



Musing the Minutes

By RICK TRAVER, CGCS
Monticello Country Club



March Madness is here. Are you sick of hearing that term? While I believe it began with the NCAA Boys Basketball tournament, it seems to apply to so many events. Well I am taking advantage of the craze and moving it into the golf industry. The madness I am referring to is the madness you see from golfers calling to ask if you are open when it turns to 45 degrees even though they live on the course and can see there are still piles and piles of snow on the course. I am referring to the madness of a green chairman that asks you on the second week of March, when the course is going to open, like you could answer him with anything that would sound intelligent. I am referring to the madness of the golfer who expects you to open the golf course and have the same conditions they have seen on their televisions for the last three months.

Actually, I have good members and an excellent Green Chair, but I have heard these questions in the past. The big thing is that golfers' expectations do seem to increase and we are asked every year to produce a product that is greater than the product we produced the previous year. Despite, in many cases, budget cuts, staff cuts and weather variables. Well I hope you all have a great beginning to the season this year despite what variables you have been handed out-of-your-control.

Enough of that. You read this column for what happens at your Board of Directors meetings so without further ado. Your Board met at Keller Golf Club on Tuesday, March 8. This month's meeting was a bit longer than most. Some issues needed to be taken care of before the season really gets underway.

Treasurer Jeff Johnson reports that the financial condition of the association continues to be good. In a comparison of the '04 and '05 fiscal years, to date we are slightly ahead of last year. A motion was made to approve the Treasurers' Report and on we went.

President Rob Panuska thanked all Board Members for their service and for attending the President's dinner. He also mentioned that we have been offered an opportunity to participate in Golfweek's Bunker Book Camp, a one-day seminar that Golfweek sponsors at a host golf course. Rob felt it would fit in with our scheduled event at Monticello Country Club for this coming October. Rick Traver, CGCS will explore it farther.

Executive Director Scott Turtinen reports we have a little over 50 percent of the membership paid to date. He also inquired if we should have personal information in the roster this year. The consensus of the board was not to put personal information in the roster as that would dramatically increase the cost to print the roster and many did not want that information posted.

Vice-President James Bade reported on the MTGF directors meeting. The MTGF made \$125,000 from the EXPO, of which they set a large portion aside for the TROE Center, but they also set aside \$20,000 for an economic impact study. This study will be used to prove to the legislature and other bodies, the economic impact our industry has on the overall economics of the state. The MTGF also received a Regents Award for the amount of

money donated to the University of Minnesota TROE Center in the past. Bade also reported there are some issues with the MTGF officers as the vice-president can take office as president because he is no longer in the turf industry. They are trying to sort out who will be president and so forth during the next month.

Legislative Committee Chair Paul Eckholm, CGCS reports there are two bills that will have an impact on our industry that are being introduced. The first is the formation of a Fertilizer Council, which would be funded by a \$.45 surcharge per ton sold. This council would then be charged with the duty of directing these funds toward fertilizer research. The second is a bill that would change the pesticide application documentation requirements. All applicators would be required to file all pesticide applications to the MDA electronically monthly. Stay tuned for this one. It could be interesting.

There were many other smaller items discussed, but that was the high impact list. I hope you all have a great spring and I'll see you again next month. - Rick

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