David M. Sanders, MA LLB
885 Wilkes Avenue
Winnipeg MB

May 17, 2013

Chairperson and Members of
Alternative Service Delivery Committee
The City of Winnipeg
510 Main Street
Winnipeg, MB

Dear Councillors:

Re: **Alternative Service Delivery Committee**
1:30 p.m., Friday, May 17, 2013 – Item #2

Business Plan for the Private Management of Golf Courses, Proposed Leasing of City Operated Golf Courses (Expression of Interest #497-2011 for Selected City-Owned Golf Courses) and Declaration as Surplus of John Blumberg Golf Course Land

I am appearing this morning to oppose the recommendations of the City's Administration with respect to the future of these City-owned golf course properties.

I also wish to condemn the whole $90,000 "Help Council Get Out of the Golf Business" advertising campaign, in the strongest possible terms.

Who on earth is "Responsible Winnipeg"?

Who authorized the expenditure of City taxes on this blatant and offensive attempt to deceive citizens and persuade them to lobby their elected councilors to approve these recommendations?

Who prepared this advertising campaign for the City? GolfNorth Properties Inc.?

Were the contents of these ads approved by Alan Shane, Acting Chief Operating Officer-WGS; Barry Thorgrimson, Planning, Property and Development; Mike Ruta, CFO; or Deepak Joshi, Chief Operating Officer, the administrators who authorized these recommendations?

What are the so-called facts in these ads?

1. Your City Golf Courses are stuck in an $8.4 million trap.
2. Losing $850,000/year
3. Save tax dollars
4. Invest $4.2 million in upgrades
5. Keep courses accessible

What is the truth?

The $8.4 million is purported to be the accumulated deficit of the Golf Course Special Operating Agency, reflecting annual losses suggested to be $850,000 now.

First of all, the SOA financial statements indicate the four golf courses to be leased produce an operating profit of $106,750 per year (2011).

The so-called "loss" consists of $450,000 in charges allocated to the City accounts, which the City will lose in the future, plus interest on long term debt of $180,000 and depreciation of $300,000, which will continue to be expenses of the City.

Officially, the lease option means that the SOA will produce an annual "loss" of $270,000, and a reduction in expense off-sets of at least $200,000 which will then be borne by the taxpayers.

The continuing net loss with the lease option means there is no way that the accumulated "deficit" will be eliminated "over the next 22 years," with this type of accounting.

The proposed lessee's commitment to invest in capital expenditures is just $4.5 million, over 20 years, supposedly some $2.15 million in the first four years, or an average of $210,000 per year, but apparently if the lessee fails to fulfill its annual "commitment," the balance will just be carried over to the next year.

Finally, if one of City Council's objectives is to keep golf courses "accessible," then how will Council ensure that remains a "fact", if the proposed lease will allow GolfNorth to determine all fees and charges annually?

The truth is that the City of Winnipeg has failed to manage and maintain its golf courses in a professional and prudent manner. The City should retain competent professional management now, as previously recommended in the City Auditor's Operational Review of Winnipeg Golf Services, November 2010, and demonstrate once again that the City of Winnipeg can indeed deliver a service efficiently and economically.

With respect to John Blumberg Golf Course:

Please reject, at least defer consideration of the recommendation to declare John Blumberg Golf Course surplus to the needs of the City and to authorize its marketing now, with the intention of selling it.

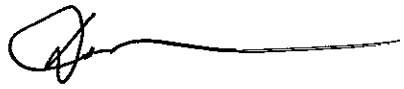
No such decision should be made until the City receives the Ernst & Young Real Estate Management Audit Report and considers and acts on its recommendations.

Supposedly an American consulting firm thinks Winnipeg has too much green space. Can anyone produce the quoted report "Pros Consulting – "Draft Level Service Report, December 2009"?

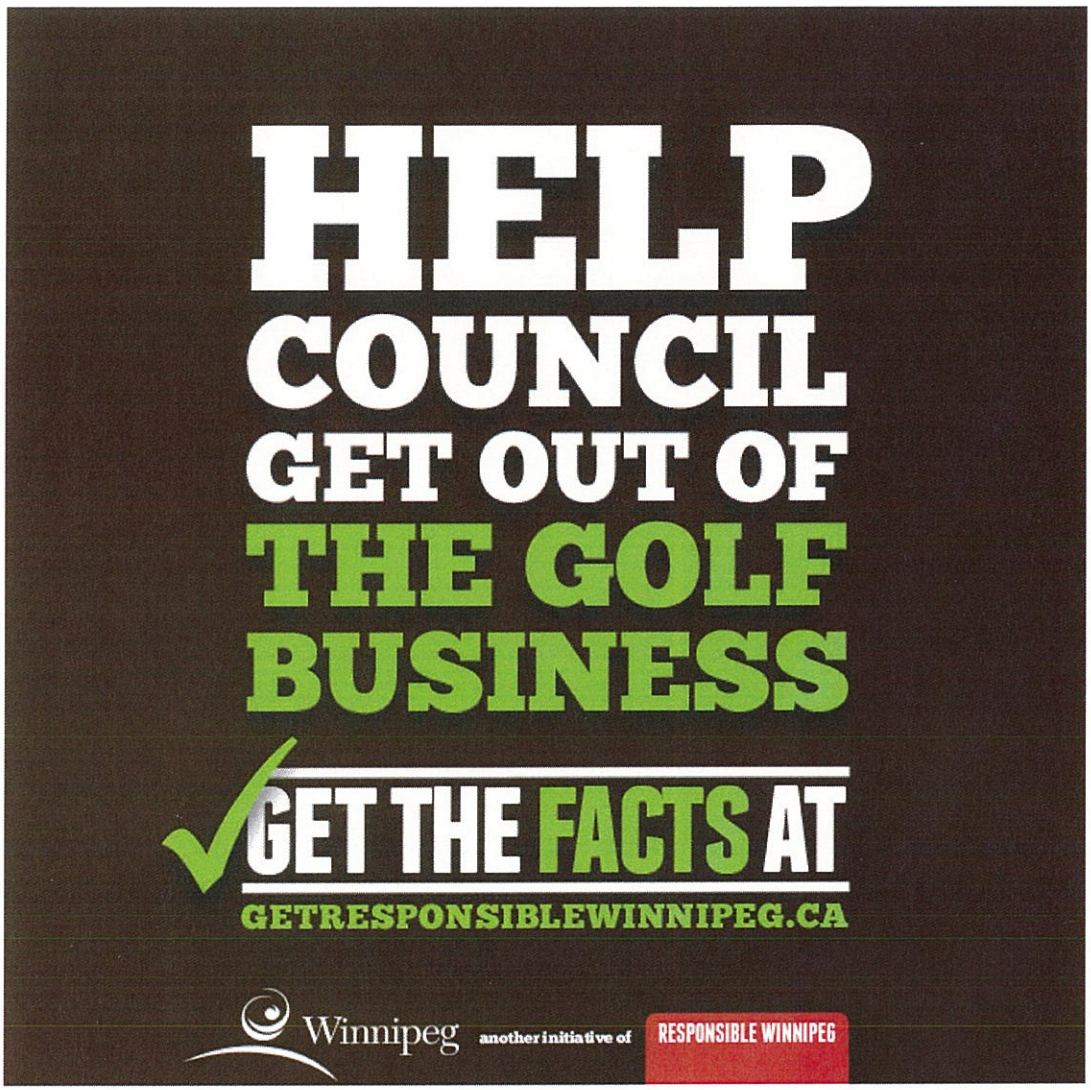
I think that D.I. Macdonald, the first Chief Commissioner of the unified City of Winnipeg, must be turning in his grave to hear that his successors are trying to dispose of this asset in this underhanded and thoughtless manner.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours truly,



David M. Sanders, MA, LLB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THE GOLF
BUSINESS
GET THE FACTS AT
GETRESPONSIBLEWINNIPEG.CA
Winnipeg
another initiative of
RESPONSIBLE WINNIPEG


GET THE
FACTS AT
GETRESPONSIBLEWINNIPEG.CA
Winnipeg
another initiative for a
RESPONSIBLE WINNIPEG


AFTER YEARS OF REVENUE LOSS
YOUR CITY GOLF COURSES ARE STUCK IN AN
$8.4 MILLION TRAP
HELP COUNCIL GET OUT OF THE
GOLF BUSINESS
Winnipeg
GET THE FACTS AT GETRESPONSIBLEWINNIPEG.CA
another initiative for a
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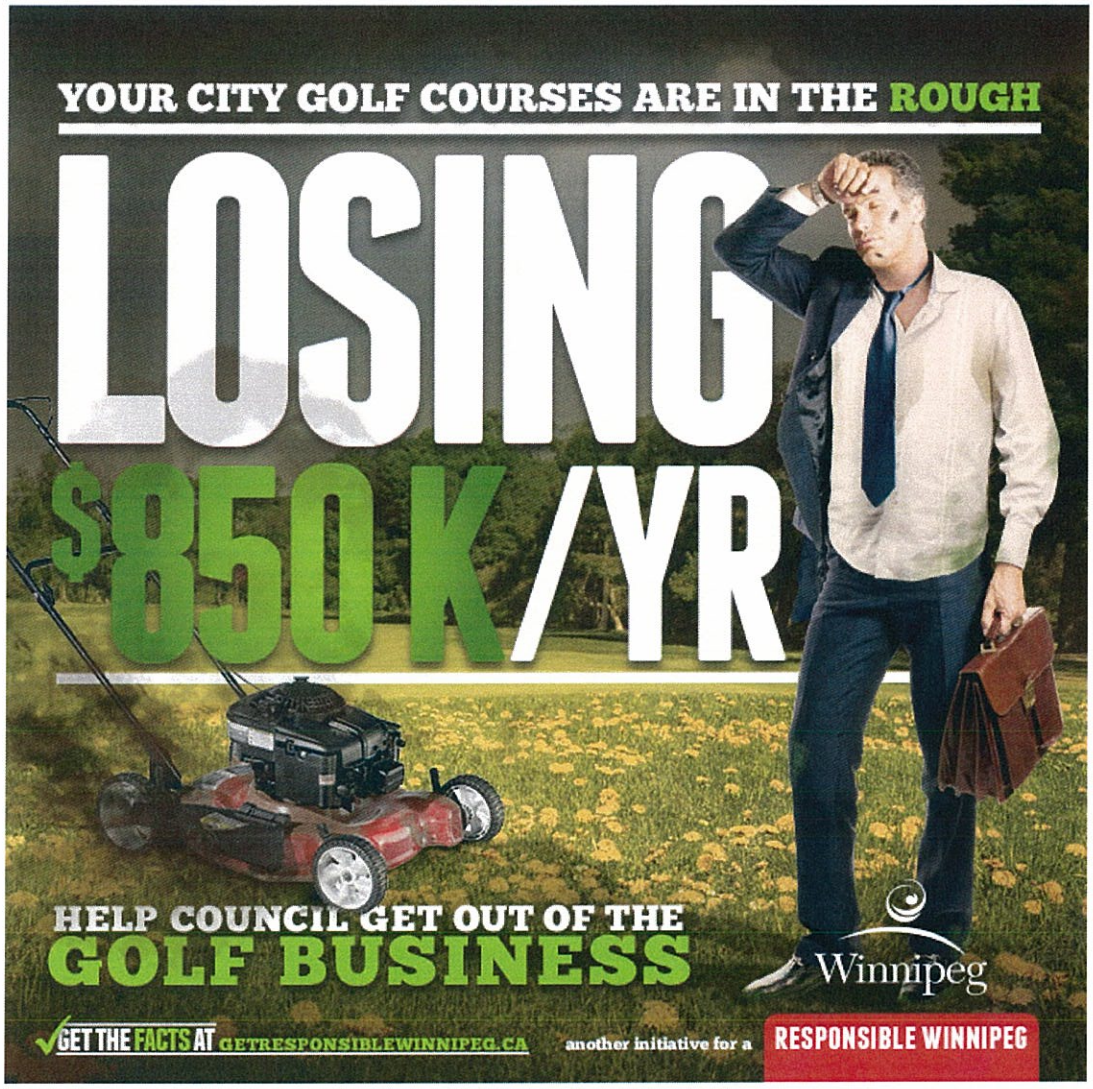


DOWNLOAD THEM ALL



City of Winnipeg Another Initiative of Responsible Winnipeg

Get the facts about our civic golf courses and share with your friends.

Help City Council get out of the golf business — let's bring our courses back up to par.

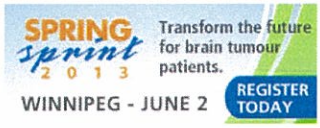
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Email
- Downloads

- **Fact**

This would save the city up to $1 million a year in expenses while bringing our courses to a profitable operating level







LOCAL

Winnipeg Free Press - PRINT EDITION

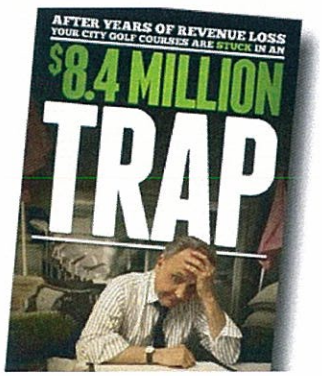
Councillors rip golf-course ads

Called a waste of $90,000 of taxpayers' money, misleading

By: Bartley Kives
Posted: 1:00 AM | Comments: 70

34 24 REDDIT 0 TUMBLR 0 259 PRINT E-MAIL





Enlarge Image

A $90,000 campaign intended to garner support for a proposed Winnipeg golf-course plan has backfired amid accusations of wasting public funds and misleading the electorate.

On Thursday, the City of Winnipeg launched a newspaper, radio and transit-bus advertising campaign that initially urged Winnipeggers to lobby city councillors to support a plan to sell off the John Blumberg Golf Course and lease four other courses to an Ontario operator.

Most of the ads did not feature the City of Winnipeg logo and none employed the city's usual blue-on-blue colour scheme. Instead, they were presented as "another initiative of Responsible Winnipeg," a name also employed by a website launched Wednesday at www.getresponsiblewinnipeg.ca.

Mayor Sam Katz said the campaign is intended to counter claims the city is privatizing golf courses and let the public know the golf-services special operating agency loses money every year.



LATEST VIDEO

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PHOTO STORE GALLERY




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POLL

Do you approve of the city's $90,000 campaign to back its plans for city golf courses?

- Yes
- No

An ad urging support for the city's Blumberg plan has sparked anger.

RULES ON BRANDING

There is maybe no government policy as fussy as the branding policy, especially in Ottawa.

In an era where branding is boss, the federal government's "identity program policy" covers everything from television commercials to government cars. It's meant to make sure people can clearly recognize federal activities by means of consistent identification. It's lengthy and persnickety, mandating, for example, that the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board use the coat of arms and not the Canada symbol with the little flag over the last "a."

Failure to follow the policy could incur the wrath of Treasury Board, which does audits and progress reports. Prime Minister Stephen Harper has come under fire for fiddling around the rules' edges to reflect Conservative party esthetics.

Manitoba's rules are simpler but similar, demanding the Manitoba logo appear on all public materials. Winnipeg has similar technical guidelines for the look of Winnipeg's logo, but not rules on where and when it must be used.

-- Mary Agnes Welch

"In the past, I think you've seen a lot of misinformation or inaccurate information out there, so I think the key thing is to make sure the public is aware of all the facts. I think the city should be praised," Katz said Thursday.

The absence of the city logo from the ad campaign was an oversight, the mayor said. "I believe there was a small mistake made and I believe that's been corrected," he said. Later on Thursday, the website was amended to delete the lobbying effort.

> *"In the past, I think you've seen a lot of misinformation or inaccurate information out there, so I think the key thing is to make sure the public is aware of all the facts. I think the city should be praised' -- Mayor Sam Katz*

A broad array of city councillors, however, remained outraged by the campaign, which convinced at least one member of executive policy committee to vote against the plan to sell the 81-hectare John Blumberg site and sign a 20-year lease with Conestoga, Ont., company GolfNorth Properties to operate and maintain the Harbour View, Kildonan Park, Windsor Park and Crescent Park courses.

"Absolutely not, especially after the city spends $90,000 of real money to convince Winnipeggers that golf courses lose $800,000 annually, which is a fictitious number and not reflected in the consolidated statements of the City of Winnipeg," St. Boniface Coun. Dan Vandal said in a statement.

Another member of EPC, St. Vital Coun. Brian Mayes, announced immediately after the plan was made public on Monday he would vote against it, also questioning the arithmetic used to determine the golf agency loses money.

Today, council's alternate service delivery committee, chaired by Coun. Russ Wyatt (Transcona), will consider the proposal. The plan requires EPC approval on May 22 and then comes before council as a whole on May 29.

A two-thirds majority of councillors will be required to sell the John Blumberg course, which is considered green space. As of Thursday, there were not enough votes to approve the sale. Several councillors remained leery of the golf-course proposal -- and outraged by the Responsible Winnipeg campaign.

Daniel McIntyre Coun. Harvey Smith and Mynarski Coun. Ross Eadie said it was unacceptable for Katz to describe the Responsible Winnipeg campaign as a city effort. They described the $90,000 effort as a pointless exercise that will not change their minds about voting against the golf plan.

Charleswood-Tuxedo Coun. Paula Havixbeck said she is not certain how she will vote, but criticized the campaign as a waste of money. So did Fort Rouge Coun. Jenny Gerbasi, who will vote against the plan.

The $90,000 for the ad campaign was drawn from the coffers of the city's new office of policy development and communications, which supports EPC, said city spokesman Steve West, adding the ASD committee chairman approved the expenditure.

Like Katz, Wyatt defended the campaign. "We've been hammered for the last eight or nine months by a nasty, malicious and misinformed CUPE campaign, which included TV ads," said Wyatt, referring to spots paid for by the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 500, the city's largest union.

CUPE 500 president Mike Davidson shot back that he is amazed Wyatt and Katz will defend a city effort to use public funds to lobby its own elected officials.

"We had our members' permission to fund our campaign. Did they have taxpayers' permission for their campaign?" Davidson asked. "I've seen a lot of things. I have to say I've never seen this before."

Gerbasi went further, calling the campaign unethical. "Citizens are being given the false impression that Responsible Winnipeg is a legitimate community group that cares about an issue. Real advocacy groups that represent real people are not allowed to use the city logo and our web platform," she said in statement.

Wyatt denied there was any attempt to mislead the public, conceding only the city logo should have appeared on the advertisements from the start.

> *'Citizens are being given the false impression that Responsible Winnipeg is a legitimate community group... Real advocacy groups that represent real people are not*

Submit my Vote

View Results

MOST POPULAR LOCAL

MOST VIEWS MOST COMMENTS MOST EMAILS

TODAY | WEEK | MONTH

1. Woman killed in head-on crash in southwestern Manitoba
2. Horrific crash kills minivan driver near Brandon
3. Sex charges for ex-club boss
4. Doctors celebrate graduation at U of M
5. Ad campaign urges Winnipeg to lobby councillors to approve golf plan
6. Revolution in liquor licensing
7. Crushing blow for amateur sport
8. Police seek car sideswiped downtown Sunday morning
9. '2 minutes after I read the winning numbers, I retired': Winnipeg lotto winner
10. Fire crews kept busy battling south Winnipeg, Point Douglas fires

ADS BY GOOGLE

Support Ride for Heart
rideforheart.ca
Support 13,000 Cyclists Riding for Charity. Donate to Heart&Stroke.

Edmonton Vacation Package
travelalberta.com
Coming to Edmonton? Start Your Edmonton Vacation Planning Here.

Winnipeg Public Relations
www.DooleyCommunications.ca
Generate positive public opinion Experienced PR agency

Canadian Timeshare Scam
www.timesharequestions.info/ca
Canadian scammed on vacation? We will help cancel your timeshare

AdChoices

The Canadian Public Relations Society has ethics guidelines that require its members to refrain from representing one interest as another. The marketing firm responsible for the campaign did not respond to interview requests.

Wyatt said he remains optimistic "common sense will prevail," and the golf -course plan will be approved by council on May 29.

"If this goes down to defeat, the public should know which councillors continue to vote against efforts to find efficiencies," he said.

bartley.kives@freepress.mb.ca

allowed to use the city logo and our web platform' -- Coun. Jenny Gerbasi

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FACT Factual inaccuracy? Something missing? Help improve our journalism.

TIP Know about news? Share your story suggestions, photos and video.

TYPO Spelling error? Punctuation problem? Send us an email if you've found a typo.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Statement of Operations and Deficit (2009 – 2011)

See attached Excel file.

Appendix 2 – 2011 Statement of Operations by Course

See attached Excel file.

Appendix 3 – Schedule of Financial Savings through Privatization

See attached Excel file.


Appendix 1 (of 3).xls


Appendix 2 (of 3).xls


Appendix 3 (of 3).xls

THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
GOLF SERVICES - SPECIAL OPERATING AGENCY

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND DEFICIT (2009 - 2011)

For the years ended December 31

	2009	2010	2011	3 Year Total
REVENUES				
Green fees	$ 1,748,862	$ 1,635,154	$ 1,517,109	$ 4,901,125
Equipment rentals	249,224	259,362	279,488	788,074
Net revenue from leasing operations	114,600	232,959	264,085	611,644
Merchandise sales	97,023	79,139	66,311	242,473
Concessions	56,721	53,361	54,564	164,646
Other	78,594	199,182	246,284	524,060
Total Revenues	2,345,024	2,459,157	2,427,841	7,232,022
EXPENSES				
Salaries and employee benefits	1,278,584	1,513,118	1,354,556	4,146,258
Services	737,559	677,435	615,477	2,030,471
Material, parts and supplies	293,611	279,396	233,515	806,522
Interest on short term debt	15,269	25,491	51,836	92,596
Interest on long term debt	58,854	57,558	65,707	182,119
Total Expenses	2,383,877	2,552,998	2,321,091	7,257,966
Net Revenue	(38,853)	(93,841)	106,750	(25,944)
ALLOCATED TO THE CITY				
Property tax equivalents	$ 234,754	$ 255,158	$ 248,990	$ 738,902
Departmental support costs	49,451	50,935	52,463	152,849
Office accommodation costs	17,389	16,789	16,789	50,967
Provision for payroll taxes	24,015	26,483	25,797	76,295
Provision for business taxes	28,249	28,249	28,249	84,747
Interest on long term debt - acquired assets	185,459	184,095	182,648	552,202
Transfer to general revenue for 311	78,237	79,463	81,115	238,815
Total Allocated to the City	617,554	641,172	636,051	1,894,777
OTHER				
Depreciation, fixed assets	274,353	295,443	300,534	870,330
Annual audit fee	9,951	6,500	6,695	23,146
Total Other and Allocated to the City	901,858	943,115	943,280	2,788,253
NET LOSS	$ (940,711)	$ (1,036,956)	$ (836,530)	$ (2,814,197)

THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
GOLF SERVICES - SPECIAL OPERATING AGENCY

2011 STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS BY COURSE

For the year ended December 31, 2011

	Crescent Drive	Harbour View	Kildonan Park	Windsor Park	Total City Maintained Courses	Existing Leases	Total
REVENUES							
Green fees	216,908	180,792	747,274	372,135	1,517,109	-	$ 1,517,109
Equipment rentals	16,956	-	173,863	88,669	279,488	-	279,488
Concessions	1,889	-	36,778	15,897	54,564	-	54,564
Merchandise sales	9,060	-	33,792	23,459	66,311	-	66,311
Other	38,480	21,460	95,985	90,359	246,284	-	246,284
Net revenue from leasing operations	-	-	-	-	-	264,085	264,085
Total Revenues	283,293	202,252	1,087,692	590,519	2,163,756	264,085	2,427,841
EXPENSES							
Salaries and employee benefits	209,011	140,561	511,499	493,485	1,354,556	-	1,354,556
Services	66,483	186,045	162,474	162,956	577,958	37,519	615,477
Material,parts and supplies	27,973	34,786	97,836	72,920	233,515	-	233,515
Interest on short term debt	16,069	40,951	(29,547)	24,363	51,836	-	51,836
Interest on long term debt	7,228	15,113	13,141	11,170	46,652	19,055	65,707
Total Expenses	326,764	417,456	755,403	764,894	2,264,517	56,574	2,321,091
Net Revenue	(43,471)	(215,204)	332,289	(174,375)	(100,761)	207,511	106,750
ALLOCATED TO THE CITY							
Property tax equivalents	42,318	58,537	55,803	37,771	194,429	54,561	248,990
Departmental support costs	13,116	13,115	13,116	13,116	52,463	-	52,463
Office accommodation costs	4,197	4,198	4,197	4,197	16,789	-	16,789
Provision for payroll taxes	4,031	2,247	10,054	9,465	25,797	-	25,797
Provision for business taxes	3,939	-	13,055	11,255	28,249	-	28,249
Interest on long term debt - acquired assets	20,091	42,009	36,530	31,050	129,680	52,968	182,648
Transfer to general revenue for 311	27,039	-	27,038	27,038	81,115	-	81,115
Total Allocated to the City	114,731	120,106	159,793	133,892	528,522	107,529	636,051
OTHER							
Depreciation, fixed assets	35,000	63,215	77,230	60,744	236,189	64,345	300,534
Annual audit fee	1,674	1,673	1,674	1,674	6,695	-	6,695
Total Other and Allocated to the City	151,405	184,994	238,697	196,310	771,406	171,874	943,280
NET INCOME/(LOSS)	(194,876)	(400,198)	93,592	(370,685)	(872,167)	35,637	$ (836,530)

THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
GOLF SERVICES - SPECIAL OPERATING AGENCY

SCHEDULE OF FINANCIAL SAVINGS THROUGH CONTRACTING OUT

For the year ended December 31, 2011

	Internal Operation	Private Operation (est.)	Net Impact
REVENUES			
Green fees	$ 1,517,109	$ -	$ (1,517,109)
Equipment rentals	279,488	-	(279,488)
Concessions	54,564	-	(54,564)
Merchandise sales	66,311	-	(66,311)
Other	246,284	-	(246,284)
Net revenue from leasing operations	264,085	401,585	137,500
Total Revenues	2,427,841	401,585	(2,026,256)
EXPENSES			
Salaries and employee benefits	1,354,556	25,000	(1,329,556)
Services	615,477	37,519	(577,958)
Material,parts and supplies	233,515	-	(233,515)
Interest on short term debt	51,836	51,836	-
Interest on long term debt	65,707	65,707	-
Total Expenses	2,321,091	180,062	(2,141,029)
Net Revenue	106,750	221,523	114,773
ALLOCATED TO THE CITY			
Property tax equivalents	248,990	-	(248,990)
Departmental support costs	52,463	-	(52,463)
Office accommodation costs	16,789	-	(16,789)
Provision for payroll taxes	25,797	-	(25,797)
Provision for business taxes	28,249	-	(28,249)
Interest on long term debt - acquired assets	182,648	182,648	-
Transfer to general revenue for 311	81,115	-	(81,115)
Total Allocated to the City	636,051	182,648	(453,403)
OTHER			
Depreciation, fixed assets	300,534	300,534	-
Annual audit fee	6,695	6,695	-
Total Other and Allocated to the City	943,280	489,877	(453,403)
NET INCOME/(LOSS)	$ (836,530)	$ (268,354)	$ 568,176
Capital Investment	56,000	210,000	154,000
Net Income(Loss) plus Capital Investment	$ (780,530)	$ (58,354)	$ 722,176

Schedule 1 - Terms and Conditions of Lease:

Landlord:	City of Winnipeg
Tenant:	GolfNorth Properties Inc.
Courses to be Leased:	Kildonan Park, Windsor Park, Crescent Drive and Harbour View
Lease Term:	20 years (2013 – 2032)
Payment of all Operating Costs:	Agreed
Lease Payment:	$100,000 annually (2013 - 2017) $150,000 annually (2018 – 2032) Lease payments will be pro-rated for 2013
Capital Investment:	$210,000 annually (2013 – 2032) (minimum) (pro-rated for 2013) ($4.2 million over the term of the lease with $2.15 million being invested in the first 4 years which includes the abbreviated 2013 operating season) Compensation to Tenant if lease terminated early by City without cause
Payment of Property & Business Taxes:	$170,000 annually (estimated) Property & Business Taxes will be pro-rated for 2013
Profit Sharing:	5% of total revenues over $2.5 million annually
Acceptance of existing Equipment Leases:	Agreed
Purchase of Existing Auto Cart Fleet:	At Fair Market Value
Purchase Inventory for Resale:	At cost
Fees and Charges:	All fees will be determined annually by GolfNorth.

Insurance:	Tenants to provide Commercial general liability insurance in the amount of $5,000,000 including bodily injury and property damage, host liquor liability, products and completed operations, cross liability clause, and contractual liability endorsements. All Risk property insurance policy for full replacement of buildings, contents, equipment, and tenant's improvements and business interruption. Automobile liability used for or in connection with the Lease in the amount of at least 5 million ($5,000,000). All insurance requirements to remain in place at all times during the full term of the Lease Agreement.
Tenant Responsibilities:	To pay all operating costs, to maintain the Leased assets in good operating condition; and in accordance with maintenance and winterization requirement schedules, no assignment without written consent, no sub-letting without approval of the Landlord, no replacement of signage or advertising without the approval of the Landlord and no leasehold improvements without approval of the Landlord.
Performance Security:	Throughout the term of the Lease, GolfNorth has agreed to provide and maintain an Irrevocable standby letter of credit in favour of the City in the amount of five hundred thousand ($500,000).

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Issues

Does Winnipeg have too much Green Space?

February 20 2012, 9:47am

Categories: Taxes and Fees, Sustainability, Green Space, Development



25 Year Blue Print

There is a City of Winnipeg report about selling golf courses that says so.

The "report" was about assessing present municipal golf services however a portion of the report strays off topic to conclude that Winnipeg has too much green space. How was this determined?

images/userfiles/Audit.pdf

The reason why this statement is important is that it is used to justify the selling of golf courses/public green space.

The golf report references a Pros Consulting "Draft Level Service Report," December, 2009, pg 4 report as evidence that Winnipeg has too much green space but, upon request to City Administration, no copy of the report was available.

I have contacted the author of the report used by the golf audit to support the claim that Winnipeg has too much green space and author indicated that no such report was done for Winnipeg.

I contacted Golf Convergence, the author of the golf audit, for a copy of the report claiming that Winnipeg has too much green space and was informed that a copy was forwarded to The City of Winnipeg Auditor. I am in the process of obtaining the document.

(will add report if/when I receive it)

How does a City determine how much green space it has? Are the same criteria used to determine green space in one City the same as others? Do some Cities include riverbanks while others do not? Do some Cities include school grounds while others do not? How do you compare?

There is a process called the Ontario Municipal CAO's Benchmarking Initiative (OMBI), which the City has recently used for comparing parking and library services to other Cities, and could be used in determining how much green space Winnipeg has comparable to other Cities.

images/userfiles/OMBI-2010-Performance-Benchmarking-Report.pdf

This process would provide comparable data that would allow The City of Winnipeg to compare the amount of green space it has versus other Cities in Canada.

The OMBI has presently reviewed the process in which benchmarking for green space can be done and outlined measures that can be taken to properly create usable benchmarks.

Therefore, lacking the proper evaluation of the golf report's assertion that Winnipeg has too much green space, OMBI ability to properly provide comparable benchmarking and that the City has no internal review process, the only possible conclusion is that there is no evidence that Winnipeg has too much "green space".

The present process of potentially selling green space for development therefore should cease immediately until such time as Council has properly assessed our green space and worked with the community to identity the proper use of these public lands.

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