adjourned the Commissioners' Meeting at 3:56 p.m.