

The Greenkeeper and His Budget

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THE natural and efficient conclusion to a good cost analysis system, kept intelligently by the greenkeeper, is a well-developed budget for the following year. From the results obtained from keeping cost analysis figures for a few years on his golf course, any greenkeeper should be prepared to furnish his green-committee with a budget which is practical, specific and adequate.

It is an unhappy fact that most golf courses have too little money. Too many clubs have "bitten off more than they can chew." Many others think more of new improvements and changes on the course (often unnecessary), and pay too little attention to efficient maintenance. Because of these factors, a greenkeeper should always ask for as much money as he can use intelligently, and should always show that if the budget figures are made lower than the figures which he deems necessary, the standards of maintenance are bound to be lowered. This is not a plea for prolific spending, but rather a plea that all greenkeepers be not afraid to ask for what they need! I have seen many courses which show neglect due to the greenkeeper being afraid to ask for more money for his course. Every greenkeeper should ask for what his course needs; he owes it to himself and to the course, and he should show *why* it is needed! Then, if it is impossible to get all that the course needs, he should be ready to show where money can be saved, costs can be cut best, what best left undone, and where the standards can be lowered best.

Greenkeepers in general are underpaid. If the greenkeeper in making up a budget feels that he is worth more money, has had no raise in salary recently, and knows that the club can afford to give him a little more, he should indicate a raise in his budget requirements. This is an ideal way to ask for a raise, and should not be overlooked!

Now for the proposed budget! It should be submitted to the green-committee in such shape that it will be self-explanatory, and easily understood. Hence, if figures given do not explain themselves, notes should be added to explain them. The budget for which the greenkeeper asks should be easily for the green-chair-

man to interpret, and hence easy for him to "put across" when it comes up before the directors. It is always a good plan for a chairman and his greenkeeper to talk over the budget to help understand it. Budget work provides a good argument for every greenkeeper to be a member of the green-committee of his club. How many clubs have had the greenkeeper before the directors to explain the budget recommendations?

What should the budget contain? Proposed salaries, labor, and material costs, for maintenance, and the estimated costs of any new work planned, should always be included. These items, especially the material costs, should in most cases be divided to show costs of sub-items. It is often helpful to show how many men are planned under the labor estimate given. The material costs proposed should be itemized at least to show proposed purchases of new equipment, repairs on old equipment, and materials, such as seed and fertilizer needed for the course during the year.

Any budget for golf course work should be elastic unless the figures are high, or an item for emergencies must be included. There are so many items of work on the golf course the costs of which are affected by uncontrollable conditions that it is hard to predict actual costs in advance. A greenkeeper can take the average cost for the last five years, but unfavorable weather conditions might almost double the cost for that year. Unless there is an understanding that the budget is to be a little elastic, include an item for emergencies!

Hence, ask for enough money in your budget recommendations, but explain why and where it is needed. Most green-chairmen are business men used to figures; they will often approve when they understand what would seem large to them if they did not understand.

Explain your budget recommendations through itemizing, and tell the *why* it is necessary of every item if you find you need it to get your budget across! Lack of explanation has wrecked many a good greenkeeper's fine ideas! Practice salesmanship, and "sell" your ideas!

FRESH air is essential to the well-being of turf, and the value of mechanical treatment, such as spike rolling, harrowing, etc., cannot be overestimated.—From the *Journal of the Golf Grnkpr. Assn., England.*