

Interview Questions for Golf Management Companies

- 1 • Why do you want to operate a public golf course? What will you bring to the operation?
- 2 • Tell us how you plan to increase play at your golf course?
- 3 • Do you have a specific plan to increase play from kids/minority groups?
- 4 • What are some other revenue options you think should be explored at public golf courses besides traditional golf?
- 5 • Describe your thoughts on the state of golf in Louisville and nationwide.
- 6 • Tell us in detail, your marketing plan for the golf course? What is your marketing investment plan?
- 7 • You responded in the RFP with your revenue sharing plan? Please describe it.
- 8 • What are your thoughts on dynamic pricing and explain how you would incorporate it into your operation?
- 9 • What maintenance practices are most important to encourage play?
- 10 • The current golf ordinance allows some courses to close during the winter months. How would you balance revenue during the open months to sustain course maintenance during the winter months (exclude those who bid on Seneca, Iroquois, Vettiner or Quail)?
- 11 • Tell us about your staffing plan? How many full time and part time employees (if they listed multiple courses- be specific with each course)?
- 12 • In your experience, what is the key to developing a good team?
- 13 • How will you ensure all revenue is received and recorded properly? How do you document free play from employees or others?
- 14 • One of the questions during the RFP process had you describe your capital improvement ideas and how you would implement them? Can you please share those plans in detail along with a timeframe?
- 15 • What initial investments are you willing to make?
- 16 • What are some of your ideas regarding investment in the long-term sustainability of golf courses in partnership with Metro Parks?
- 17 • What are your long-range goals for the course? How will you achieve them?

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RFP candidate interview committee notes
Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 8:22:24 AM

RFP Candidate Interview Committee Notes

Barry Basham 12/5/19 at 11:30 a.m.

1) Long history - built from 9-18 holes

Good for first 10 years / starting in '97

Positive influence

2) proposed dynamic pricing will be able to get back players/few cosmetic upgrades will help / also look at 9 hole rates / more aware of people's time

3) need range to get youth tournaments in

4) \$5 increase will help with revenue / along with dynamic pricing

5) state of golf in Louisville trends are upward / before too many golf courses - now it is OK

6) limited in resources / word of mouth churches / have couple of regular weekend groups / no investment planned

7) raised it 1% and that's all he can afford

8) come together as a group on how to decide dynamic pricing / need to compete with the private public courses

9) greens are key to operations and increased play / drainage issues on tees

10) proponent of closing during Jan and feb months - right thing to do / makes sense to close but should be left up to individual course on how to be open

11) staffing plan: he and wife / retired guy 30 hours/ 2 or 3 young cart guys

12) folks work there because they love golf / honesty and people skills

13) 800 key that they use for free play / allow employees to play for free

14) no course capital improvements plans to help (driving range) / clubhouse is functional no need for improvement

15) this \$5 increase should-could help

16) re-do front 9 holes / willing to work on fundraising to improve hole by hole

17) no long range goals

Kevin Greenwell 12/5/19 at 12:30 p.m.

1) golf is what he wanted to do / assistant since '81 / pga pro bring in rounds of golf /

afternoon play from noon - 4 p.m. par three course expand rounds

2) increase rounds entice folks in the afternoon - college students 20-40 year old demographic is missing

3) work with community centers (first tee wed night fill up in first 15 minutes) / need to expand that program

4) driving range and par 3 course can open up a learning center / close in pavilion and start teaching system (14/15 variables)

5) nationwide reading that it is on an uptick / seeing new players ladies and kids programs keep it busy

6) marketing plan - commit \$10K to social media ideas that's where the 20/40 year olds are

7) 14% proposal across the board mirror's rfp plan - would be \$50K more to the city

8) dynamic pricing - afternoon and Saturday afternoons decrease pricing / \$5 increase will

impact rounds of golf so don't increase fees during dynamic pricing / limited outings to encourage regulars

9) change to Zoija turf at other facilities and start own z grass farm / equipment needs / best last year - (good this year with program)

10) staffing plan: Kevin - dir of golf / golf pro / 2 or 3 assistants / 25 employees (summer) /// year round are 5 people

11) make team as family like as possible / dignity and respect / communication and consistency

12) kevin on site majority of time to monitor / cameras on site / balances register / industry standard - folks who worked there don't pay (perdiem/employee etc.)

13) capital investment plan - have units / \$5K / replace units \$28K / painting outside of clubhouse / sprucing up / maintenance building next 10 years / cart issue on 10 and 11 need to be replaced - willing to partner

14) long range goals - be an advocate in the community and promote golf and the facility

Tommy Betz 12/5/19 at 1:30 p.m.

1) career path since 14 / care about golf / bring charisma / customer service philosophy

2) Charlie Vettiner well played / what's supply and demand - courses close demand goes up / great customer service / marketing - use mail service (social media etc.) / third party to design dynamic pricing / junior clubs / men and women clubs

3) first tee is key / kids who are introduced to game are not avid golfers have to get them and keep them at the course / got to 6 courses and have junior programs

4) foot golf course didn't work - put on the side / outings and events / use technology and digital signage

5) stayed stable in city last 2 years / state of golf downward trend in 14 years - hit rock bottom / what is our supply and demand / too many courses in city

6) Vettiner be able to spend more money / 3rd party designs system - tee time utilization / email service sends blasts and utilizes social media / signage on doors / facility enhanced stuff cart etc.

7) revenue sharing plan - 13% carts / 10% F&B / lessons and junior tour entry fees

8) set dynamic pricing policy / free play etc.

9) greens are most important and they are good / fairways at zoysia courses are key / take care of buildings

10) staffing plan - assistant pro / 2-3 other full times / total: out of season 5-6 and 20 in season 80% part-time

11) set by example and good customer service

12) pos system protects a bunch / daily checks of register / make deposits in timely fashion - need policy / FREE PLAY: at maximum just employees - parks administrators - golf pros - golf course superintendents of america /// set another policy

13) help within all building / gravel issues around clubhouse / start a non-profit to raise money for golf capital needs

14) long range plans - get to an 18 hole course with higher volume / need to be master pro / the happiness of people / need golf cart path improvements

Grant Hummel 12/6/19 at 11:30 a.m.

1) love golf and bring 30-40 year olds in

2) show people this is a sport for everyone couple leagues / light up evening golf

3) first tee program is a great opportunity for kids and minorities

- 4) other activities besides golf like corn hole etc.
 - 5) state of golf is stagnant - potential to move forward push over the wall
 - 6) social media is key to marketing / website user friendly
 - 7) revenue sharing plan: 10% carts / 10% of f&B / 5% lessons and 1% merchandise
 - 8) be careful with dynamic pricing / just use at slow times only
 - 9) get golfers out as early as possible / keeping ruff cut short
 - 10) discuss plan with superintendent / downsize staff during winter
 - 11) 1 head pro until secure Class A / shop assistant full-time / seasonal cart and inside help
 - 12) communication and everyone being on same page
 - 13) daily balance done daily / free play: pay flat rate per employee need key to ring it up
 - 14) deal with minor improvements / siding etc. (group decision about future improvements)
- clubhouse needs work
- 15) need to showcase our product better /
 - 16) 1st year sustain current play / 2nd new golfers / opportunity to learn and grow

George Moe Demling 12/6/19 at 12:15 p.m.

- 1) still enjoy the golf business / family of golfers / love teaching enhance the courses
- 2) get more adults playing / great par 3 course to get things done
increase play - over 200 homes across the street - pass out flyers / blame maintenance team for play
- 3) first tee is key to increase golf / driving range deals / Jody Mudd to help teach and play
- 4) dynamic pricing in the afternoons
- 5) golf is back because Tiger is back / terrific players coming out of Louisville
- 6) couple hundred dollars/month
- 7) revenue sharing plan: 13 or 14% carts/10-12 concession / 5% lessons / 2% merchandise
- 8) tee markers, cutting, tee markers etc.
- 9) winter 24-7 maintenance / no offer to help / metro put up a building permanent to have indoor training area
- 10) staffing plan: pro and 2 asst 6-7 part time assistants and couple of junior
- 11) clubhouse is key / regular meetings
- 12) revenue is checked out nightly / free play is documented - work your way around / employees - older gentlemen work 1 day and play 1 day
- 13) get building built to have indoor lessons / willing to invest money (won't give dollar amount)
- 14) look at golf annuals on Saturday and Sunday mornings / drop twilight times
- 15) no long range goals / short term range plan and building back there

Patrick Vadden 12/6/19 at 1 p.m.

- 1) grew up in system / st x high school / something always wanted to do / 2001 Seneca long run and Charlie Vettiner
- 2) men's clubs junior clubs ladies leagues need to be revitalized / there already is senior club / new tournament format need pga junior league team
- 3) expand first tee program / operation 36 / free scramble for kids on course
- 4) indoor golf simulators 2 at indoor clubhouse (well used)
- 5) state of golf holding steady / leveling out / need to reengage kids and get parents involved
- 6) social media/area schools / text message mkt /
- 7) revenue sharing plan 15% carts/12% f&B/ 1% merchandise / lessons
- 8) dynamic pricing look at afternoon times and weekend afternoons / need to be same at all courses

- 9) greens are key to encourage play /
- 10) stay open during winter months
- 11) busy season weekdays 3 people / afternoon 3 plus carts / weekends 3 inside and 1 outside
Winter: take one person off depending on weather or play
- 12) team environment informed and on same page
- 13) revenue received and recorded - checked in and deposit made next morning / free play - document work for play - put it in as a comp policy
- 14) capital investment - new fixtures in golf shop landscaping etc.
- 15) not thought about investments
- 16) long term goals / building of programming
- 17) hands on person to person organizer / people person / done payroll - ordering of supplies - food and beverage - budget for payroll

Chris Wilson 12/6/19 at 2 p.m.

- 1) goal to be a head professional at metro golf / pga programming grow game etc. and make it more fun
 - 2) pga junior league 13 and under / not a ton of pressure to play make it more fun / golf in schools kpga
 - 3) reach minorities / go to schools
 - 4) 7/8 months of good revenue other months go to indoor golf // simulator in upstairs room (\$20/hour to use it / \$40K to implement) foot golf /
 - 5) seen decline in Lou but folks are hungry to grow the game / if I didn't think it would grow, I wouldn't be here / we have a good history and golf reputation
 - 6) social media with younger generation / Santa's revenge / online access to book a tee time / pga initiatives / data base of emails / willing to invest talk to other pros about amounts
 - 7) 12% cart / 12%f&B / 5% driving / 2% merchandise / 2% lessons
 - 8) work with numbers to see what is the best idea / Saturday afternoon etc.
 - 9) no rain / no damage to greens - good practices from maintenance crew
 - 10) start a rainy day fund
 - 11) 2 inside pga employees (hourly) / customer service is key / adequate staff to service customer properly
 - 12) develop employment team - smile and work on compliments
 - 13) revenue: mark kemper taught how to manage money (take it to the bank personally) / free play for employees / pga pros play for free
 - 14) clubhouse improvements flowers etc. / nice flat screen tv is key / golf course - practice facility (investment initially - no dollar amount)
 - 15) long term sustainability - partnership with metro / create more golfers / driving prices down have allowed more folks to be part of private organizations
- Few of peers retired / manage supplies and ordering - have that budget / took over outside staff /
- Helped with f&b operation with general manager
- How do you get a golfer back - yield management - free clinics -

Open to most courses / Shawnee is best shot /

1st Tee (Barry / D'Shawn) 12/6/19 at 3 p.m.

- 1) headquartered at Shawnee / life skills need development / create sustainable income to grow the program / unique ability to enhance programming
- 2) focus on new golfers / social media and advertising / girls leagues / youth development /

- engage whole family parents night to encourage parents and family play / engage family / no club no ball no problem (invited sport) target gen X and millennial
- 3) golf should mirror what the community is - their whole mission / girls only leagues etc.
 - 4) need to make sure the course standards are high / customer service is most important component / quicker rounds 6 after 9... 9 after 6 etc. / get senior golfers engaged with range but put targets up and get it rolling / as a non-profit get things donated
 - 5) state of golf: first tee numbers are up and what we see is good / lou has great golf bones / state of golf nationwide is suffering / need to change mindset and perception of golf
 - 6) social media is key to marketing / full time dev. Director / pga social media manager and U of L student /
 - 7) revenue sharing plan: same plan as previous under Craig 10% f&b, range and cart 1% of March.
 - 8) dynamic pricing: maximize revenue or maximize slow play 1/2/3 more for pricing need to match it with marketing
 - 9) green speeds consistent / visually appealing course look
 - 10) utilize the holes that are in place and do best with what you have
 - 11) staffing plan: 2 pga pros on staff / 2 full time coaches / operations / hire head pro and assistant pro to operate facility with seasonal and part-time employees (head pro) create a board with Kevin craig Marty Kirchdorfer etc.
 - 12) let people do what you have hired them to do / don't micro manage and allow them to make mistakes and correct them
 - 13) strong set of internal controls / document free play - need to document it to make good decisions
 - 14) capital investment: range cover / clubhouse needs to be inviting and welcoming / good food and drink / good merchandise selection / need country club look
 - 15) put some initial money for the clubhouse / donor base / spruce up driving range / new signage / corporate donations for capital projects / flowers and new downspouts
 - 16) viable course up in rounds / reenergized / engaged in neighborhood / engaged with non-profits / youth got summer jobs / great success story
 - 17) how do you see play / more folks playing - not a kids course

Greg Basham 12/9/19 at 8:30 a.m.

- 1) grew up on public golf - worked for green fees / live close to Iroquois went to Valley high school and know the area / bring a lot of folks back to south end / knowledgeable about course
- 2) increase play - (check rounds at Cherokee) discount to students during twilight hours / full rack rates are low / need leagues to grow at courses / st Stephen league plays / need senior league at Iroquois / 30 week leagues / bring the universities along / need good product - but main job is to make sure they come back / need to make sure the golf course product and course conditions are good
- 3) need to start a junior league at Iroquois / but no driving range - need that / need to have leagues every night / promote through high school / have junior tournaments to attract parents etc
- 4) everyone is looking for a discount - promotions / but no alternative ideas
- 5) know for courses and reasonable play / play went down / national golf foundation last year since 2018 seen increase play - more millennials on course
- 6) contacted leagues at Iroquois and Cherokee to see if they will play / willing to invest fiscally \$2K or whatever it takes / can send out texts to get things done
- 7) revenue plan: 12% carts / over 28K rounds 13% / over 31K rounds 14% / f&b - 10% / merc at 1%

- 8) dynamic pricing - need a policy consistent for all the courses / only city to discount rounds weekend mornings
- 9) greens are number one to maintenance
- 10) 2 full assistants 5 shop assistance food and beverage manager / seniors for carts
- 11) communication is key to develop a good team / have to have a good unit that runs smoothly
- 12) employees that work play for free / pga members play free
- 13) capital investments - redo clubhouse paint and rearrange / \$2K for flowers etc. / also water stands / landscape all the tee boxes have a contest - to improve look and feel
- 14) investments big picture: maintenance equipment needs some improvement (leasing program) / need to see immediate results due to fee increase / need shorter ruff to make sure play is faster - eliminate championship tees and increase pace of play to make it faster
- 15) long range goals for course: money coming in needs to be spent on course / leagues and equipment

Sent from my iPad

Henry, Kim

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, December 17, 2019 5:19 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Parks and Recreation's Golf Course RFP Review Committee Recommendation
Attachments: 12-17-19 RFP Review Committee Recommendation - Parks and Recreation golf courses.docx; ATT00001.htm; Scores and Courses - Parks and Recreation RFP.xlsx; ATT00002.htm

Kim, I concur with the recommendations from the Golf RFP review committee. Please [REDACTED] with the recommendations.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]
Date: December 17, 2019 at 3:23:30 PM EST
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Parks and Recreation's Golf Course RFP Review Committee Recommendation

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Brosko, Margaret A." <Margaret.Brosko@louisvilleky.gov>
Date: December 17, 2019 at 7:42:09 AM EST
To: "James, Vincent" <Vincent.James@louisvilleky.gov>
Cc: "Henry, Kim" <Kim.Henry@louisvilleky.gov>
Subject: Parks and Recreation's Golf Course RFP Review Committee Recommendation

Chief James,

Please see the attached recommendation and scoresheet from Parks and Recreation's Golf Course RFP Review Committee.

Margaret Brosko
Assistant Director, Louisville Parks and Recreation

December 17, 2019

To: Chief James

From: Louisville Parks and Recreation Golf Course RFP review committee (Margaret Brosko, Spencer Holt, Jeff O'Brien, Ben Tipton and Art Williams)

Re: Recommendation for the operation of the city's golf courses

Thirteen initial responses were received.

Two proposals were eliminated for failure to meet minimum qualifications: Olmsted Parks Conservancy and Great Life Golf. The remaining eleven (11) were found to be responsive to the RFP.

The initial scoring of the submissions was complete Nov. 20, 2019. Clarification questions were sent to select proposers. As a result, proposals from American Golf and Billy Casper Golf did not move forward to the next stage of the RFP because they were not interested in operating a single course per Metro Council Ordinance.

Based on the initial scoring of the proposals, the ranking of the remaining nine were as follows:

1. Seneca Golf Course
2. Greg Basham, LLC
3. T Betz Golf, LLC
4. Youth Golf Coalition Inc., DBA The First Tee of Louisville
5. Patrick Vadden
6. Sun Valley Golf Services
7. Grant Hummel
8. George A. Demling
9. Wilson Golf

The committee conducted discussions with all respondents to further detail their proposed services, qualifications and experience, and any investment plans they offered. Based upon these discussions, the committee re-ranked the proposals as follows:

1. Seneca Golf Course
 2. Greg Basham, LLC
 3. Youth Golf Coalition Inc., DBA The First Tee of Louisville
 4. Patrick Vadden
 5. T Betz Golf, LLC
 6. Wilson Golf
 7. Grant Hummel
 8. Sun Valley Services
 9. George A. Demling
- Discussions with **Seneca Golf Course** and **Greg Basham LLC** reflected the same level of experience and proven results that were displayed in their written proposal. Their status in the overall ranking remained the same.
 - **Patrick Vadden** demonstrated a very high level of fiscal and personnel management and strategic planning experience. He showcased development - revitalization of the ladies' organization and youth leagues / staff training and mentorships/success at implementing and growing junior golf including offering free scrambles for kids on course / creative ideas

for alternative revenue opportunities including bringing indoor golf simulators to clubhouse activities. References reflect his experience at Audubon Country Club preparing him to operate a course at a high level and stating now is the right time.

- Discussions with **T Betz Golf** reflected relative consistency with his written proposal and did not add anything significant to enhance his position. A concern from the committee during the interview continues to be a lack of specific examples for increased play.
- **The First Tee of Louisville** specifically laid out their plan to increase play at the course and revitalize their youth programming while focusing on an overall goal to make golf mirror the demographics of our community at large (focusing on minorities, women and youth) during the interview process. Their research nationwide regarding best practices for course operation and increased play was evident. They also indicated the success of other First Tee Chapters running courses and their intent to model some of their operation on those proven results. Their staffing plan includes a head PGA pro and a PGA assistant pro. That, along with their reputation as an established non-profit organization, will allow for investment into the course and youth programming for the city. They provided specific examples of how to speed up play and their established social media and marketing experience is above par.
- Discussions with **Wilson Golf** clearly demonstrated his ability to operate a course due to his professionalism, innovative ideas and willingness to continually improve. A lack of specificity in his written proposal reflected his initial ranking. During discussions, he was able to provide greater detail of his proposed services and experience. His specific plan to increase junior play and build relationships with area schools was noted. His engagement plan using technology was well thought out. His maturity and leadership with the KPGA highlighted his reputation as a rising star in the industry. References stressed his ability to achieve a high level of customer service and manage conflicts calmly.
- Discussions with **Grant Hummel** brought detailed and creative ideas for increasing rounds and revenue including night golf tournaments, couple's leagues and youth programming. His connection to the community and success in building a strong youth program was evident. He also identified other opportunities to increase foot traffic and grow awareness from the millennial crowd including out of the box thinking like corn hole tournaments. His knowledge of the industry and awareness of current trends including the need to speed up the game for some demographics was laid out in detail. His reference confirmed his knowledge of management, budgeting and long-range planning.
- Both **Sun Valley Golf Services** and **George A. Demling** did not demonstrate through their written proposal or discussions the ability to meet the standards for operation the city is seeking for its golf courses. Discussions supported the written proposals reflecting a lack of innovative plans to increase rounds and a failure to provide any comprehensive strategy beyond the status quo. References did not alter the findings.

Based on the information provided, the review committee is making the following recommendations to enter into negotiations:

- 1) **Seneca Golf Course (Kevin Greenwell) - Seneca Golf Course**
- 2) **Greg Basham LLC - Iroquois Golf Course**
- 3) **Youth Golf Coalition Inc., DBA The First Tee of Louisville - Shawnee Golf Course**
- 4) **Patrick Vadden - Charlie Vettiner Golf Course**
- 5) **T Betz Golf LLC (Tommy Betz) - Long Run Golf Course**
- 6) **Wilson Golf (Chris Wilson) - Crescent Hill Golf Course**
- 7) **Grant Hummel - Sun Valley Golf Course**

In making the recommendation, the committee considered the final ranking as well as the proposer's preferred course to operate. As the committee went down the list, if the proposer's preferred course was already assigned, they were given options of the remaining courses. T Betz Golf LLC, Wilson Golf, and Grant Hummel were contacted by Metro Purchasing to clarify their desire to operate courses that were not in their original proposal. They agreed to the recommendations listed above.

There are no recommendations for award of Bobby Nichols and Cherokee golf courses. No proposals were submitted for operating Bobby Nichols and the current ordinance allows Cherokee Golf Course and Bobby Nichols Golf Course to close during the winter months. By not recommending an award for these courses, further discussions can be pursued about the future use of these courses.