

An Important Message to the Waterton Community, and
Friends and Supporters of the Waterton Lakes Golf Course
from the
Waterton Community Joint Venture



A New Lease for the Waterton Lakes Golf Course

Where Are We?

We'd like to take a few moments of your time to fill you in on where we are on our journey to secure a new lease for the Waterton Lakes Golf Course (WLGC). In case you didn't know, our lease expired before the 2019 golf season and we have been operating without a lease for two seasons.

For decades we have known, loved and appreciated having this charming course in Waterton. Our course is a good fit for us, it's approachable and welcoming - actually a perfect reflection of how we see our community. None of us are looking for anything remotely close to a Banff Springs or Jasper Park Lodge experience, but if we're honest, we know that there are things that have been slowly deteriorating on our course and we simply must address them if we hold out any hope for having a golf course in the future. The items that need attention should not be a surprise to

Parks Canada as they were clearly spelled out as far back as a Parks Canada study conducted in 1994.

The WLGC is basically a break-even operation run by a non-profit community organization, and the fact that we have been able to keep things running is a testament to our experienced manager, who has, through necessity, learned how to run things on a shoestring. But that can't last forever and has taken its toll on the course.

Over the last 27 years, if there ever were any profits, they were quickly used up by day to day needs on the course. There was one big expenditure, a maintenance building (which we lost in the Kenow fire) and that had to be financed. Considering all that needs to be addressed on the course, we simply must have a long term plan in place, because we just can't look after things properly using a year-to-year financing approach.

So what's happening now?

In our last note to you, we told you that in September, 2020, we submitted our proposal to Parks Canada to continue running the WLGC. Our proposal recognizes that anything built on the course immediately becomes the property of Parks Canada, so in light of that, we have asked Parks Canada to give us a break on the rent while we upgrade the course and buildings. Our proposal outlines areas that need immediate attention. First and foremost is water; we just don't have enough, and the course is suffering for the lack of it. Once we have water, the cumbersome and antiquated irrigation system needs to be replaced and the clubhouse and proshop need serious attention - these things are included in our proposal along with improving the golf cart fleet and the grounds equipment. These aren't frivolous additions, they are necessary to the future sustainability of our course and they are going to take time and financing. It is why a 42 year lease is necessary, and why we asked for it in our proposal.

After submitting our proposal in September, we personally discussed it with Parks Canada. We were told that our proposal would not be considered until they had determined that there was no outside interest in running the golf course, and that the only way for them to gauge outside interest, was through a *Request for Proposals (RFP)*. If they didn't receive any viable offers from the outside, they would then revisit our proposal. This was a verbal agreement, between Parks Canada and the Joint Venture and we made it very clear to Parks Canada that if an outside party would be willing to operate the golf course we would respect that, (maybe even

welcome that), as long as any potential operator honestly knew what work needed to be done at the course and was committed to undertaking that work.

We'll include the link to the RFP, and hope you'll take a minute and look through it. You'll immediately see the reason for our concern. The RFP falls far short of pointing out what needs to be done at the course. We believe that if an outside party succeeds in obtaining the lease, based on the attached RFP, they are doomed to fail.

We are extremely concerned that a private operator would never be able to reinvest every cent of profit back into the course and will have to cut corners and any progress we have made in the last 25 years will be lost.

We have sent a letter to Parks Canada outlining the reasons why we are so concerned that their RFP does not spell out what actually needs to be undertaken at the course and why the future sustainability of the golf course will not be possible if the RFP is used as the basis for a new lease. We are attaching that letter.

Are we the only ones that can run the golf course? No, of course not. But the community has been supporting and operating it for over 25 years, we have dedicated and experienced management and staff in place - ready and willing and able to continue, and the Waterton Community Joint Venture is prepared to be the solid foundation behind making this iconic community course be all that it can be.

But here's the reality: if the golf course is taken over for any period of time by a private operator, and that operator fails, because of the inability or an unwillingness to do what is necessary to sustain the golf course in future years, it may not be possible for us to reconstruct our current infrastructure (ie. people, machines, good will) to come back and run it again.

We hope that Parks Canada will recognize that their RFP does not speak to the future integrity of the course, and we are going forward in the belief that our September conversation will be honoured, and that we will have the opportunity to discuss our proposal in the near future.

As always, thank you for your time and for your support. We will keep you posted.

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