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Resolution on Financing Improvements to Golf Operations from Parks Advisory Commission  
 At a special April 29 work session in response to new recommendations by City Staff regarding funding for capital and operational improvements to the two City golf courses, PAC developed the attached resolution.

This resolution reaffirms the Parks Advisory Commissions’ (PAC) January 2008 resolution regarding recommended capital and operational improvements to the golf courses and the source of funding for those improvements.

PAC strongly objects to the use of park millage funds or park general funds to fund improvements to activities in an enterprise fund.

The portion of park millage funds earmarked for capital improvements is already small (20%), and diverting any of those funds to activities in the golf enterprise fund would be very detrimental to needed improvements elsewhere in the park system.

Likewise, diverting millage funds earmarked for park operations and/or park general funds to activities in the golf enterprise fund would be detrimental to park operations.

Capital investments and operational assistance for activities in an enterprise fund should be funded by the City’s general fund reserve.

The attached resolution also calls for park staff, PAC, and the golf advisory task force to develop criteria to define “reasonable sustainability” of the golf operations at Huron Hills, and to review those operations against those criteria at the end of the 2008, 2009, and 2010 seasons.

The attached resolution further calls for an alternative use study to include city wide public input into potential alternative uses at Huron Hills and the financial implications of such alternative uses so that, in the event the three-year trial period for golf is not successful according to the criteria developed,

the City will have a realistic basis for comparing the costs of maintaining Huron Hills beyond the three-year trial period with the cost of conversion to other park uses and ongoing operation for other uses.

PAC continues to support the ongoing effort to continue City golf operations at both courses since each serves different levels of ability. PAC does not prejudge the outcome of the three-year trial period for Huron Hills, nor do we prejudge whether alternative park uses at Huron Hills would have a greater or lesser adverse financial impact on the park system or whether the community as a whole has stronger preferences for continued golf operations or other park activities. We do support efforts to obtain this information so that a responsible decision can be made at the end of three years to retain golf operations at Huron Hills or convert to other park uses.

Our April 29 work session on golf operations was attended by all nine Park Commissioners. The attached resolution was approved 7 to 2. The two commissioners who opposed this resolution did so not because they supported the use of park general funds or park millage funds to support golf operations. Rather, they questioned any significant investment in Huron Hills for golf operations and preferred an alternative use study to commence immediately.

Prepared by: Linda Berauer, Chair, Parks Advisory Commission