



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
BONITA NATIONAL GOLF CLUB, INC.**

**Place of meeting:** Bonita National Clubhouse  
17501 Bonita National Blvd  
Bonita Springs, Florida 34135

**Date of meeting:** September 24, 2024

**Time of meeting:** 4:00 p.m.

- 1. Call to Order: R. Donatuti, President on September 24, 2024 at 4:04 p.m.**
- 2. Certification of Quorum: R. Jackson, Secretary**
- 3. Proof of Notice: S. Coulls, GM, Troon Management**

**Attendees:** R. Donatuti, President  
P. Hanson, Vice President (Via Telephone)  
R. Jackson, Secretary  
N. Oliver, Treasurer (Via Telephone)  
R. Winter, Director  
D. Jimenez, Director  
T. Casey, Director  
S. Coulls, GM, Troon Management  
W. Weber-Brunson, Troon Management  
J.P. Shepherd, Head Golf Professional  
J. Ellis, Golf Superintendent

- 4. Approval of Meeting Minutes.**

**R. Jackson moved to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2024 Round Table Special Meeting. The motion was seconded by T. Casey and passed unanimously.**

**R. Jackson moved to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2024 Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded by P. Hanson and passed unanimously.**

R. Jackson moved to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2024 Executive Session Special Meeting. The motion was seconded by T. Casey and passed unanimously.

R. Jackson moved to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2024 Special Meeting. The motion was seconded by P. Hanson and passed unanimously.

R. Jackson moved to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2024 Executive Session Special Meeting. The motion was seconded by P. Hanson and passed 6-0 (T. Casey abstaining).

5. President's Report.

R. Donatuti thanked the membership for the inconvenience they have suffered as a result of all of the changes and improvements made to the golf course over the past few months, and he thanked Jason Ellis for keeping our golf course in great shape. He also stated that the new golf carts have been favorably received.

6. Treasurer's Report.

N. Oliver reported that August 2024 rounds were down by 411 to budget and 1,869 YTD. Our net operating income YTD remains strong (\$348,974). R. Jackson asked if the Preferred Reciprocal Program was resulting in more rounds, and J.P. Shepherd stated that it was helping, but a survey conducted by a local club indicated that 47 of the 50 clubs surveyed have seen decreases in their rounds this summer.

T. Casey asked how our investments are performing. R. Donatuti stated that we have received over \$185,000 in investment income YTD.

7. Standing Committee Reports.

Greens. R. Winter stated that the course improvements are three weeks ahead of schedule and growing in nicely. The short game practice area is about 60% grown in and it is anticipated it will be available for golfer use by October 21, as will all of the new tee boxes. The Committee anticipates that the work on the putting green renovation (if approved by the membership) and the driving range re-grassing will begin on April 29, 2025, at which time the mats will be available for hitting range balls and the short game area putting green will be available for practice putting. The Committee is also examining pace of play, maintenance, and the condition of our bridges, such as to add rails to the bridges to extend the life of the bridges. Flag reflectors will arrive soon and we will soon have slots in the mats to facilitate hitting woods off of the mats.

Golf Operations Committee. P. Hanson stated that the final event calendar has been posted to the website and thanked the Finance Committee and J.P. Shepherd for a

thorough budget report and giving the GOC the ability to have meaningful input into the budget process. The Men's Member-Guest event is sold out with 120 participants, and she thanked Danny Fisher for chairing this event. J.P. Shepherd stated that those wishing to play on October 24-26 during this event can request reciprocal play at other clubs if they so desire. The October 12 Oktoberfest event is sold out with a wait list. The Halloween Nine&Dine will open to membership reservations on September 29.

Governance/Compliance. D. Jimenez stated that the Committee is working on proposing revisions to the Declarations and ByLaws as discussed at some length at the Round Table. The Committee will also be working on revising the Committee Composition and Roles and standardizing the Charters of all Committees.

Finance Committee. N. Oliver stated that he will provide to the Board, before the October 17 Budget Workshop, more detailed financial information including as to the final costs of all of the projects completed in 2024, the amount of the 2023 Excess Member Income that was used on any such projects, the final cost of the renovations to the short game area, the amount of 2023 Excess Member Income that remains unspent, the amount of tax we must pay on the unspent amount, and what we plan to do with the amount remaining after taxes. R. Donatuti also stated that he anticipates that we may have an operating surplus for 2024 of around \$200,000 and we need to focus on the best way to plan for that eventuality.

Strategic Planning Subcommittee. N. Oliver stated that a number of projects are being considered for 2025. The putting green renovation, cart path revision, and re-grassing of the driving range were discussed earlier in this meeting. The Subcommittee is also considering expanding the chemical/fertilizer building, adding a canopy in the maintenance area, replacing the driving range boom, cart path repairs, improving the drainage on Hole 3, and taking added steps to extend the life of the bridges. These items are all in the Capital Reserve Study and final costs for them will be included in the budget for approval. The Subcommittee is also considering work on removing the common Bermuda and Zoysia grass around the green surrounds and a canopy and updates to the entry area by the bag drop and by the Pro Shop.

Communications Committee. No Report.

8. Old Business: None.

9. New Business:

A. Survey on Men's and Ladies' Day.

P. Hanson stated that participation in Men's and Ladies' Day (MLD) has steadily dropped and the Golf Operations Committee is making it a priority to have a strong MLD program, to increase socialization, revenue, and a sense of being well-connected to the

community. P. Hanson made the following motion: "To survey the membership regarding charging a ½ Chelsea point for participation in Men's and Ladies Day. To get feedback on membership thoughts regarding participation in these events, in addition to plaque events." P. Hanson stated that the results of the survey will allow the GOC to use feedback to improve the golfing experience of Bonita National members. D. Jimenez seconded the motion.

T. Casey asked what has changed since the golf membership was surveyed in June, 2023 when they stated that members should be charged a point when they play in MLD. P. Hanson stated that it has been a long time since that survey was sent out and there has been a lot of turnover in the community.

R. Jackson asked what the vote was at the GOC – it was 6-1 in favor of this motion. R. Jackson stated that the membership survey was only 15 months ago and the members clearly voiced their view that a Chelsea point should be charged every time a member plays golf, with limited exceptions. The survey results, which are on the BNGC website, reveal that 57.5% feel a point should be charged on MLD, versus 35%; 52.6% feel a point should be charged for playing in tournaments, versus 40.6%; and 50.9% feel a point should be charged for playing in plaque events, versus 40.6. R. Jackson stated that the reason for these views is clear – it reflects that our members want a system in place that allows for fair and equal access to their golf course by all members. Giving any group, or subset, greater access by accruing fewer Chelsea points is not fair and equitable. Many people do not like playing in events and they should not be penalized as a result.

R. Jackson also stated that the GOC is a Committee that reports to this Board and should be focusing on the requests from the Board. They need to cease their attempts to modify the Chelsea system for MLD and other events. The GOC made a motion a year ago to not charge a point for one MLD per month, and that motion was defeated 7-0. The GOC should instead focus its efforts on other matters requested by the Board.

The motion was defeated 5-2 (with P. Hanson and R. Donatuti voting in favor; and R. Jackson, D. Jimenez, T. Casey, N. Oliver, and R. Winter voting against).

#### **B. Chelsea 30-Day Point Rollover.**

P. Hanson made the following motion: "To make the following changes to Chelsea's operating system based on recommendations from Chelsea: 1. To move the trailing point retention period from 14 days to 30 days. 2. To perform a point reset on January 1<sup>st</sup>." D. Jimenez seconded the motion. P. Hanson stated that doing so will create a more equitable distribution of tee times through the placement process and ensure that all members start prime season on a level playing field with regards to tee time allocation.

R. Winter and J.P. Shepherd repeated the statements they made on this topic at the Round Table we held earlier this date. In addition, R. Winter stated that changing to 30

days will not reduce the amount of members on the overflow list and other clubs in the area do not use a 30-day reset period. J.P. Shepherd stressed that it will make tee time allocation fairer and the Chelsea expert (Theresa Burgess) recommends this change.

The motion was defeated by a unanimous vote of 7-0.

R. Winter made a motion to change the Chelsea reset system we use right now. We currently charge the Chelsea point 5 days before play and that point resets 14 days after play (a total of 19 days). R. Winter moved to charge the Chelsea point 5 days before the play date and reset that point 9 days after the play date (a total of 14 days). The motion was seconded by D. Jimenez. J.P. Shepherd and Simon both stated that they would leave the system as it is and not change it.

The motion passed 5-2 (with R. Donatuti and R. Jackson voting against; and R. Winter, T. Casey, P. Hanson, D. Jimenez, and N. Oliver voting in favor).

#### C. Code of Conduct.

P. Hanson made a motion to impose the “Board of Directors and Committee Members Code of Conduct Policy.” It would have various provisions governing the conduct of Board members and Committee members and provisions regarding the removal of Committee members. The motion was seconded by D. Jimenez. P. Hanson stated that this motion comes from the Communications Committee and we have had some recent instances of inappropriate behavior at meetings that should be addressed in a policy.

T. Casey stated that, as he reads the draft, it would mean that golf members would give up their right to state their opinions in order to be on the Board or a Committee, and he cannot agree to that. R. Jackson asked who drafted the motion, and P. Hanson stated that she did so with some help from Simon and the attorney has looked at it. R. Jackson stated that he opposes this draft for a number of reasons – it misstates the name of BNGC; in Paragraph 5 it states that Board and Committee members should “vote their conscience” which is an ambiguous term and misunderstands that our role is to act in the best interests of the membership; it requires the support of all duly adopted Board decisions, which could be construed to prevent a Board or Committee member from stating their views; it contains very ambiguous provisions about when and under what circumstances a Committee member can be removed ; it impinges upon the authority of the Board, as set forth in our governing documents, to control the membership of Committees, because all Committee Chairs and members serve at the discretion of the Board. At this point, R. Donatuti suggested, and P. Hanson agreed, to table this motion until a later date and suggested that Directors Hanson, Jimenez, and Jackson, and Simon, discuss an acceptable Code of Conduct and report back to the Board at a later date. All Directors agreed.

#### D. Strategic Long Range Planning Committee.

R. Winter made a motion: "To form a stand-alone Committee for Strategic Long-Range Planning that is not part of the Greens Committee." The motion was seconded by D. Jimenez. R. Winter stated that we previously combined such a Committee with the Greens Committee and that, in retrospect, was a mistake. This Committee will focus on establishing forward plans (2+ years) for our golf facilities that support the continued improvements required and our capital reserve study. R. Winter stated that we have to have a plan in place for the next 5-10 years. The current Subcommittee consists of N. Oliver, Bob Pacheco, R. Winter, R. Donatuti, and Simon and they would become members of this Committee with N. Oliver as the Liaison.

The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

E. Convenience Credit Card Fee and ACH Payment Options.

R. Donatuti made a motion: "Effective November 1, 2024, a convenience fee of 3% will be instituted to all credit card charges." The motion was seconded by R. Jackson. R. Donatuti stated that the HOA yesterday approved an identical motion. Members who sign up for ACH (instructions will be forthcoming to the membership) will not be charged this 3% fee. Those members who wish to continue to pay with their credit cards may do so, but they will be charged a 3% fee, which is currently being paid by BNGC. R. Donatuti stated that BNGC will save between \$125,000 and \$150,000 per year if this motion is adopted.

R. Jackson asked if we have more than one account with Global Processing, and R. Donatuti stated that we only have one account and there will not be any savings by bundling as the HOA experienced. R. Jackson also implored the Finance Committee to explore additional ways to reduce our banking fees even though Global Processing is a preferred vendor of Northstar.

The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

10. Management Report.

General Manager Simon Coulls thanked all of the Committee members for all of their time and effort on all of their tasks and especially the budget. Simon also thanked J.P. Shepherd and Jason Ellis and their staffs for running a wonderful golf course, both inside and outside. Last, Simon stated that we have a beautiful golf course here at BNGC.

Simon notified all present that the golf course will be closed on Thursday, September 26 due to the incoming storm and implored all to stay safe.

11. Golf Member Comments. None.

12. Member Online Questions. None.

**Adjournment:** R. Donatuti made a motion to adjourn; seconded by R. Jackson. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0, at 6:17 p.m.

Approved 10/22/2024  
Robert Jackson, Secretary