

Sun City West centers turn profit for 1st time

By Carl Young
Gazette Northwest Bureau

SUN CITY WEST — The Recreation Centers of Sun City West Inc. in 1984 turned a profit for the first time.

Advisory Committee Chairman Bill Moll said the Del E. Webb Development Co. originally projected the Recreation Centers would break even when the community's population hit 11,500, and those projections were correct.

For the fiscal year of 1984-85, the Recreation Centers turned a profit of \$3,600, Moll said.

"I am proud to announce that for the first time, the Recreation Centers have made a profit," Moll told about 130 residents who attended a Recreation Center forum.

In the coming fiscal year the Recreation Centers will not do as well because of the addition of Beardsley Park Recreation Center and the Grandview Golf Course.

Because those new, multimillion-dollar facilities will have to be operated next year, the centers will lose \$210,000, Moll said. The centers will not be profitable again until the population reaches 16,000, he said. The estimated population of the community is 12,500.

Although the centers lose money, residents do not have to pay the bill. DevCo. makes up any operating losses.

DevCo. built the Recreation Centers as part of its marketing plan for the retirement community. When the population reaches 25,000, the centers will be turned over to the Recreation Centers

homeowners association for management.

Annual membership fees are expected to generate enough income for the centers to operate in the black.

At build-out, there will be one more Recreation Center and two more golf courses in the community. Moll said the value of those facilities is estimated at \$50 million.

"That is a pretty healthy price for these great, great facilities," he said.

Every resident of the community is required to join the Recreation Center homeowners association. The annual fee is \$82 for homeowners. Renters pay \$82 plus a \$25 renters fee.

Moll said the fees will not be raised in the coming year.

Fees and other Recreation Center income are expected to be slightly more than \$1 million. The operating deficit for Johnson Recreation Center is projected at \$786,000; Beardsley Park Center at \$294,000; the library at \$89,540; and other operations at \$11,000.

The total operating loss for the Recreation Centers is projected at \$108,700.

Bowling is expected to make a profit. Projections are for a bowling lane profit of \$27,428 but a coffee shop loss of \$23,643 for a net of \$3,785.

The three Recreation Center golf courses will lose \$105,000 in the coming year. Pebblebrook will make \$3,659 and Stardust \$85,945. Those gains will be offset by a

See • Report, NW-C

Report

From NW-A

\$93,436 loss from newly opened Grandview.
The three pro shops at the courses will lose \$54,860 and the snack shops \$46,616. Total golf division loss is estimated at \$105,000.
Total Recreation Center revenue is projected to be \$3.4 million but expenses are estimated to be \$3.6 million for a net loss of \$210,000.
Even though the centers will lose money, Moll said residents do not have to worry about picking up the tab.
"At the end of the year we go to Webb and ask, 'Write us a check,'" he said.

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Rec Center News

*An official publication of the
Recreation Centers of Sun City West*

RCSCW.COM

SPECIAL EDITION - FEB. 8, 2012

SCWAZ.COM

Preserve Sun City West the way it was intended!

Sun City West residents:

An election is under way that could drastically change the character of this community. In the opinion of the current volunteer Governing Board, the staff, and most of the previous Governing Board Directors who have given up three years of their retirement to serve this community, the proposed Bylaw changes are misguided and destructive.

Promises made by those who circulated the petitions to get these referenda on the ballot sound great. Who wouldn't agree that they would like to see their dues decrease? But if Washington, D.C., has taught us anything, it's that

election promises can't always be trusted.

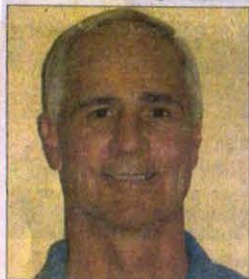
These proposed Bylaw changes will not lower your dues without significantly impacting the quality of services and amenities in this community. (And when we say "significantly," we're talking about the real possibilities of closing golf courses, charging rent to chartered clubs, and charging our residents every time they use a facility. In the next pages of this Rec Center News, we'll explain why.) Of course, as usage drops, maintenance decreases, facilities are shuttered or mothballed and a community begins showing its neglect, crime rates increase.

But the real question is, why should you believe the Gov-

erning Board, staff and former Governing Board directors over those who are pushing these referenda? Just look to our history. We have 34 years of experience proving that Del Webb's vision of a COMMUNITY where all residents pay equal annual Owner Dues to support ALL amenities and ALL facilities is visionary, sustainable, and responsible for a cohesive community.

Slashing Owner Dues and creating an a la carte, cafeteria-style community is really no community at all. You can find that in any city.

You chose to live in Sun City West for a reason. Let's maintain that. Vote NO on the Bylaw amendments.



David Moeller
President 2010-12

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Whether one chooses to be involved in everything that we have to offer or just interact with friends and neighbors, there really isn't a better place to live than Sun City West. This will change if these Bylaws pass.



Ron Gillmeister
President 2009-10

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Radical changes to our financial structure will jeopardize the well being and lifestyle of our owner members.



Matt Szydlowski
President 2007-09

“

We have lived here for 22 years. These changes would be devastating to SCW, which has attracted new home buyers because of the quantity and quality of our facilities. This would kill us as a four-star community.



Ronni Hoover
President 2006-07

“

I was Treasurer in 2005 and discovered the requirement for self-sufficiency could not be met. Golf wasn't self-sufficient, and Bowling needed complete rehab and had no reserves. The only answer was to change the bylaw.



Ray Caldwell
President 2005-06

“

The passage of the Holmes-Prindle initiative will fundamentally and negatively change our way of life, seriously impacting not only the wonderful recreational opportunities, but our home values as well.

"Resort-Retirement Living" without the Resort

Del Webb's goal was more than building houses. He wanted to provide an environment that "fostered a richly rewarding recreational, social and cultural life." He called it "resort-retirement living" and it was perhaps best exemplified in the multi-faced recreation centers that were planned for the community.

"Sun City West Silver Celebration," Page 39

This community has been successful for 34 years because we've remained true to Del Webb's vision.

ONE COMMUNITY

We're at a crossroads. Do you really want to take this community in a new direction?

Current Bylaws maintain Sun City West as Del Webb envisioned it

You will hear a lot of rhetoric from those who want to change our Bylaws. You will hear how they want to revert to what "Del Webb intended." In the same breath, they'll tell you it's OK to lower our standards. That we don't need to replace things when they wear out. That we

don't need to put in modern materials when it's time to renovate.

And you'll hear about some magical Bylaw change in 2005 that supposedly changed "Del Webb's intent" that each division be self-sustaining.

In reality, even Del Webb knew self-sustaining wasn't possible or

advisable in a community like ours. It's why Del Webb subsidized the community to keep dues artificially low.

In 2005, your Governing Board, elected by you and discussing these decisions in open session, changed the wording of a Bylaw to recognize reality. All owner

members in this community had an opportunity to reaffirm that Bylaw change in 2007. And you did, overwhelmingly. What you approved was a change that put us into compliance with our own Bylaws.

Prior to the change, we were in violation of our Bylaws because

OUR THREE DIVISIONS HAVE NEVER BEEN SELF-SUSTAINING. Now we account for them separately so we know how each is doing, but ***we recognize that we are one community, and Member Dues - as required by our CC&RS - must be used to support all divisions.***

All three Bylaw char

The proposed changes to the Bylaws are shown in the brown boxes on succeeding pages. You'll notice as you read them that they are verbose and confusing. That leaves them open to interpretation, and as of press time, staff was still consulting with the Association's attorney on just how to implement them if they pass. We don't have all the details, but we do know they will majorly disrupt how your community operates and the level of services you enjoy.

Let's take a look at them one at a time, since that's how you will be voting on them:

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGE NO. 1

We know that proposed change No. 1 sounds promising - it will limit your dues increases to no more than 8 percent. Some years it might be as low as 2 percent! Great, right? Well, in reality, your Governing Board has increased dues 3.7 percent, 5.3 percent and 4.2 percent in the last three years. Next year's plan is looking at a 0-5 percent increase.

Why artificially limit the dues without taking into consideration the increasing costs of doing business? Because it looks good and gets votes, that's why. The way we currently operate is to budget according to our needs, taking into consideration the increasing costs of goods and services.

Just look at your own costs for gas, insurance, electricity and various commodities, and you'll un-

derstand our costs must increase as well. The alternative is cutting services, hours of operations and maintenance. Mothballing amenities may be a reality.

Nobody likes dues increases (your Governing Board is comprised of your neighbors, so they have to live with them too!), but the fact is, costs go up, and our dues have to go up gently, steadily, most years to maintain the current level of services.

What we don't want to do is get into a situation where we are holding our dues down to zero just because it's popular, and then finding ourselves having to hike them to make up lost ground.

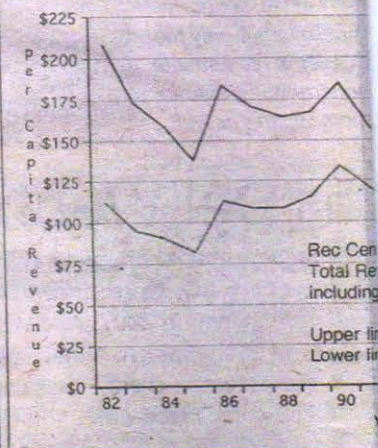
Several years ago, there was a desperate need to increase our reserves. That's the money that's set aside to repair our facilities if there's a catastrophic emergency that's not covered by insurance; or, to replace items like wells (which are more than \$1 million each) as they wear out.

Del Webb had no motivation to build the reserves. He wanted to sell houses. So when he left, it was up to us to build those reserves. That's why, if you look at the Dues Chart at right, you will see large increases in some years. But in other years - five of them in fact - there were no increases at all. So what happened? Large increases had to follow to get us back where we belonged. We're happy to report our reserves are

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGE NO. 1

"RESTRICTION ON GOVERNING BOARD POWERS: Delete 4.18.3 and replace with: Establish effective with the FY 2012-13 budget and thereafter, annual Owner Member Dues, or Associate and Landlord Fees which is greater than the Social Security increase over the preceding year, plus two percent (2%), and limited to a total annual increase NOT TO EXCEED eight percent (8%) greater than the immediate preceding Fiscal

Del Webb s



An analysis of Association revenues
downtrend over the formative years of

FY Ended June 30	Annual Dues	Percent Increase
1993	\$110	
1994	\$110	0.0%
1995	\$110	0.0%
1996	\$126.50	15.0%
1997	\$126.50	0.0%
1998	\$126.50	0.0%
1999	\$133	5.1%
2000	\$133	0.0%
2001	\$148	11.3%
2002	\$170	14.9%
2003	\$174	\$2.4%
2004	\$180	3.4%
2005	\$207	15.0%
2006	\$225	8.7%
2007	\$258	14.7%
2008	\$296	14.7%
2009	\$325	9.8%
2010	\$337	3.7%
2011	\$355	5.3%
2012	\$370	4.2%
2013	Projected 0-5%	

Bylaw 1 Pop Quiz!

True or False?

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Sun City West's dues are among the lowest in the nation. | TRUE! Our dues continue to be among the lowest in the nation. Every community has seen increases just as we have, but ours continue to be highly competitive. At the same time, the number of amenities other communities have pales in comparison to what we enjoy. |
| 2. Dues have escalated in recent years to pay for golf! | FALSE! Dues have increased in recent years to build up the Association's reserves and cover the increasing day-to-day costs of running the ENTIRE Association (including Recreation, Golf and Bowling). |
| 3. Golf used to pay its own way! | FALSE! Golf has always relied on Member Dues to pay part of its costs, just as every division has. |
| 4. Dues are going up 15 percent every year. | FALSE! See chart at left. Dues in the last couple years have been 5.3 percent or lower. Next year's are projected between 0 and 5 percent. |

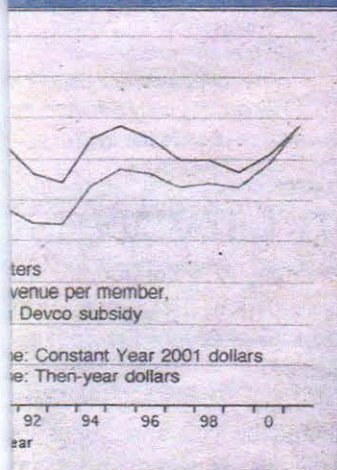
Dues increases fund essential functions

Key Years and % Increase	\$ Revenue Produced	Purpose
2005-2010 --- 4-15% incr.	\$5 Million	Reserve Study revealed \$16 million shortfall from \$4 million starting point
2008 --- 15% increase	\$2.3 Million	Water Rights Purchased
2005-2008 --- 15% increase	\$1.5 Million	Purchased equipment - ended lease
Total	\$ 8.8 Million	\$ 328.16 total in Member Dues or \$ 65.63/year



now up to a healthy \$8.5 million. This is responsible governance. There is no frivolous spending happening. It's methodical spending designed to keep this community afloat in the decades ahead.

ubsidized dues to keep them artificially low!



Del Webb's own financial statements reveal an annual subsidy to the Association and efforts to keep dues low IN ORDER TO SELL houses. The quote below accompanied the chart at left in DEVCO's own financial statements! The company knew this model was unsustainable in the long-run, which is why it subsidized dues until it pulled out and moved on to Sun City Grand. It was then up to us to get dues up to a sustainable level. Note, too, that in actual dollars, the dues and subsidy combined were lower year after year!

Future Challenges

"An analysis of Association revenues per member shows a general downward trend over the formative years of the community when inflation is taken into account. The lower line shows the annual dues plus the DEVCO subsidy per member in actual dollars per year. The upper line adjusts these figures for inflation in terms of constant 2001 dollars. ... Subsidies ended in 1999.

"Sun City West Silver Celebration," Page 243

s per member shows a general the community when inflation is

How do you make the Recreation Division self-supporting?

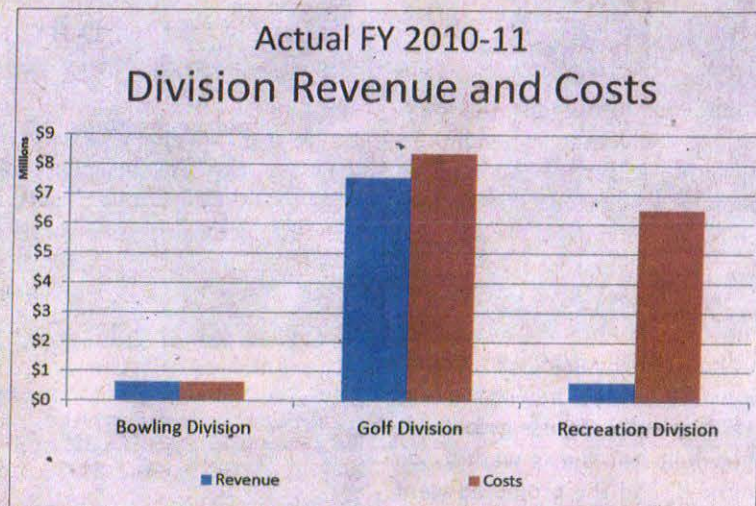
PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGE NO. 2

If you read the text of the second proposed Bylaw change, it clearly states all three Divisions must pay their own way, without relying on Owner Dues. If this Bylaw change passes, the Board will be required (beginning July 1) to "ensure that Recreation, Golf and Bowling Divisions shall be self-supporting. Self-supporting means that all direct operational and maintenance costs of each division are covered by operating revenues generated by that division."

“
But how do you make up the deficit in Recreation, where it's about \$5.8 million! The Division makes about \$500,000 from concerts, rentals, shows, etc; but spends about \$6.4 million. The rest is subsidized by dues. So if the Bylaw passes, we will have to get real creative, real fast, to make up that kind of deficit.

So, just how much money are we talking about here?

Well, for golf, it's about \$814,000. You've heard that number before. It's a deficit we subsidi-



dize and are working to reduce. We have some ideas on how to make up that deficit (perhaps course closures and for sure drastic reductions in maintenance).

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Options we're looking at (because we must, not because we want to) include:

1. Renting space to chartered

clubs. With 110 clubs, the shared deficit amounts to about \$60,000 per club, per year. We will have to determine how to divvy that up better for larger clubs with greater expenses, versus smaller clubs with smaller expenses, but that's the starting point.

2. Alternatively, we can add user fees to each facility. So every time you stop into a facility, be it the swimming pool or the tennis courts, the billiards or the library, we would charge you a user fee.

3. Use some combination of the above two options.

Obviously, we don't want to do any of these, but there don't ap-

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGE NO. 2

2. "DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOVERNING BOARD: Delete 4.17.1 and replace with: Effective with the FY 2012-13 budget ensure that Recreation, Golf and Bowling Divisions shall be self-supporting. Self-supporting means that all direct operational and maintenance costs of each division are covered by operating revenues generated by that division. Operating costs shall not include depreciation or allocation of Association administrative costs. No Member dues shall be used to support Bowling and Golf direct operational costs."

Resort-Class Recreational Facilities

For many, retirement marks the beginning of a new lifestyle, with time to engage in sports, hobbies and other activities for which there wasn't enough time earlier. Sun City became the national showcase for active adult living, and the Del Webb Corporation sought to expand on this success with the new Sun City West.

To John Meeker, president of DEVCO (Del E. Webb Development Company), the new community had to be larger with facilities unmatched elsewhere. At its core, an 'Emerald Valley' would be the focal point as what he called the 'largest golf course development project in Arizona history' got under way.

"Sun City West Silver Celebration" Page 63

pear any other ways to make up such a large deficit by July 1.

Is this the way YOU want the

Rec Centers to operate? Do you think this is what Del Webb had in mind? Neither do we!

Think you're paying too much to subsidize the golf division?

We know there are a lot of you out there who believe you're paying too much to subsidize golf, and you have been told the subsidy is increasing every year. Let's get as specific as possible: In 2011, your dues were \$355. Of that, \$211.53 went to subsidize the Recreation Division; \$29.53 went to subsidize the Golf Division; and \$0.37 went to subsidize the Bowling Division.

So, whether you golf or not, yes you are paying toward that amenity. If you swim or play tennis or use the library or not, you are paying toward those amenities.

Just as you wouldn't tell Maricopa County that you want to pay taxes only for the streets you drive on, it also doesn't make sense to ask that your dues only

go toward the amenities you use. The fact is, there is virtually nothing in this community that can be funded solely by the people who use it. Even bowling, which just about covers its costs, does not

cover its capital costs. It only covers its day to day costs.

Webster's defines a community as "a unified body of individuals; the people with common interests living in a particular area."

Member Support Needed by Division

Member Fees to Divisions
(\$355 base in FY 2011)



There is no common slate of activities in which we all participate. It's the totality of amenities that makes us a community - golf, bowling, rec centers, clubs, etc. There is no practical way to split out who pays what.

So yes, you do subsidize golf,

but golfers subsidize your activities. The end result is one unified community where everyone benefits from the economies of scale that make their own individual activities, amenities and hobbies possible. Without this cohesion, none of them are possible.

Bylaw 2 Pop Quiz!

True or False?

1. Residents will have to pay each time they use a recreation facility.
2. Sun City outsourced its golf and no longer subsidizes the golf courses.
3. This Board changed the Bylaws in 2005.

TRUE! Because the Recreation Division must be self-sustaining, you may have to pay a user fee for any class or activity.

FALSE! Sun City golf courses were outsourced and still operate in the red, according to their General Manager.

FALSE! Nobody currently on the Board was serving when the Bylaws were changed in 2005.

Fixing something that's not broken w

It's ironic that those who are pushing these Bylaw changes claim to want to curtail spending, when in fact the proposals will have the opposite effect.

Let's look at the third proposed Bylaw change, shown at right. First, this community voted on a similar measure just three years ago and soundly defeated it.

Why will this measure cost you money? Because a new state law requires us to mail you notice of every special meeting. A special meeting will be required to give you the opportunity to vote on any capital project over \$100,000.

Here's the state law: "Not fewer than ten nor more than fifty days in advance of any meeting of the members the secretary shall cause notice to be hand-delivered or sent prepaid by United States mail to the mailing address for each lot, parcel or unit owner or to any other mailing address designated in writing by a member."

So, let's say the pump that services one of our golf courses goes down in the summer and we have to design and notice a special meeting and ask you to vote on whether or not we should replace the water pump.

“

This system works. Why fix it when the bandaid will cost tens of thousands of dollars a year ... Is that good government? Is that a wise use of your money?

By the time we hold the election (and hopefully, you all pass the measure!), the course would be decimated. The cost of returning the turf to a healthy condition would be much more pricey than if we just fixed the pump as we do under our current procedures.

And one more thing: Do you really want to be asked to vote on such items? Isn't that why Del Webb created an elected nine-

member Board, to look after these matters for you? Not only do they volunteer so you can enjoy your retirement, but they discuss and vote on expenditures in multiple, public sessions. The agendas are posted at the library, on bulletin boards, on the website and in the newspaper.

You *already* have a say in these matters. We *encourage* you to let us know how you feel! Your opinions are heard! They're the reason the multipurpose gym didn't get built. You didn't want it, we agreed, and the projected went no further.

This system works. Why fix it when the bandaid will cost tens of thousands of dollars a year, and realistically, only a few hundred of you will likely show up to vote on these items? If it's during the summer, our snowbirds will be disenfranchised. Is that good government? Is that a wise use of your money?

Building the Community

The inhospitable desert landscape gradually gave way to curving streets, beautiful homes, lush golf course and luxurious resort amenities. Sun City West was destined to become a complete community, offering residents places to worship, shop, bank and obtain basic services without ever having to leave town. As a result, Sun City West residents truly enjoy "everything under the sun."

"Sun City West Silver Celebration," Page 45


Want more "ASU Sundomes" around?

Should we just leave things the way they were 30 years ago? What if no one approves any capital expenditures above \$100,000? We'd have a lot more abandoned properties like the Sundome (owned by ASU, not the Rec Centers!). That's not good for property values or crime rates. Projects that might not have occurred:

- RHJ Fitness update
- New Softball Field turf (paid for by club)
- Library computer room (paid for by club)
- Stardust Theatre addition (paid for by club)
- Stardust Theatre renovation (paid for by SPAA Grant)

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Weed whacker



LYNN Jensen of Sun City West decided to take the weed situation at the Sundome for the Performing Arts into her own hands this past week. With music piping into her ears and a bucket and shovel she said she was going to tackle two (parking) rows in May. She said she just had to do it because it was bright.

Sun City West resident orchestrates cleanup in Sundome parking lot

Words to Remember...

"Mr. Prindle said his goal is to stem the tide of steady annual increases in dues to support golf, contending that the RCSCW Governing Board relied too heavily on these fees in its Five Year plan approved a couple of years ago."

- Independent, Jan. 11, 2012

...

Major Assumptions: expend \$2.75 mil-

cent per year ... Maintain facilities at Four-Star level ... "This plan provides equity in fees and spending throughout our facilities. It is the roadmap to help us achieve financial stability over the next five years, and sets the framework for future planning."

Ernie Prindle, CFO, 2008-11 in his Five-Year Plan presented Oct. 22, 2009

(Despite Prindle's recommendation for a 6.5 percent increase each year for five years, the Board increased dues only 3.7% in 2010, 5.3% in 2011, and 4.3% in

financial officer before being terminated last year. Board members would not say why he was let go, but Prindle attributed it to his increasing frustration and a public fit of temper."

Arizona Republic, Jan. 27, 2012

...

"At some point it may become necessary to close some facilities or charge use fees for those venues that are most costly to operate and maintain such as swimming, tennis and pickleball."

- Prindle supporter Carole Alexander, Daily News Sun Jan. 17, 2012

will cost us THOU\$AND\$

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGE NO. 3

3. "GENERAL POWERS OF THE GOVERNING BOARD: Add the following to 4.16.15: Any capital project over \$100,000 in Association Funds that change, modify, or re-purpose the use of, or that expands or increases the square footage of any Association facility or structure shall first be approved by a majority vote of the members voting for such purpose. This amount shall be adjusted annually by the annual increase in Social Security."

Future Challenges

The success of the Association depends on many people: conscientious employees, dedicated and impartial board members, and hundreds of enthusiastic volunteers to staff committees and provide club leadership. Fortunately, Sun City West is not lacking in good people. Its major challenge is to motivate them to serve - and then to treat them with respect and appreciation.

"Sun City West Silver Celebration," Page 244

Bylaw 3 Pop Quiz!

True or False?

1. Not every project above \$100,000 will have to be voted on, just the major new facilities.	FALSE! Our attorneys have advised us that the wording of the proposed change is such that every project above \$100,000 will require a member vote.
2. Chartered Clubs that are willing to fund their own projects will still be able to get them done.	FALSE! This change would require a membership vote even when Clubs provide the majority of the funding for a project. A membership vote could stop a project that is 100 percent funded through donations - so we would have to decline the donation.
3. The General Manager and Governing Board are out of control, and wasting members' money on unnecessary projects.	FALSE! Our General Manager already has pledged that major new projects that don't have widespread support or co-funding will not be built. The projects we have done renovated 30-year-old facilities that looked aged and, in some cases, were creating a safety issue. A few others have responded to changing demographics. The Governing Board listens to residents. (That's why the multipurpose gym didn't get built!)
4. This change is good for the community.	FALSE! This change will create a community of special interests who will vote each other's projects down. Clubs will be pitted against clubs. Residents against residents.

faced a question Tuesday that has become a familiar one in neighboring Sun City West: Should operations such as golf and bowling be self-supporting? Their answer: No."

Daily News-Sun, Feb. 1, 2012

...

"The RCSCW board would like to call Sun City West a golf resort. Sun City West never was nor should be considered a golf resort."

- Carole Alexander, *Daily News-Sun*, Jan. 17, 2012

...

"At its core, an 'Emerald Valley'

ment project in Arizona history' got under way."

John Meeker, *"Sun City West Silver Celebration,"* Page 63

...

"Both Sun City and Sun City Grand have self-sustaining golf operations as did Sun City West up until 2005."

- Carole Alexander, *Daily News-Sun*, Jan. 17, 2012

...

"Revenues are not meeting the demand of operating costs (in the golf division). But, but the way, that's true nationwide."

Pickleball courts offer challenge

JARED HARTUNG
DAILY NEWS-SUN

For years when the pickleball players of Sun City West would look for a court, they would find themselves in quite a pickle.

They swamped the platform tennis courts, and groups would wait to play starting as early as 5:30 a.m.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West unveiled three new pickleball courts this week and granted the pickleball group charter club membership. The pickleball club is the 106th chartered club in the RCSCW.

Following the ribbon-cutting ceremony, pickleball players Mike Johnson and Laurel Andrews christened the court in a match against Martha Wasserman, club president, and News Channel 3 sports anchor Ross Shimabuku.

The match was over quickly, as Shimabuku learned the game on the fly.

"It's the first time I have played pickleball," he said. "I didn't know what it was."

Shimabuku challenged the new president to a match and was beaten before he could score a point.

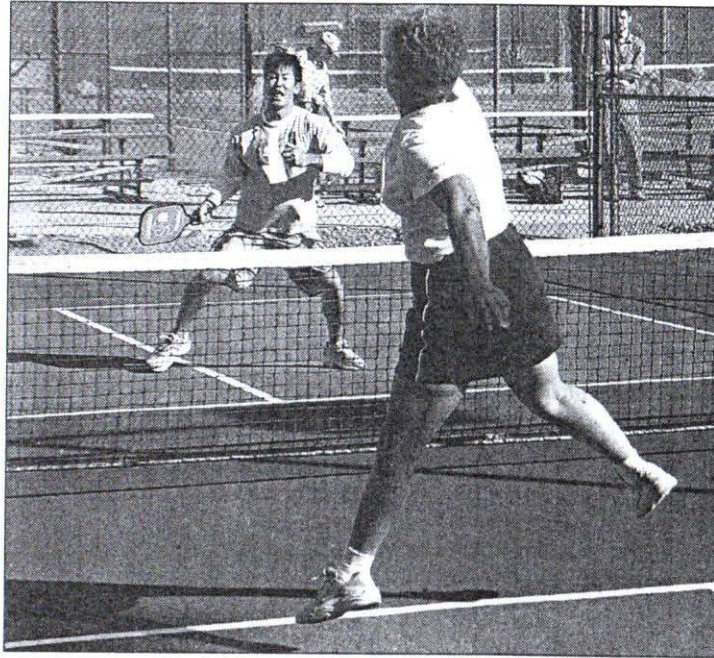
Pickleball uses a table tennis-like paddle and a hard, yellow ball that is similar to a whiffle ball. It's played like tennis, only on a court half the size.

The new courts at the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center are regulation size, but the out-of-bounds area is enlarged to allow players more room to challenge balls.

Several years ago, the RCSCW tore down the basketball court and several platform tennis courts because they were in disrepair. The RCSCW did not immediately rebuild the area, instead investigating what would benefit the space best.

The rec centers determined interest in the new sport was increasing faster than courts could open. Ground was broken on the new pickleball courts Aug. 28.

The courts cost the RCSCW \$65,000, said General Manager Mike Whitting.



RYAN D'AGOSTINO/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Ross Shimabuku, left, a sports anchor for News Channel 3, challenged Martha Wasserman of Sun City West to a game of pickleball Tuesday during the dedication of the new courts at R.H. Johnson Recreation Center.

"You got a good deal on these three courts," he said Tuesday.

"It's the best evidence that

your money is working for you," said board President Ray Caldwell.

Following the opening

matches, pickleball players flooded the courts and matches were under way.

"If I could put a dome over this thing, they'd play all day," said Larry Griffith, project manager.

Griffith said the popularity of pickleball is comparable to table tennis, which he said is always being played inside the rec centers.

Wasserman said there are 314 pickleball players, and she hopes at least half of them will join the charter club.

"Some of the players don't care for the competition, they just want to play," she said.

The club is beginning its membership drive and will be setting up tournaments soon. Three leagues have been developed for men, women and mixed doubles.

For residents who want to learn the game, there are free instructional meetings at 8 a.m. Fridays, and new players gather at 3 p.m. Tuesdays to hone their skills.

Jared Hartung may be reached at 876-2513 or jhartung@aztrib.com.

Cost of moving to Sun City West increases

Board hikes buy-in fee to \$1,700

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Starting July 1, Sun City West homebuyers will be paying \$800 more than their predecessors for the privilege of living in the community.

The change comes with the Recreation Centers of Sun City West governing board's approval Thursday of its 2004-2005 budget, which

includes an \$800 hike in the asset preservation fee. The fee is charged to new residents to help fund renovations and replacements of major capital items and facilities.

The new fee is \$1,700, effective for all closings after July 1. In addition, almost all the centers' other fees increase with the new budget, including a jump in the annual dues from \$180 to \$207, and increases in the various golfing fees.

Although the budget made it through a series of open sessions with relatively few

complaints, board Director Richard Ahlgren on Thursday questioned the nearly 90 percent increase in the asset preservation fee.

"We haven't received any memo indicating any necessity for this increase," he said.

Ahlgren said he didn't believe the burden of upgrading the centers should be placed on newcomers. The budget estimates there will be 966 homebuyers next fiscal year.

"I think it's unfair," he said. "I think it's inequitable."

Ahlgren said he's spoken

Developer requests use of RCSCW facilities, Page A3

with Realtors who believe the increase will negatively impact home sales. He proposed increasing the fee to \$1,200, but his motion failed without a second.

Board President Ray Caldwell said he, too, had spoken with a Realtor, but was told the fee would not impact sales.

The board voted 8-1, with Ahlgren the sole dissenter, to

accept the budget, including the \$1,700 asset preservation fee.

"Reluctantly, I had to vote no," Ahlgren said.

Director Barbara DuPonte said she believes the extra \$800 is negligible for today's retirees, and, in any case, it's necessary to keep up the community's home values.

"If we were all just going to die and say, 'OK this building is going to last us until I die and then I don't care,' that would be one thing," she said. "But I would like to think we have a future in Sun City West."

The alternative, DuPonte said, would be waiting until the centers are in dire need of upgrades and then levying a special assessment on existing residents. "This would create a big hardship for residents whose pension was set (years ago)," she said.

Director Ronni Hoover, who chairs the board's budget and finance committee, said the centers' auditor has told directors for two years they need to do an asset study to determine the worth of the facilities and

See BOARD, A3

equipment, and then establish an appropriate reserve fund to replace items or do upgrades as needed.

"It is the fiduciary responsibility of this board," she said. "If we do not, we can be sued."

Since the community is 25 years old, Hoover said, items will be needing replacement or refurbishing, as is the case with the \$1.6 million renovation of the Beardsley Recreation Center, which is now under way.

"The goal of the asset preservation fee is to create a substantial amount of reserve funds for this community, and that current goal is \$10 million," Hoover said. "If you think how much it would cost to replace a building in this community, that is how much it would cost for all of us. ... Today it isn't unusual for a house, a residential building, to cost \$1 million. What would it cost for one of those (recreation) buildings?"

Resident Earl Bush asked what the money in the fund would be used for. General Manager Mike Whiting said it will preserve the amenities that attracted residents like Bush to the community in the first place.

"Why did you move here?" Whiting asked.

The centers is budgeting \$1.66 million in expenditures from the asset preservation fee fund in the next fiscal year.

Katy O'Grady may be reached at 876-2514 or kogrady@aztrib.com.

RCSCW unveils \$14M budget



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

General Manager Mike Whiting delivers the proposed Recreation Centers of Sun City West budget Wednesday.

Fees hiked across board

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A 2004-2005 budget in which nearly every fee is being raised seems destined for approval next week after few residents raised concerns at Wednesday's public unveiling.

About 100 residents showed up at Palm Ridge Recreation Center for the budget presentation, the only one in which residents' participation was guaranteed. Of those in attendance, about a dozen asked questions or

raised concerns.

The approximately \$14 million budget, up about \$32,400 from this fiscal year, is set for a board vote at the next regular meeting, which begins at 9 a.m. May 27 in the R.H. Johnson Social Hall, 19803 R.H. Johnson Blvd. Management has proposed raising nearly every fee, from a 10-cent increase in the cost of bowling to a \$900 hike in the asset preservation fee.

Of those who spoke Wednesday, a few were concerned that high-volume golfers were getting a better deal than those who played less frequently, or that golfers in general carried more of the financial burden than tennis

players and lawn bowlers.

"When I went out to visit with the golfing community, I did hear this ... that we were allowing the high-end golfer to golf at a cheaper rate," said General Manager Mike Whiting. "We're going to be taking a close look at our fees, as we did this year, next year."

Whiting added, "It's a policy that was started several years ago. It was decided golf would pay more fees."

Answering other concerns, Whiting said the increased daily golf fees, if approved by the board, would go into effect July 1 for all golfers. Prepaid cards would be good through their expiration date; each golfer would pay for the

more expensive cards as his or hers expired.

One resident suggested the centers close one or two golf courses or open them to the public to decrease costs or increase revenue.

"That has been proposed before," Whiting said. "That's really a policy decision."

Whiting pointed out that Sun City West's peak golfing days are Monday through Friday, whereas elsewhere in the Valley courses are crowded on weekends.

"We think there's some ability there to draw some people in," he said. "We think that might be an opportunity to make some money."

Resident Ken Evory said

he was concerned management was presenting the proposed budget, including the increased fees, at a time when most winter visitors had left the community.

"I think, politically, somebody's pulling the wool over our eyes to present this when we don't have input from half the people who live here," he said.

Whiting said the budget process started in December and the numbers were only now ready to be presented. Next year, he said, he hopes to start the process earlier and have smaller presentations with individual groups.

See RCSCW, A5

From A1

Resident Loraine Konrath also questioned the meeting's timing, although she was more concerned it was on a Wednesday afternoon when many golfers were playing. Whiting said Palm Ridge's availability was limited, and the timing was not meant to exclude golfers.

Evory said he's lived in Sun City West three years, and the increasing fees he's had to pay have been "beyond what I expected." He said people on fixed incomes will have a difficult time paying the 15 percent increase in next year's recreation dues, which would jump from \$180 to \$207.

"And yet, our retirement funds from the government are (increasing) only maybe 2 or 3 percent," he said.

Evory added he will probably golf less frequently because of the increasing costs.

Whiting said the increasing fees are necessary to "play catch up" on upgrading the community's facilities. He said residents are still getting a great deal for the price.

Whiting said he was talking with someone outside Sun City West recently and mentioned the annual dues. "They said, 'That's a pretty good monthly fee.' I said, 'No, that's an annual fee.' They said, 'No, you must be wrong.'"

Sun City West will start marketing its golf courses more aggressively this year, once a golf manager is hired. The individual will also be in charge of the marketing program. Whiting said part of the program will be aimed at

keeping residents from leaving the community to golf.

"I have heard people are playing outside the community, and I understand why," he said. However, he added, "Every dollar you spend outside this community is a dollar less for the budget."

Resident David Wilson said he was willing to pay the costs necessary to keep the golf courses in top shape. "I want the golf courses up and

looking good, as good as they look now if not better," he said.

Whiting responded, "If we don't do something about marketing this place as a golf resort community ... if it goes downhill, we're all going to have a tough time."

Katy O'Grady may be reached at 876-2514 or kogrady@aztrib.com.

PROPOSED RCSCW FEES

- Recreation dues: from \$180 to \$207.
- Tenant member card fee: from \$144 to \$150.
- Card reprint fee: \$15, no change.
- Guest card fee: \$20, no change.
- Resale transfer fee: from \$170 to \$180
- Asset preservation fee: from \$900 to \$1,700
- Resale disclosure fee: from \$50 to \$75
- Refund processing fee: \$10, no change.
- Additional fees apply for bowling and golf.

DAILY NEWS-SUN MONDAY, NOV. 3, 2003

RCSCW names interim GM

Board creates, fills assistant's position

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A Glendale human-resources consultant has been hired as the Recreation Centers of Sun City West interim general manager.

Michael Ingersoll, president of Ingersoll Consulting, will fill the interim position for the foreseeable future. He will begin next week.

During a special meeting Friday afternoon, the governing board unanimously approved Ingersoll's hiring, as well as the creation of an assistant general manager position to be filled by Barbara James, the member-services manager who has been filling in as temporary interim general manager since George Grimstad was fired Oct. 23.

Ingersoll will not seek to become the permanent GM, said Director Barbara DuPonte.

"He has his own business," she said. "He's a private consultant. He's



James

From A1

retired. He's not interested in any permanent position with the rec centers."

The board considered four individuals for the interim position, including Ingersoll and James. The other two were Steve Jablonowski, a certified Professional Golf Association member who was the centers' golf-operations director from 1991 to 1996 and now lives in Kansas, and Roger Lansberry, a Sun City West resident and retired certified public accountant.

According to his resume, Ingersoll has 30 years of experience in human resources, management, business-systems design and

improvement, training and management development.

Ingersoll Consulting helps organizations increase productivity, decrease turnover, increase job satisfaction, develop future leaders, coach managers and supervisors, mediate employment issues and improve customer service.

Ingersoll earned a bachelor of science degree in education from Wayne State University in Detroit, and graduated from the city of Phoenix Management Academy. From 1997 to 2001, he was assistant personnel director for the city of Phoenix. He also served as Phoenix's interim personnel director and deputy personnel director.

Ingersoll is a certified member of the International Public Management Association for Human Resources, chairman of the Arizona Government Training Service board and a member of the Metro Phoenix Human Resources Association and the American Society for Training and Development. He served in the Navy from 1971 to 1975.

Director Elaine McCraith said the board would not rush into finding a permanent GM, but would look to Ingersoll and James to provide a professional evaluation of the centers before taking that step.

James will continue as member-services manager

along with filling her new position — which is intended to be permanent, not just a temporary position while Ingersoll is in office.

"It's an enlargement of her current position — with compensation," McCraith said.

DuPonte said she and Director Bob Beaupre have begun working together to establish a search committee and define a process for finding a permanent GM, but the selection won't be made for the foreseeable future.

"We are going to try to do it the best way possible, with the least amount of cost," DuPonte said. "Right now, we're still in the process of just developing the committee and developing what's going

to happen."

Although most hiring duties fall under the GM's position, Cook said he believes the board was authorized to create the new assistant GM position.

"The job description for the general manager says he should have someone trained and ready to take over for him should the need arise," he said. "This has kind of been overlooked in the past."

In a quick workshop session following the special meeting, the board discussed a proposal to create an Office of Internal Audit.

Director Carolyn Jennings said the word "office" implies more than one individual would be hired. Director Ray

Caldwell, who introduced the proposal, said the policy is planned to be flexible in case future growth requires it be expanded, but right now he envisions only a single, part-time person filling the role.

"It could be one, or 10,000," he said. "It is of course up to management and up to the board to decide."

Jennings and James had a list of other questions about the proposal, but "in the interest of brevity," Cook asked that those be forwarded to Caldwell for consideration at a future workshop.

"We have been at this since 8 o'clock in the morning," Cook explained.

DAILY NEWS-SUN

TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2003

Union signs on more RCSCW employees

Fears for jobs, benefits drive movement

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A second group of RCSCW employees, worried about pay and job security, has embraced a union.

"I believe the employees have done their contract because of threats of their pay and benefits being cut," said George Grimstad, Recreation Centers of Sun City West general manager.

Nearly 87 percent of a group of 157 staff members signed cards allowing the Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 56, to bargain on their behalf. Grimstad said he recognized the union late last week to avoid a potentially costly election.

Sharon Schomer, the centers office manager, said she was among those given the opportunity to join the union, but she declined to say whether she signed a card or not.

"I really can't talk about that. It's against the rules," she said.

However, she said most of those she has talked to want the union "because of rumors or threats made by board members now and incoming that they wanted to cut wages and eliminate jobs."

"I believe the union was brought in to save our positions," she said. "It's just a matter of our livelihoods. Most of us who work here full time are not retired."

Grimstad, who came under fire earlier this month for recognizing the union as requested by a group of 43 employees who also overwhelmingly supported it, said he does not believe centers officials are overpaid.

Although some employees were concerned about pay cuts — which some discussions put as high as 20 percent — Grimstad said another segment was worried about losing benefits.

"A lot of our folks are mainly working not for pay but for the health benefits," Grimstad said.

Board Secretary Tom

Cook, who likely will be voted in Thursday as the board's acting president, said he can understand the employees' concerns about losing pay or benefits.

"If you were an employee, would that concern you?" he asked.

Neither Cook, Grimstad nor Schomer believes the unions will push for advantages over what employees have now.

"I don't think it's a pay issue. I think it's a security issue," Grimstad said.

"From what I understand, they're just going by the company handbook," Schomer said. The handbook outlines merit raises and other issues for employees.

The local representative for Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 56, could not be reached for comment.

Grimstad said he expects to receive contract proposals from both unions by the end of June, at which point discussions between the centers

See UNION, A5

From A1

and each union can begin.

Cook said he believes Sun City West's problems aren't unique to retirement communities.

"Unfortunately, it seems to be a phenomena in senior retirement communities that there seems to be a lot of agitation going on. It's not just here — it's nationwide," he said. "Senior homeowners associations tend to get a lot of agitation from homeowners. They're all sitting around with time on their hands, so things start happening."

The centers, which employs about 410 people, initially recognized Professional Employees International Union earlier this month when 91 percent of the first group requested it.

That set off a fire storm with some board members upset Grimstad agreed to recognize the union without consulting the board.

Cook eventually asked former board President Bob Finn to step down after the National Labor Relations Board filed two complaints against Finn, who retains his office as a director. Vice President Elaine McCraith is interim president.

Cook and McCraith said the board likely will vote at Thursday's meeting to make Cook president until the new board members are seated July 1. McCraith said she'd prefer not to hold the top post.

"This is a smoother transition," McCraith said.

Before Finn stepped down as president, Grimstad said

he sent a letter to the board stating "the hostile environment Finn had created" was interfering with his ability to do his job, a complaint that Grimstad could turn into a formal complaint of constructive discharge.

Grimstad said he believes the issue will be resolved now that Finn is no longer president.

"I'm hoping it's going to be fine with him just as a board member," he said. "I get along great with all eight board members. There's just the one."

Grimstad said he believes the two complaints filed against Finn by the National Labor Relations Board are still pending, with that board collecting depositions before taking further action.

Grimstad said he doesn't

believe his recognition of this second unionization will cause the uproar his first decision did.

"There may be a few nasty messages coming in, but the lawyers for the corporation told me I was well within my rights, and most of the board members are supportive," he said.

Cook and McCraith said they were kept apprised of the situation from the time the union sent its request.

"We have to recognize it, you know," McCraith said, adding she doesn't know whether this will spur more employees to seek unionization. "We just take it as it comes."

Katy O'Grady can be reached at 876-2514 or kogrady@aztrib.com.

RCSCW budget proposal hikes golf fees

OTHER INCREASES: Plans call for boost in assessments

MICHAEL MARESH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City West residents will be paying a lot more to play golf in the near future if the proposed RCSCW budget is approved by the governing board.

Several Recreation Centers of Sun City West board members, speaking at a budget workshop Tuesday morning, said the increases are too much.

"It's substantial," said Director Tom Cook, who chairs the golf committee. "It's a pretty good increase for golfers who play 75 rounds. (They) will be hit the hardest."

As an example, Cook said that a golfer now

charged \$1,425 for 100 golf rounds would be charged \$1,725 under the proposed budget.

The 2002-2003 budget is \$13.7 million, and of that, \$7.13 million is earmarked for the golf division. The 2003-2004 proposed budget of \$13.7 million designates \$7.3 million for the golf division.

Under the proposed budget, golf-pass fees would average \$22.50 for 50 rounds and \$9.08 for 300 rounds. Unlimited golf passes would cost \$1,900.

Director Bob Hubbs, chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee, said the golf division needs to be self sufficient.

"How do you develop enough money to make golf black?" he asked. "We have to generate some funds some way. We all know how to use

See RCSCW, A5

calculators, but we have to do it for a whole lot of people."

The \$7.3 million expense for the rec centers to maintain and operate seven courses compares with:

- Phoenix, seven courses, \$7.7 million.
- Tucson, five courses, \$10.7 million.
- Houston, two courses, \$5.1 million.
- Summerland, Las Vegas, three courses, \$5.5 million.

Interim Director Patrick McBurnett, an avid golfer, said rec center fees should be raised \$25 so golfers would not be gouged.

"It should be scattered throughout all 30,000 residents," McBurnett said, surprising many members of the Budget and Finance Committee. "It is unfair to charge golfers (high fees) plus rec card dues. These are the facts."

McBurnett said some golf employees living in the community are working for next to nothing just so they can afford to play golf.

"This area is a golfing community," he said. "What you are going to face is a bunch of irate golfers. I have had enough. Golfers resent these increases."

Hubbs said raising fees for everyone to support golfers

was never considered by his committee. He said the committee worked on the proposed budget for weeks, and its goal is to be fiscally responsible.

Director Carolyn Jennings wanted to know if the RCSCW could generate more revenue by lowering guest rates to attract more play.

General Manager George Grimstad said the centers would not attract that many more golfers — at least not enough to offset the loss of revenue.

Golf fees would not be the only increase under the proposed budget. Annual membership fees would increase from \$174 to \$180, contributions to facility reserve would

Recreation Centers of Sun City West, Inc.

Summary Fees – FY2003-2004

Recreation Division	Current	Proposed	Change
Annual Membership Fee	\$174.00	\$180.00	\$ 6.00
Contribution to Facility Reserve	14.00	15.00	1.00
Guest Activity Card	10.00	20.00	10.00
Resale Transfer Fee	150.00	170.00	20.00
Asset Preservation Fee	845.00	900.00	55.00
Tenant Activity Card	136.00	144.00	8.00
Bowling Division			
Bowling Line Fee: Resident – Winter	1.65	1.65	0.00
Bowling Line Fee: Resident – Summer	1.35	1.35	0.00
Bowling Line Fee: Guest – Winter	2.25	2.25	0.00
Bowling Line Fee: Guest – Summer	1.95	1.95	0.00
Locker Rental Fee Per Year	17.00	17.00	0.00

Source: Recreation Centers of Sun City West

Daily News-Sun

increase from \$14 to \$15, guest activity cards would increase to \$20 from \$10, resale transfer fees would rise from \$150 to \$170, asset-preservation fees would increase \$55, going from \$845 to \$900, and tenant activities cards would increase from \$136 to \$144.

Bowling fees would remain the same.

Sun City West residents will have an opportunity to express their views on the proposed budget to the governing board at 8 a.m. May 9 at the R.H. Johnson Social Hall.

Michael Maresch can be reached at 876-2513 or mmaresch@aztrib.com.

SC West rejects 3 measures; opponents win 3 board seats

By Lesley Wright

The Republic | azcentral.com

Sun City West residents resoundingly defeated three ballot measures Tuesday that would have capped annual dues, limited the governing board's power and ended community subsidies of golf and other recreation activities.

Votes against the three measures ranged from 80 to 85 percent of the total cast.

"This was an emphatic announcement on the part of the vast majority of Sun City West residents that they are happy with the way Sun City West is running today, which is under the guidelines set up by Del Webb," said Patti Shanholtzer, spokeswoman for Sun City West Unite, the group that worked to defeat the measures.

Sun City West Unite's slate of candidates for the three open seats on the governing board also had decisive wins. Marion Mosley and Nolan Reed each

won 87 percent of the vote, and David Wilson won 82 percent of the vote.

Ernie Prindle, the primary sponsor of the measures and a governing-board candidate, got just 16 percent of the vote. Candidate Chuck Reott won 27 percent.

Sharon Schomer, the governing-board manager, said the election drew the most voters in the community's 23-year history. Of 27,500 eligible voters, 15,522 cast a ballot.

The emotions behind the controversy were clear at the voting booth Tuesday.

Standing on one side of the Social Hall, where votes were cast, was a boisterous group of Sun City West Unite volunteers wearing yellow T-shirts, handing out yellow fliers and chatting easily with a steady stream of voters.

Prindle sat largely alone at a table, with a handful of supporters stopping by.

He was asking voters to "change Sun City West fundamentally," he said, add-

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SUN CITY WEST

Continued from Page 5

ing that there would likely be another effort to change community bylaws sometime in the future.

Judy Hodgins, a six-year resident of Sun City West, said she voted "no" on all of the measures because they would harm residents.

"Change is not always the best thing in the world," Hodgins said.

Prindle and his supporters had objected to subsidies for golf, which takes \$30 out of every \$370 that residents pay in annual membership dues. Other recreation categories, such as bowling, also would have to be self-supporting under the proposed bylaw changes.

Opponents said that the loss of that funding could mean Sun City West would have to shutter two of its seven golf courses.

Many golfers and non-golfers alike said that developer Del E. Webb founded the system where all residents pay for all activities and then use what they want.

"I like Sun City West the way it is," said Anne Lebig, a 19-year resident. "I like our golf courses. You have to spend a little money to keep things going."

BALLOT MEASURES

Here are results of the ballot measures, which would have amended several Sun City West bylaws:

Amendment 1: This would have restricted annual dues increases to 8 percent. The measure was opposed by 80 percent of the voters.

No: 12,424.

Yes: 2,946.

Amendment 2: This would have required golf, bowling and recreation activities to be self-supporting. The measure was opposed by 86 percent.

No: 13,351.

Yes: 2,023.

Amendment 3: This would have required the governing board to seek a community-wide vote before starting any projects costing more than \$100,000. It was opposed by 83 percent.

No: 12,869.

Yes: 2,061.

RCSCW voters spurn bylaw changes

MITCHELL VANTREASE

DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City West residents have rejected overwhelmingly three bylaw changes — one by a margin of more than 6 to 1 — and soundly defeated the architect of the proposals who was seeking a seat on the RCSCW governing board.

With 15,522 total votes cast — a record turnout — the first bylaw, regarding an 8

percent cap on membership dues, was defeated 12,424 to 2,946.

The second proposal, which would have made the bowling, recreation and golf divisions self-supporting, lost 13,351 to 2,023.

The third, requiring capital improvements of more than \$100,000 to go to voters for their approval, failed 12,869 to 2,601.

"This is a great day



Marion Mosley

Ernie Prindle

Chuck Reott

David Wilson

Nolan E. Reed

for Sun City West, and we want to thank each of our members who voted and assured our community of a bright future," said RCSCW General Manager Mike Whiting. "The overwhelming turnout and the failure of these misguided changes indicate our residents support the way we've

SEE RESULTS, A5

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

www.yourwestvalle

RESULTS

FROM A1

been operating for 33 years, and they want to preserve this community the way it is."

Also among the election results announced Tuesday night, Marion Mosley, Nolan Reed and David Wilson were elected to seats on the governing board. They'll take office July 1 and replace members Pat Canfield, Lake Westphal and Board President Dave Moeller.

Mosley garnered 12,428 votes followed by Reed with 12,418 and Wilson in third with 11,675. Chuck Reott and Ernie Prindle, who led the bylaw-change effort, trailed with 3,769 votes and 2,343 votes, respectively.

The proposed bylaw changes have dominated community discussion in Sun City West for months, ever since Prindle received more than 2,000 petition signatures to have the items placed on the ballot.

Moeller said he's pleased with the outcome.

"Our members who retired here recognized that what they have taken for granted had been threatened, and they needed to speak up," he said. "The association realized from this election and heard the members say we need to do a better job of communicating important issues, finding avenues to get the information that they're looking for, and that members learned they need to take time out of their busy schedule to access that information."

Prindle said he's disappointed in the outcome, but he still believes the membership wants change.

"I think the members were clearly scared to death by what Whiting and Moeller put out about the closure of golf courses and other things if these bylaws passed," Prindle said. "I intend to still be around and keep a watch out for the finances and report it to the membership."

Ron Gliot, a Sun City West resident and golfer, said this morning he's glad the election is over but believes history will probably repeat itself in another few years.

"I've been here 25 years and every so often someone will try to raise a ruckus, and down the road I'm sure that it'll happen again," Gliot said.

Sun City West resident Bob Fortuney said the people have spoken about the bylaws.

"I just don't think those bylaws were needed at all and many people felt things already run smoothly, so why make any changes," Fortuney said.

RCSCW voters spurn bylaw changes

MITCHELL VANTREASE

DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City West residents have rejected overwhelmingly three bylaw changes — one by a margin of more than 6 to 1 — and soundly defeated the architect of the proposals who was seeking a seat on the RCSCW governing board.

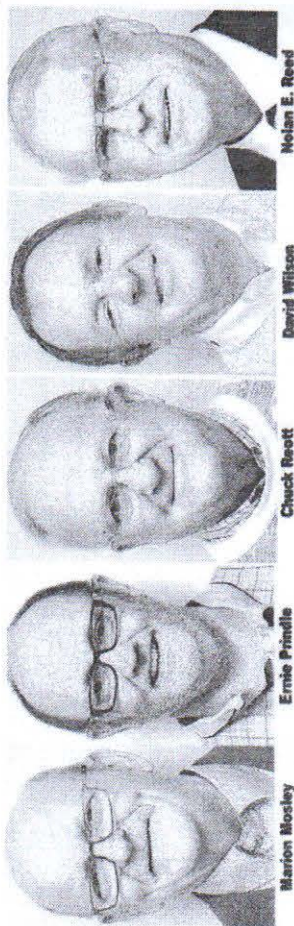
With 15,522 total votes cast — a record turnout — the first bylaw, regarding an 8

percent cap on membership dues, was defeated 12,424 to 2,946.

The second proposal, which would have made the bowling, recreation and golf divisions self-supporting, lost 13,351 to 2,023.

The third, requiring capital improvements of more than \$100,000 to go to voters for their approval, failed 12,869 to 2,601.

"This is a great day



Marion Mosley

Ernie Prindle

Chuck Reott

David Wilson

Nolan E. Reed

for Sun City West, and we want to thank each of our members who voted and assured our community of a bright future," said RCSCW General Manager Mike Whiting. "The overwhelming turnout and the failure of these misguided changes indicate our residents support the way we've

SEE RESULTS, A5

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

www.yourwestvalle

RESULTS

FROM A1

been operating for 33 years, and they want to preserve this community the way it is."

Also among the election results announced Tuesday night, Marion Mosley, Nolan Reed and David Wilson were elected to seats on the governing board. They'll take office July 1 and replace members Pat Canfield, Lake Westphal and Board President Dave Moeller.

Mosley garnered 12,428 votes followed by Reed with 12,418 and Wilson in third with 11,675. Chuck Reott and Ernie Prindle, who led the bylaw-change effort, trailed with 3,769 votes and 2,343 votes, respectively.

The proposed bylaw changes have dominated community discussion in Sun City West for months, ever since Prindle received more than 2,000 petition signatures to have the items placed on the ballot.

Moeller said he's pleased with the outcome.

"Our members who retired here recognized that what they have taken for granted had been threatened, and they needed to speak up," he said. "The association realized from this election and heard the members say we need to do a better job of communicating important issues, finding avenues to get the information that they're looking for, and that members learned they need to take time out of their busy schedule to access that information."

Prindle said he's disappointed in the outcome, but he still believes the membership wants change.

"I think the members were clearly scared to death by what Whiting and Moeller put out about the closure of golf courses and other things if these bylaws passed," Prindle said. "I intend to still be around and keep a watch out for the finances and report it to the membership."

Ron Gliot, a Sun City West resident and golfer, said this morning he's glad the election is over but believes history will probably repeat itself in another few years.

"I've been here 25 years and every so often someone will try to raise a ruckus, and down the road I'm sure that it'll happen again," Gliot said.

Sun City West resident Bob Fortuney said the people have spoken about the bylaws.

"I just don't think those bylaws were needed at all and many people felt things already run smoothly, so why make any changes," Fortuney said.

SC West non-golfers teed off with golfers

Routine election
to fill three seats
takes a sharp turn

By Lesley Wright

The Republic | azcentral.com

A routine election to fill three seats on the board of Sun City West's Recreation Centers took a sharp turn this month as three propositions qualified for the March 27 ballot.

"It's the hottest topic I've seen in this community," said resident Tony DiBiaio. "I have been here 18 years, and I don't think there has been an election as crucial as this one."

Recreation board members, who manage a \$21 million annual budget, agree. So apparently do dozens of homeowners who read Internet blog posts that whip between two camps.

At stake, some say, is the future of Sun City West's allure as a golf haven and a growing hostility between golfers and non-golfers in this 23-year-old retirement community.

Two of the ballot measures would restrict the power of the Recreation Centers' governing board by capping yearly increases in membership dues at 8 percent and forcing a community vote on any capital project of more than \$100,000.



A class in advanced tai chi at Zen Wellness is conducted in Sun City West. Although golf is popular in the adult community, it's not the only game in town, though some might think so. NICK OZA/THE REPUBLIC

VF SCW - Recreation Centers General - Northwest Valley News 2.27.2012

The third measure would require the three divisions of recreation activities — golf, bowling and recreation — to be self-supporting.

"No member dues shall be used to support Bowling and Golf direct operational costs," reads the proposed amendment to Sun City West's bylaws.

The problem, recreation board members say, is that golf has rarely if ever been self-supporting at Sun City West. If the amendment passes, the directors will have to find some way to cut \$1 million from operational costs for the community's seven golf courses.

Dave Moeller, president of the Recreation Centers, said board members would have to consider closing a golf course for a period of time, although deed restrictions could make that difficult.

"If we can't close courses, we would have to severely cut back on operational costs, with less weeding and less mowing," Moeller said. "We're between two very unpopular choices."

UPCOMING

Sun City West voters will decide the fate of three measures on the March 27 ballot that would affect the community's Recreation Centers governing board. The board will hold a special meeting at 2 p.m. Feb. 10 in Palm Ridge Summit Hall, 13800 W. Deer Valley Drive, to discuss the issues. Here are summaries of the measures:

» A restriction on governing board powers would tie dues increase to the Social Security increase of the preceding year, plus 2 percent. Total yearly increases would max out at 8 percent.

» The measure would restructure the budget to require the three divisions of activities — golf, bowling and recreation (a catch-all category for everything else) — to be self-supporting for direct operational costs.

» A third would restrict the general powers of the board and require a community vote for any capital project worth more than \$100,000.

Should golf pay for itself?

Ernie Prindle, a board candidate and a main supporter of the ballot measures, said golf would always be a priority at Sun City West. It just might not be the only priority.

"A number of people have just said they are tired of paying for golf," said

Prindle, who was the board's chief financial officer before being terminated last year. Board members would not say why he was let go, but Prindle attributed it to his increasing frustration and a public fit of temper.

Prindle characterized the threat of closed golf courses as an electoral "scare tactic" and said golf advocates are mis-

leading the voters because some recreation costs still would be subsidized.

Only the direct cost of operations would have to pay for itself. Prindle said that would force the managers to make reasonable business decisions based on revenue instead of assuming they could

See ELECTION, Page 4



ELECTION

Continued from Page 3

just raise dues to cover everything.

"It's time for the membership to get upset about what's happening," Prindle said. "It's about a minority group of our members — golfers — driving what's happening in Sun City West."

Golf revenues on a downslide

Sun City West is a retirement community northeast of Bell Road and Grand Avenue, sprawling on either side of R.H. Johnson Boulevard.

About 8,000 of the 28,000 residents use the golf courses, one of the community's premier amenities.

The problem for Sun City West and other retirement communities, country clubs and municipal courses, is that golf is not generating the robust revenues it once did. Some communities have "outsourced" operations. Others, like Sun City West, have opened the courses to outsiders.

Golf in Sun City West brings in about \$7.3 million and costs about \$8.5 million, Moeller said.

That discrepancy and concern about higher dues helped Prindle and the group Sun City West Unite collect more



The iconic Del E. Webb statue stands outside the Banner Del E. Webb Medical Center in Sun City West. Golf is another SCW icon. MICHAEL SCHENNUM/THE REPUBLIC

than 2,000 signatures to put the measures on the ballot.

Ronni Hoover, who sits on the recreation board's finance committee, said that although golfers are a minority, the courses are part of the community.

"The point is, you came here to live in a community, and the community supports all the facilities," she said.

Moeller added that simply raising golf fees would be counterproductive because the courses could lose their competitive advantage and find themselves in a "death spiral."

'Disparity in income'

Resident Donald Holmes, who is working to pass the ballot measures, said the changes to the bylaws would just give some control over fees and building projects back to the residents.

Holmes also hinted at another divide in Sun City West.

"All of this boils down to a disparity in income," he said. "The people on the golf courses have more income than most people in the community."

PETITIONERS ARE JEOPARDIZING AMENITIES, EXEC SAYS

Dave Moeller, board president of the Recreation Centers of Sun City West, weighs in on the issue. Page 26



In 2007, Don McDonald was busy smacking balls at the driving range at the Grandview Golf Course in Sun City West. THE REPUBLIC



NICK COTE/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City West residents pack the Palm Ridge Recreation Center during a forum for the proposed bylaw changes Friday.

RCSCW board rips proposed bylaw changes

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

More than 500 people listened Friday afternoon as the Recreation Centers of Sun City West staff and governing board addressed concerns and questions about the three proposed bylaw changes up for a vote next month.

During the special

meeting of the board at Palm Ridge Recreation Center, RCSCW General Manager Mike Whiting urged people to vote no on all three bylaws.

Whiting discussed the "nuts and bolts" of the three changes, which were written by a group of petitioners who gathered 1,000 signatures to have

Sun City West residents vote on them.

"This permanently impacts the quality of life along with every member as well as every club," Whiting said.

The three proposed bylaw changes will appear on the March 27 ballot along

SEE BYLAWS, A5

BYLAWS

FROM A1

with candidates for the governing board.

Ernie Prindle, a governing board candidate and former chief financial officer for RCSCW, led the effort to gather signatures for the changes to make the ballot and is the only candidate supporting them.

Prindle chose not to comment at the association's forum.

"This is clearly their show and that's what they were going for," he said. "We will have our say on Monday."

On Monday from 10 a.m. until noon at the Palm Ridge Rec Center, the Daily News-Sun will conduct a forum at which proponents and opponents of the bylaw changes will be questioned by newspaper editors.

The bylaw changes include voter approval for capital improvements of more than \$100,000 and an 8 percent cap on annual membership dues. But the major revision would make the golf, bowling and recreation divisions self-supporting.

RCSCW officials have said for weeks the bylaw changes would change the face of the community.

Officials said there would be a \$1 million cut in the budget and the closure of two golf courses if the voters approve the bylaw change requiring the recreation, golf and bowling divisions to be self-supporting.

Supporters of the bylaw changes have said that is not necessarily the case and the intent is to control spending.

In addition, RCSCW officials also question the wisdom of limiting owner member dues to 8 percent, when state law allows for 20 percent and RCSCW bylaws already limit any increase to 15 percent.

Whiting said he wanted to dispel some rumors "that have been floating around," including speculation that membership dues will go up \$425 by 2014. Whiting said annual dues are frozen for the next three

years.

In addition, Whiting said it's not true that 30 percent of residents live below the poverty line in Sun City West. According to U.S. Census figures, 3.5 percent are below the level.

If approved, Whiting said the three bylaw changes would have severe effects, particularly the change to make the recreation, golf and bowling divisions self-supporting.

"When you make them pay for themselves, then that means everything, including the fact that we would have to charge rent to all of the clubs or add user fees every time you use any facilities," Whiting said. "It's more than just golf and bowling that will be affected by these bylaws."

Jack Steiner, governing board secretary, displayed a tapestry made by his wife that he likened to Sun City West.

"No person gets everything that they want and if you vote 'yes' for these bylaws you're destroying the tapestry of this community."

During the public portion of the meeting Richard Brust, who supports the bylaw

If You Go

WHAT: Daily News-Sun forum on proposed Sun City West bylaw changes

WHEN: 10 a.m. to noon Monday

WHERE: Palm Ridge Recreation Center, 13800 W. Deer Valley Drive.

INFORMATION: Daily News-Sun editors will discuss the issues with proponents and opponents of the changes. Seating is limited.

changes, said it is unfair that no one presented that side at the meeting.

"The membership dues keep going up, only for all of these golf courses that we don't even use anymore," said Brust, who was booed after his comments.

Terry Hamman, vice president of the board, said he's always concerned about the rise of dues but he believes "staff is controlling the cost and urges people to vote 'no'."

"All of these bylaws are financial issues and the board is doing their best work on these issues to do just that," said Ed Van Cott, another board of director.

RCSCW OKs request to stay

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West governing board has decided to allow a 52-year-old man to continue living in the home of his deceased mother for whom he cared

SEE RULES, A4

RULES

FROM A1

while she was ill.

But the board has decided not to create a policy for future requests, opting to deal with them on a case-by-case basis.

Board president Dave Moeller said during Monday's operations meeting that the issue doesn't warrant the time to establish rules for something that does not occur frequently.

"When this came about, all we wanted to do was fairly respond if a family member can live in a loved one's home if they're close in age to live here," said Moeller. "So we will continue to deal with this on a case-by-

case basis because we don't get too many of these."

Moeller was referring to a 52-year-old caretaker who requested to stay in the home of his mother, who he took care of in her home while she was sick. The woman left the home to her son, and he asked to stay in the house as a resident, even though he didn't meet the age requirement of 55.

"It would be different if he were 30 or 35, then he would probably have to rent the house out," Moeller said. "But we see no problem since he's that close in age."

In the last five years, there has only been one other similar case.

"We'll just take this thing as we go," Moeller said.

Board ponders project policy

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Rec Centers General Manager Mike Whiting learned a lesson last year during a heated debate over a proposal for a \$3.5 million multi-purpose gym in Sun City West, and he wants the governing board to help him make sure something similar doesn't happen again.

Recreation Centers of Sun City West bylaws require a committee to examine proposals put forth by residents. In the case of the gym proposals, it appeared only a handful of people wanted the gym.

Under a draft policy, Whiting suggests that proposals costing more than \$250,000 be submitted

SEE POLICY, A4

POLICY

FROM A1

to him for review prior to going to the board for further consideration.

The new policy will eventually go to a vote by the board, but at a meeting Monday, there seemed to be support for Whiting's idea.

"It lays out the framework for future projects," said board member Patricia Tomlin. "We really don't want a repeat of what happened the last time because so many were upset."

Board member Ed Van Cott agreed.

"This safeguards the process," he said.

Board president Dave Moeller said Whiting's proposed policy change would save time and money.

"This is all about clarification, and this policy does just that," Moeller said.

Whiting said he wrote the policy out of frustration following the gym flap.

Last fall, after weeks of listening to community members decry the gym idea as being too costly, the governing board voted 7-1 against pursuing the idea, which would have replaced a fenced-in patio area at Beardsley Recreation Center.

Special Edition E-News

[Print this page](#)

Bylaw proposals fail in landmark SCW election - [Youtube Link](#)

Three proposed Bylaw amendments that would have fundamentally changed Sun City West were roundly defeated in an election Tuesday that drew more voters than any in the community's 33-year history.

"This is a great day for Sun City West, and we want to thank each of our members who voted and assured our community of a bright future," said General Manager Mike Whiting. "The overwhelming turnout and the failure of these misguided changes indicate our residents support the way we've been operating for 33 years, and they want to preserve this community the way it is."

With 15,522 total votes cast, the first Bylaw, regarding a 2 percent cap on dues, went down 12,424 to 2,946. The second, regarding the three divisions being self-supporting, was defeated 13,351 to 2,023. The third, regarding capital expenditures over \$100,000, failed 12,869 to 2,601.

Governing Board President Dave Moeller stated, "Our residents don't want a pay-for-what-you-use system. The results are confirmation that we are a community for active adults who support something for everyone. Where else can you find a community with 111 chartered clubs, seven golf courses, a private library, 30-lane bowling center and countless other amenities where one fee gives you access to just about everything you could want?"

Also on Tuesday, the membership voted for three new Governing Board Directors who will be seated July 1. The top three vote-getters were Marion Mosely (12,428 votes), Nolan Reed (12,418) and David Wilson (11,675). Chuck Reott with 3,769 votes and Ernie Prindle with 2,343 votes were unsuccessful in gaining a seat on the Board. The three newcomers will replace outgoing Directors Dave Moeller, Pat Canfield and Lake Westphal.

Had the proposed Bylaw amendments passed, they would have resulted in monumental changes to the Association's structure and operations. One change would have required the Recreation, Golf and Bowling Divisions to be self-supporting. That would have meant up to \$1 million in cuts from golf, and – depending on a legal interpretation – up to \$5.8 million in cuts from the Recreation Division.

The legal interpretation regarding Recreation would have been required because the failed Bylaw language required all direct operational and maintenance costs of each division to be covered by operating revenues. Although Recreation uses membership dues to operate clubs and facilities, those dues are not generated by that division. Rather, dues are generated through a Facilities Use Agreement that all members sign when they move into the community. Dues are currently \$370 per member, per year, and provide access to all the amenities and clubs. Only golf and bowling, due to their higher costs of operations, require extra fees.

One of the other changes voters turned down was a requirement that annual dues increases be limited to no more than the Social Security increase from the preceding year, plus 2 percent, not to exceed 8 percent greater than the preceding fiscal year.

"In the last couple of years, we've held our dues increases to 5.3 percent or lower, and we're planning no more than a 5 percent increase next year, so we didn't see this as a major stumbling block right now," said Whiting. "However, it could have had profound effects in the future because the Social Security index does not take our local needs into account. We're already fiscally conservative, but this provision would have tied our hands with an artificial ceiling that doesn't look at the age of our facilities, nor the needs and wants of our members."

The final provision that failed Tuesday would have required the Governing Board to seek membership approval on any capital improvements over \$100,000 that change or modify a facility.

"We welcome, encourage and provide for public input on our capital projects," said Whiting. "The Governing Board votes on these projects in public session, and the Board represents the members. In addition, all of these projects are discussed multiple times in public sessions, with frequent opportunity for public input. Putting each one up for a membership vote would

have been a costly, unnecessary expense since we are required under a new law to send, through first-class mail, a notice of elections to all members. And in the case of an emergency, such as a well pump going down in the summer, it could have had other long-term and costly side effects such as turf dying as we scrambled to schedule and conduct an election."

[Current Resident Golf Rates](#) | [Current CNP and Non-Resident Golf Rates](#)
[2011-12 Holiday Golf Series Schedule](#)

www.rcscw.com for the latest in RCSCW information.

[www.twitter.com/rcscw](https://twitter.com/rcscw) follow us on twitter

Log on to www.rcscw.com for the latest in RCSCW information.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West Inc.

**is a not-for-profit 501c4 private community located in the Northwest Valley of
Arizona.**

Administrative Offices: 19803 R. H. Johnson Blvd. Sun City West, AZ 85375

Phone: 623-544-6000 email@rcscw.com

SCW braces for pivotal March election

2012 Looking ahead Sun City West

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

As 2012 nears, Sun City West already will have two major renovation projects under way and an upcoming election that could include a referendum to revise three major bylaws in the community.

Dave Moeller, Recreation Centers of Sun City West governing board president, said the new year is crucial for residents and the association.

"It's important to maintain our current governing issues and represent our 28,000 residents the best way we can without special interest groups getting in the way," Moeller said. "We must have our standards everyone expects us to have."

Moeller said he's referring to a group spearheaded by Ernie Prindle, who is gathering signatures to put a bylaw change on the March election ballot.

The bylaw changes include voter approval for any capital improvement proj-

ect that costs more than \$100,000 and an 8 percent increase for membership dues.

Currently, the bylaws permit a 15 percent dues increase while the state allows for associations to hike dues up to 20 percent.

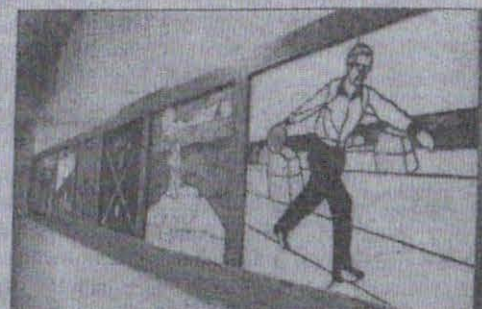
But the major revision would make the bowling and golf divisions self-supporting entities, meaning all operational and maintenance costs of each division would be covered by revenues through the division.

RCSCW officials said there would be a \$1 million cut in the budget and the closure of two golf courses if the voters approve the bylaw changes in the March 26 election.

In addition to a possible bylaw vote, three new residents will be elected to the board of directors.

"This will be a big year for us, so we'll see how it goes," Moeller said.

Along with government issues, the completion of two major renovation



DAVE MARTINEZ/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Stained glass adorns a wall inside the remodeled Strike Zone Eatery in the R.H. Johnson Sports Pavilion in Sun City West. The Strike Zone is nearly finished with its remodel.

projects are expected to occur within the first half of next year.

RCSCW recently took over the Strike Zone Eatery in the Sports Pavilion and will reopen it within the next month.

The R.H. Johnson Fitness Center closed earlier this month for an expansion and remodeling project, including a facelift for the showers and locker rooms, as well as doubling the size of the free weights and exercise machine areas.

The center is expected to reopen in March, said Katy O'Grady, RCSCW spokeswoman.

RCSCW preps poll inquiries

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

By this time next week, the Recreation Centers of Sun City West will have a good idea how many of its members will want to take part in a study to help plan for the community's future.

Dec. 15 is the deadline for residents to return postcards sent out this week.

In all, 27,000 cards were mailed and must be returned to one of the RCSCW's four fitness centers, the Property Owners and Residents Association offices, 13815 Camino del Sol; the Visitors Center or the administration office.

Dave Moeller, RCSCW board president, said the association is moving forward with long-range plans for Sun City

West and thought it important to consider residents' opinions.

"It's about being respectful to our members, letting them have their opinions," he said.

Cindy Knowlton, recreation manager for RCSCW, said Wendy Hulst-

SEE SURVEY, A5

SURVEY

FROM A1

man with the Department of Recreation and Tourism at Arizona State University is conducting the survey.

"We want to get a pulse of the community and the future, especially with the age demographics changing," she said. "It's so important to make sure that Sun City West is a place that many people want to retire to."

Knowlton said the survey is still being developed but should be ready to be distributed by the beginning of the year.

Expected survey questions will include community services, financial decisions, governance, golf, volunteerism and computer usage as well as potential use of buildings.

All the answers on the survey will be anonymous.

The survey will cost \$10,000 to produce and implement, which both Knowlton and Moeller said is less expensive than a higher-end firm that charges anywhere from \$40,000 to \$50,000.

"For the cost of the survey on an open market, we are getting a bargain, less than 50 cents per member," he said.

Some residents don't agree with

the survey and the cost.

An independent website, www.sun-city-west-today.org, stated its position: "As many owner-members know or have heard the RCSCW Board & management are spending \$10,000.00 of your money on another ASU survey to gaze into the future. Unfortunately, with a number of Board members retiring from Public, as opposed to private sector jobs, and generous public pensions, spending other peoples money is the current SCW Board's passion. Many SCW owner-members are not in such a fortunate position and are told, if you can't afford it, move," stated the site.

In addition, a resident whose letter to the Daily News-Sun appeared recently on an editorial page believes the survey is intrusive.

"If there are questions like that, but I don't think there will be, people know how not to answer," Moeller said.

After the survey is completed, the results will be released and RCSCW board and staff plan to have open meetings about the findings.

"We respect their opinions, and the more who participate the more valuable it is to us," Moeller said.

The surveys will include a self-addressed stamped envelope returned directly to ASU. The preferred method, however, is to complete the form online.

Scanned

SCW residents find gym too costly

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City West officials received an earful Thursday from those opposed to a proposed \$3.5 million multi-purpose gym.

As for supporters of the project: "I really want to know who these people are who want this, so we can understand," said Jack Seagraves.

Including at Thursday's Recreation Centers of Sun City West governing board meeting, Seagraves said he's heard much opposition to the

building proposal but hasn't heard from anyone who favors it.

Governing board member Lake Westphal said there were hundreds of residents interested in the building.

Bill Irwin isn't one of them.

A basketball player, Irwin said he's not sure the facility would be used enough.

Irwin said he doesn't see many people using the outside courts at Beardsley Recreation Center and thinks the project would be too costly.

"I feel like it's too expensive for the little use that it might get, and I'm someone that this facility would probably be of great use for. But I don't see the need right now," Irwin said.

For weeks, the proposed facility has been discussed among residents and board members.

The facility would replace a fenced-in patio area at Beardsley and house indoor activities such as basketball, volleyball, pickleball and other sports and would double as

a social gathering place for events such as weddings.

RCSCW General Manager Mike Whiting said the project could cost anywhere from \$2.7 million to \$3.6 million, depending on the materials and amenities.

"This board is being responsible by asking us to explore this, and that's what we're doing," Whiting said.

A committee of residents, including some governing board members, have been meeting

SEE PROPOSED GYM, A5

PROPOSED GYM

FROM A1

to explore the concept.

Board President Dave Moeller said he wanted to reiterate directors are not spending money on a new building but must listen to the idea of a resident and follow through with a process.

Moeller said the board eventually will vote whether to proceed.

"It's important that we listen as a board to all ideas, because that's our responsibility, then we decide if we want to move further," Moeller said. "There are 25 steps that must be taken before this could even become a project."

Sun City West resident Ken Flier said he's on a fixed income and believes it's not the right time to build a new facility.

"We really need to maintain what we already have," Flier said.

Sharon Walsh said the gym could raise their recreation fees because the board hasn't figured in the cost of maintenance and staff. Walsh suggested the board table any capital improvement projects for the next year due to the economy.

"Even though it sounds like a great idea, I just don't think this is economically sound at this point," Walsh said.

Mitchell Vantrease can be reached at 623-876-2526 or mvantrease@journalvalley.com.

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Mitchell Vantrease can be reached at 623-8767 or mvantrease@journalvalley.com.

Scared

Rec centers buy water option

Grandfathered water right to cost more than \$2M

By Dave Casadei
Independent Newspapers

Long-awaited answers to some of the community's water issues are beginning to surface following the Recreation Centers of Sun City West's decision to buy a grandfathered water right option.

RCSCW management acquired the option to purchase a non-expiring 1,481-acre-foot Type II water right to ensure

the community maintains an adequate water supply for its residents and facilities, including its seven golf courses. The purchase is in response to a future dilemma the rec centers face as early as August 2009 when its general industrial use permits allowing its existing 1,306 acre-foot water right can expire. According to RCSCW spokeswoman Katy O'Grady, the rec centers' GIU permits have a varying expiration window between August 2009 and August 2012 depending on how much progress the association makes on its CAP line plans.

RCSCW General Manager

What do you think?

How do you think this purchase will impact Sun City West?

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Mike Whiting believes the rec centers lucked out with the deal, noting grandfathered rights are tough to get.

"We've been watching the

market for years, and there have been very few grandfathered water rights out there that would meet our needs, and even fewer that were for sale," stated Mr. Whiting in a RCSCW press release sent to Independent Newspapers. "This is perhaps the only positive about the housing market decline — the rights are available to us now and they might not be in the near future as more municipalities and home builders begin leasing and buying them again."

The general manager explained a grandfathered Type II water right does not expire and guarantees the community the

rec centers will never have to fear losing its water rights.

"That means we won't have to revisit this problem again in another 10 or 20 years," Mr. Whiting stated. "This, combined with our other water rights, ensures an adequate water supply to maintain our association's amenities."

The water right will cost the rec centers, should its governing board approve the sale, a little more than \$2.2 million, and will be funded from its 2008-09 fiscal year budget monies. According to Ms. O'Grady, the RCSCW Wa-

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Water

Continued From Page 1

ter Committee March 21 voted to recommend the governing board move forward with the purchase. Now, it's the governing board's turn. Although they can not vote on the matter until the 2008-09 budget is approved, governing board members were more than positive about the proposal during their March 20 meeting.

"It's an excellent opportunity for us," RCSCW Governing Board Director Norm Bunas said. It does solve our water issues, covers our GIU rights that we have to replace and is the best financial outcome for the association."

He added people should consider the rights a wise investment.

The water right will continue to be held in escrow until July 1 when the RCSCW 2008-09 budget is approved.

Residents can attend any of the three public budget presentations planned for early April. Presentations will be conducted 9 a.m. Thursday, April 10; 2 p.m. Friday, April 11; and 9 a.m. Saturday, April 12 in the R.H. Johnson Social Hall, 19803 R.H. Johnson Blvd.

PORA Water Committee Chairman Bob Jones considers the rec centers' purchase to be a wise move that will benefit the entire Sun City West community. But he believes rec centers officials should not stop there.

"It's a smart move, but it does not solve all of our problems," he said. "We still need to bring

in CAP water or some source of water to take care of our golf courses. Right now, we're pumping good ground water from our wells, which is a waste of good quality water."

Mr. Whiting believes buying the water right option is the "most affordable" and "easiest to implement" choice rec center officials had.

"(This option is) one that guarantees our golf courses will be watered, even if the Colorado River runs low or effluent becomes unavailable," Mr. Whiting stated.

The rec centers are interested in using CAP water, but Mr. Whiting noted they had to address the water right issue first because of its dwindling time line on its validity. Rec centers officials can begin planning for how it can bring CAP water to Sun City West.

"We will be working with Sun City and an arm of Arizona-American Water Co. to engineer the possible CAP pipeline to bring Central Arizona Project water to the community," Mr. Whiting stated. "Whether the CAP project becomes a reality or not, the Rec Centers has to replace the 1,306 acre-feet of water granted under the general industrial use permits. Our best option is this grandfathered right."

The Groundwater Savings Project drawn up 10 years ago was designed to allow both of the Sun Cities to trade in their water rights for CAP water, but legal disputes have prolonged the agreement from being finalized.

Although the rec centers has no legal right to the CAP water, it will accept it in the exchange agreement if the CAP pipeline can

be built.

Sun City West resident Jack Kurrle also wants to see the CAP agreement progress, but he commended the rec centers for taking action to acquire more water.

"All the water we can get a hold of, I say go for it, regardless how you get it," Mr. Kurrle said. "We're going to run out of water one of these days, so you have to get it while you can."

Sun City West resident Hal Lind disagrees, noting he does not want to see the possibility of the water right lying dormant for more than four years waiting for the association's GIU permits to expire in 2012 because it will cost the RCSCW \$500,000 in fees.

But Mr. Bunas considers it highly advantageous to buy the rights at this time for the price they are paying. He explained the rec centers are paying \$1,500 an acre foot for the rights, noting similar grandfathered rights cost \$7,500 per acre foot.

"Yes, we probably aren't going to use them right away, but this is a solution that is so beneficial to this association versus any other solution that may be available to us," he said. "The infrastructure costs and capitals costs are far less here and we have an asset that's saleable where as we would have a depreciating asset the other way."

Sun City West resident Marianne Sikler, an RCSCW Water Committee member, tried to explain to residents at the governing board meeting opposing the deal what they are getting in simple terms.

"We know out there they're

asking up to \$7,500 an acre foot for this water," she said. "We were lucky to be able to take advantage of it in the time now — when development is down, real estate is down — so nobody is scratching around looking for these water rights in order to assure they have a 100-year water supply for their developments."

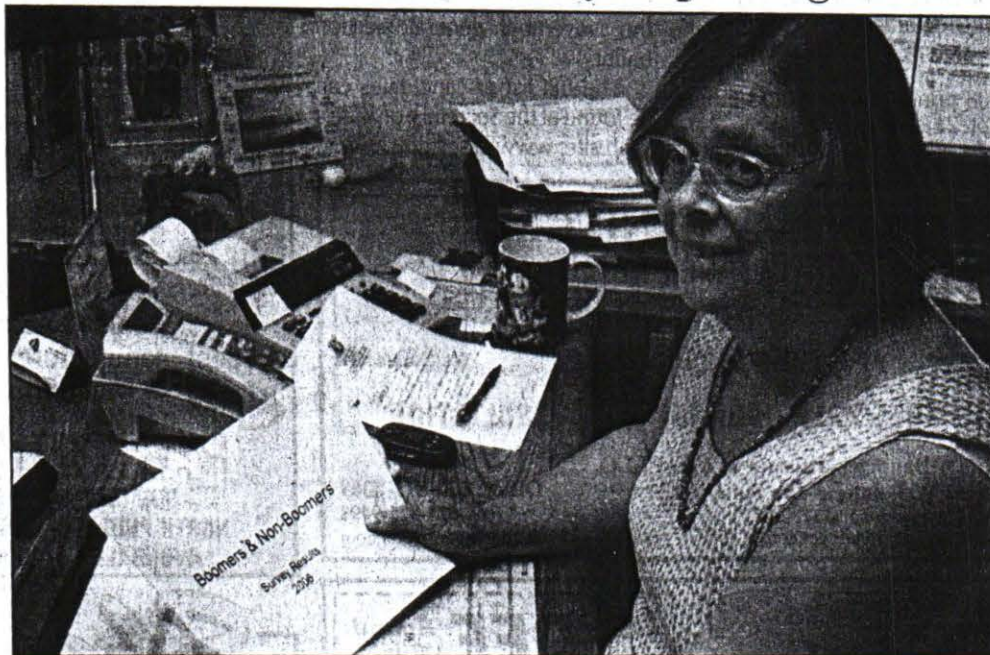
It's a good buy, lasting asset and something that has solved a big problem for us, she added.

The water right purchase is one of many efforts the rec centers have made to incorporate water-efficient solutions.

Others include installing more efficient irrigation heads; implementing a new software program that better controls watering schedules; redoing eroded lake shores to reduce seepage; using liquid fertilizer that requires less water for leaching than granular fertilizer; salvaging water runoff and moving it to storage lakes; and replacing shower heads and toilet valves with low-flow devices.

"We take a holistic approach to running this association," Mr. Whiting stated. "We balance the residents' needs and the Rec Centers' needs, and we try to be a good neighbor to other communities in the region. We believe this water purchase balances all those elements, and — after years of worrying about the future of our water — allows us to turn our attention more fully to our ongoing conservation efforts and the other business of the association."

Baby Boomers: Rec Centers eye expanding services



Independent Newspapers/Dave Casadei

Recreation Centers of Sun City West Recreation Manager Cindy Knowlton formed the RCSCW Boomers Task Force during fall 2007 to explore possible questions to include on a survey that was completed at May's end. The survey was in conjunction with a study to help the RCSCW determine which expanded services baby boomers are interested in.

Survey shows resident satisfaction

By Dave Casadei
Independent Newspapers

Results are in from a Recreation Centers of Sun City West study geared toward the community's ever-growing baby boomer population.

RCSCW, in partnership with Arizona State University's Department of Recreation and Tourism Management, completed a survey at May's end seeking comparisons between club and recreational options Sun City West baby boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, may be interested in and how they impact the association's current policies, designed more around the older community residents.

RCSCW spokeswoman Katy O'Grady said the study, which began October 2007, was nothing more than a feeling out survey to explore services more balanced to residents of all ages.

"This was the first time we've done a study like this,"

What do you think?

What services geared toward baby boomers would you like to see?

- Public forums
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she said. "We're trying to identify the trends and changing needs of boomers compared to those of our older members."

But the Rec Centers still need to service other members as well, which can be tough because residents range from 90 to 50, she added.

RCSCW Recreation Manager Cindy Knowlton during fall 2007 formed the RCSCW Boomers Task Force Committee, made up of boomer residents, non-boomer residents, a few RCSCW Governing Board

members and RCSCW staff. The committee, which worked with ASU West's Dr. Richard Gitelson and Ching-hua Ho, developed a blend of questions believed to produce an ideal random sampling to include in a survey. Following the survey's completion, ASU West broke down statistics and compiled the final report.

The survey's objective was to gain better understanding of why boomers and non-boomers chose to live in Sun City West, develop a recreation profile of residents, determine RCSCW activity information sources, develop owner member volunteer profiles, develop comprehensive physical and social health profiles of residents, create socioeconomic resident profiles and identify boomer and non-boomer differences.

According to the study's final report, the survey was of

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Survey

Continued From Page 1

ferred to 628 boomers, 62 percent (375) of which responded, and 639 non-boomers, 62 percent (395) of which responded. Of participating boomers, 231 were women and 123 were men. There were 227 non-boomer women who also participated and 147 non-boomer men.

Survey findings state of the 12 options for why residents chose to move to Sun City West — already lived in Maricopa County, family/relatives lived in the Valley, more house for the money, available amenities, weather, social opportunities, possible lifestyle, friends already living in Sun City West, cost of living, golf opportunities, non-golf recreational opportunities and investment opportunities — only three returned "significant differences."

About 44 percent of male and female boomers noted having family and relatives in the Valley was "not important" to why they moved to Sun City West, whereas 54 percent of non-boomer females and 62 percent of non-boomer males agreed. Only 12 percent of male non-boomers and 18 percent of female non-boomers found having family and relatives in the Valley to be "very important," compared to the about 22 percent from both female and male boomers.

A large discrepancy was also found regarding golf opportunities. About 37 percent of male boomers and non-boomers deem Sun City West golf opportunities as "not important," opposed to the 56 percent of female non-boomers and 46 percent female boomers. Both boomer and non-boomer men had 33 percent claim golf opportunities are "very important" to the 19 percent from female non-boomers and 26 percent from female boomers.

Lastly, there was a big difference between non-boomers and male boomers when it comes to investment opportunities luring residents to buy in Sun City West.

About 64 percent of non-boomers (men and women) felt investment opportunities in Sun City West were "not important." The number diminishes with

boomers. Only 39 percent of male boomers and 54 percent of female boomers deemed investment opportunities as "not important."

The study also investigated details including sport, club, exercise and volunteer behaviors, as well as expectations and RCSCW activity source information.

Other survey result highlights pointed out by Ms. Knowlton include 85 percent of all survey participants (boomers and non-boomers) recommend Sun City West as a place to live and only 1 percent claimed their expectations have not been met since moving to the community.

Ms. Knowlton said the study served its purpose by giving RCSCW staff direction in future trends to consider. But she was surprised there was more of a response from boomers.

"The survey gives us a baseline to work with," she said. "I think the important note here is boomers are very satisfied with what we have here, they just want to see a few tweaks."

Ms. Knowlton explained changes boomers seek are subtle and are requested to accommodate them because of all they miss out on while working. Not all boomers work fulltime, but many work. They seek extended hours on facilities and clubs and those types of things, Ms. Knowlton said.

She noted non-boomers can also benefit from potential changes in the future.

"It expands their world actually, so it is a plus for them," she said.

Sun City West boomer Rosetta Neal, who often works during the week, appreciates the Rec Centers looking at providing services for all ages.

"Since the community is older than 30 years, some residents' tastes are going to change and the Rec Centers want to appeal to everyone," she said. "I think it's nice we're looking at adding new types of crafts like scrapbooking and sports like pickleball. But they're not doing away with anything here, so that's good."

Ms. Knowlton pointed out a few committee members, prior to releasing the survey in October 2007, met in small groups of

five with resident boomers picking their brains for information and questions to include in the survey. Now the survey is complete, she again hopes to gather owner-members for more brainstorming.

"The next step will be large

roundtable discussions at Palm Ridge Recreation Center with eight to 10-person groups," she said. "Hopefully by fall in November."

Post comments in the Public Issues Forum at www.newszap.com. News Editor Dave Casadel can be reached at dcasadel@newszap.com.

Bylaw changes will head to vote

MITCHELL VANTREASE

DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City West residents will vote on three bylaw changes on March 27 that would limit the financial authority of the governing board and require the golf, bowling and recreation divisions to pay for themselves or face potentially significant cuts.

A review of more than 2,000 petition signatures endorsing the ballot ques-

tions showed that there were more than the 1,000 valid names required on the documents, Recreation Centers of Sun City West spokesman Katy O'Grady said Thursday.

Ernie Prindle, the resident who spearheaded the petition drive, said he's pleased, but "it's going to be a lot of hard work, to try and make it happen."

"We're concentrating on

the next steps right now and preparing a website to further explain these bylaw changes," Prindle said. "There is a lot of false information going on, and hopefully we can dispel that and really get the membership out to vote."

Each proposed bylaw change will be voted on separately.

The first would cap at 8 percent any annual increase in dues for owner members.

Current bylaws permit a 15 percent dues increase while the state allows for associations to hike dues up to 20 percent.

The second would require that all direct operational and maintenance costs for the recreation, golf and bowling divisions are covered by operating revenues generated by each division.

SEE BYLAWS, 25

BYLAWS

FROM A1

Finally, voter approval would be required for any project more than \$100,000 "that change, modify or repurpose the use of, or that expands or increases the square footage of an Association facility or structure."

"The bylaws, as they exist now, are the bylaws approved by the membership in a community-wide vote in 2007," said General Manager Mike Whiting. "If we're going to change what the community approved just five years ago, my hope is that the turnout in this upcoming election will be large enough to also serve as a community mandate, not just

the will of a few."

RCSCW officials have said there would be a \$1 million cut in the budget and the closure of two golf courses if the voters approve the bylaw change requiring the recreation, golf and bowling divisions to be self-supporting. Supporters of the bylaw changes have said that is not necessarily the case and that the intent is to better control spending.

RCSCW officials also question the wisdom of limiting owner member dues to 8 percent, when state law allows for 20 percent and RCSCW bylaws already limit any increase to 15 percent.

Governing Board President Dave Moeller

wrote in a letter to the Daily News-Sun that the petitioners' approach jeopardizes the future of the RCSCW.

"Exactly how will these bylaws save our Association?" wrote Moeller.

"We recognize that these are tough economic times and tough decisions need to be made. And we make them. We have explained on many occasions the steps taken to keep costs down and manage our fees ... These actions saved each member over \$130 in member fees, and we continue to look for additional savings without sacrificing the quality of our Association amenities or closing facilities."

Petitions list bylaw changes for SCW

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Ernie Prindle on Friday handed in more than 2,000 petition signatures — double the number required — to place on the March 27 ballot.

The Sun City West resident hopes to place three bylaw changes on the ballot that would limit the spending power of the Recreation Centers of Sun City West governing board and force the golf and bowling divisions to be self-supporting.

If 1,000 of the 2,068 signatures Prindle submitted are validated as being signed by Sun City West "owner members," the



DAVE MARTINEZ/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sharon Schomer, RCSCW governing board manager, signs a receipt acknowledging she had received a petition Friday, to change the organization's bylaws. The petition effort was led by Ernie Prindle, who is running for the RCSCW governing board.

petition drive will trigger an election that supporters maintain will bring about more financial accountability. Opponents contend the vote could have a devastating effect on the community and result in the closure of two golf courses along with

other major cuts.

"We wanted to make sure that we had more than enough so there wouldn't be any road blocks," Prindle said.

SEE BYLAWS, A5

BYLAWS

FROM A1

"And now the real work begins to educate the membership what this means and doesn't mean."

Sharon Schomer, RCSCW governing board manager, said 1,000 signatures must be certified through her office. She will spend the next week making sure all of the residents who signed the petitions are "owner members."

Once she reaches 1,000 signatures, the petitions are notarized, given to the Maricopa County Recorder's Office and placed on the ballot. Schomer hopes to verify them by the end of next week and then inform Prindle by phone about whether his proposed bylaw changes have made the ballot.

The Governing Board would then announce at its Jan. 25 meeting whether the bylaw changes have made the March 27 ballot. The issue would have to receive a majority vote, meaning 50 percent "plus one."

According to the petitions that have been circulating in Sun City West for weeks, each

proposed bylaw change will be voted on separately.

The first would cap at 8 percent any annual increase in dues for owner members. Currently, the bylaws permit a 15 percent dues increase while the state allows for associations to hike dues up to 20 percent.

The second would require that all direct operational and maintenance costs for the recreation, golf and bowling divisions are covered by operating revenues generated by each division.

Finally, voter approval would be required for any project more than \$100,000 "that change, modify or repurpose the use of, or that expands or increases the square footage of an Association facility or structure."

RCSCW officials said there would be a \$1 million cut in the budget and the closure of two golf courses if the voters approve the bylaw change pertaining to the recreation, golf and bowling divisions.

Prindle said the bylaw changes would freeze membership dues for three years if approved by voters.

Should the bylaw questions be approved

to go on the ballot, they will join a list of candidates running for three seats on the RCSCW board.

Seven candidates have been certified for the election: Diane Cheney, Louis Mancuso Jr., Marion Mosley, Prindle, Nolan Reed, Chuck Reott and David Wilson.

Owner members can pick up an absentee ballot from the RCSCW offices beginning March 5, which must be returned by March 26.

Reporter Zach Colick contributed to this report.

Mitchell Vantrease can be reached at 623-876-2526 or mvantrease@yourwestvalley.com.

Golfers tee off on RCSCW petition drive

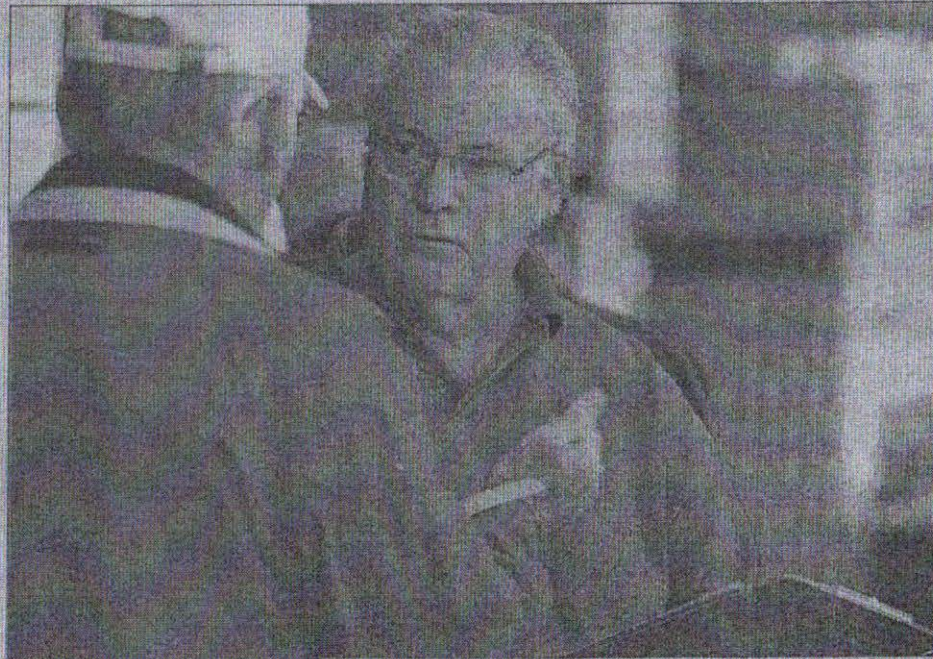
ZACH COLICK
DAILY NEWS-SUN

A petition drive to change several Recreation Centers of Sun City West bylaws that could force the closure of two community golf courses was met with stern opposition Wednesday at Grandview Golf Course.

Shouting ensued on several occasions near the golf course clubhouse as more than a handful of Sun City West residents showed their dissatisfaction with Ernie Prindle, who is attempting to round up 1,000 signatures by Jan. 15 in order to put the matter to a vote on the March 27 ballot.

Prindle's proposed bylaw changes include voter approval for any capital improvement project more than \$100,000 and membership dues increases of more than 8 percent. Currently, RCSCW's bylaws allow

SEE BYLAWS, A4



NICK COTE/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Don Holmes draws criticism while collecting signatures Wednesday at Grandview Golf Course for a petition to put proposed bylaw changes on the RCSCW ballot for the March election.

BYLAWS

FROM A1

for a 15 percent annual increase, while the state allows associations to hike dues up to 20 percent.

But one major bylaw revision calls for the corporation's recreation, golf and bowling divisions to become self-sufficient entities, meaning all operational and maintenance costs would have to be covered by revenues generated from each.

Prindle, former chief financial officer for the RCSCW, argues that a new policy framework be developed by RCSCW to ensure "responsible financial management" so that each division is self-sustaining and all dues-paying members benefit equally.

"We have to look at this like any other business," he said. "We're throwing more and more of a burden on the membership dues, and that's not right."

With the downturn economy forc-

ing many fixed-income seniors to watch what they spend, Prindle said he believes it isn't fair that annual RCSCW membership dues continue to increase and that officials determine the extra cash be shuffled to struggling divisions unable to generate new income because of decreased play.

The golf division has struggled financially during the past several years and will face a \$900,000 deficit in the RCSCW's \$8.4 million budget. RCSCW card holders pay \$376 annually to enjoy all the community perks, including use of the recreation centers and golf courses.

RCSCW officials estimate the proposed bylaw changes would require a \$1 million cut in general services, including the closure of two golf courses, as well as the elimination of overseeding, weed control, fertilization and the Special Events division.

But a majority of residents at Grandview Golf Course weren't buying what Prindle was attempting to persuade them to believe.

At one point, Chuck Woelfel got into a screaming match with some of Prindle's supporters before he began discussing the proposed bylaw changes in detail with anyone in earshot.

Woelfel said Sun City West residents buy into the age-restricted community to enjoy all the perks it has to offer and that constantly pouring money into renovations and upkeep brings increased value to their homes. So, he doesn't agree with the notion that, just because some residents don't utilize the recreation centers and golf courses, they shouldn't have to pay any associated fees.

"That man (Prindle) uses in-your-face tactics and is infuriating this community," Woelfel said. "He is a vindictive person and is going about this the wrong way."

If Prindle's bylaw changes make the ballot and are later approved, Diane Cheney said it would be the "beginning of the end for Sun City West" as the closure of two golf courses would destroy homeowners' property values and blight the community. Cheney, a Sun City West resident, believes Prindle is "carrying a grudge" and is being vindictive toward his former employer.

Prindle, who served as CFO for three years, was fired in 2010 from RCSCW after having a falling out with the governing board.

"He's carrying a grudge and has an agenda," Cheney said.

John Cash said he moved to Sun City West because of the affordable amenities. Cash said the \$376 annual card holder fee, which amounts

to a little more than \$1 per day, is a value for anyone, regardless of whether they utilize everything that's offered in the community.

"Why screw up a good thing?" he said. "This would change the way of life in Sun City West. We don't want that."

Sun City West resident Dan Gleason also doesn't care for Prindle's petition.

"Why would you attack the golf courses?" he said. "They are the biggest draw in Sun City West."

Nonetheless, Prindle, with clipboard in hand, was confident he would receive 1,000 signatures — and then some — before the Jan. 15 deadline. Prindle said those opposing his effort are hearing innuendo from RCSCW officials and that the governing board's five-year financial plan "is structured to do whatever is needed to support golf, no matter how high membership dues have to be increased."

Of the \$370 collected annually from each RCSCW card holder, Prindle said \$100 is set aside to support the golf division. Prindle contends a 34 percent membership-dues increase will take place during the next four years, meaning residents will eventually be paying \$497.

"How do we change that and make it fair for the population that doesn't golf?" he said. "I've heard from a lot of folks who said they would have never bought a home here in the first place if they knew their dues would increase so greatly."

Zach Colick can be reached at 623-876-2522 or zcolick@yourwestvalley.com.

RCSCW details card switch to digital

STAFF REPORT

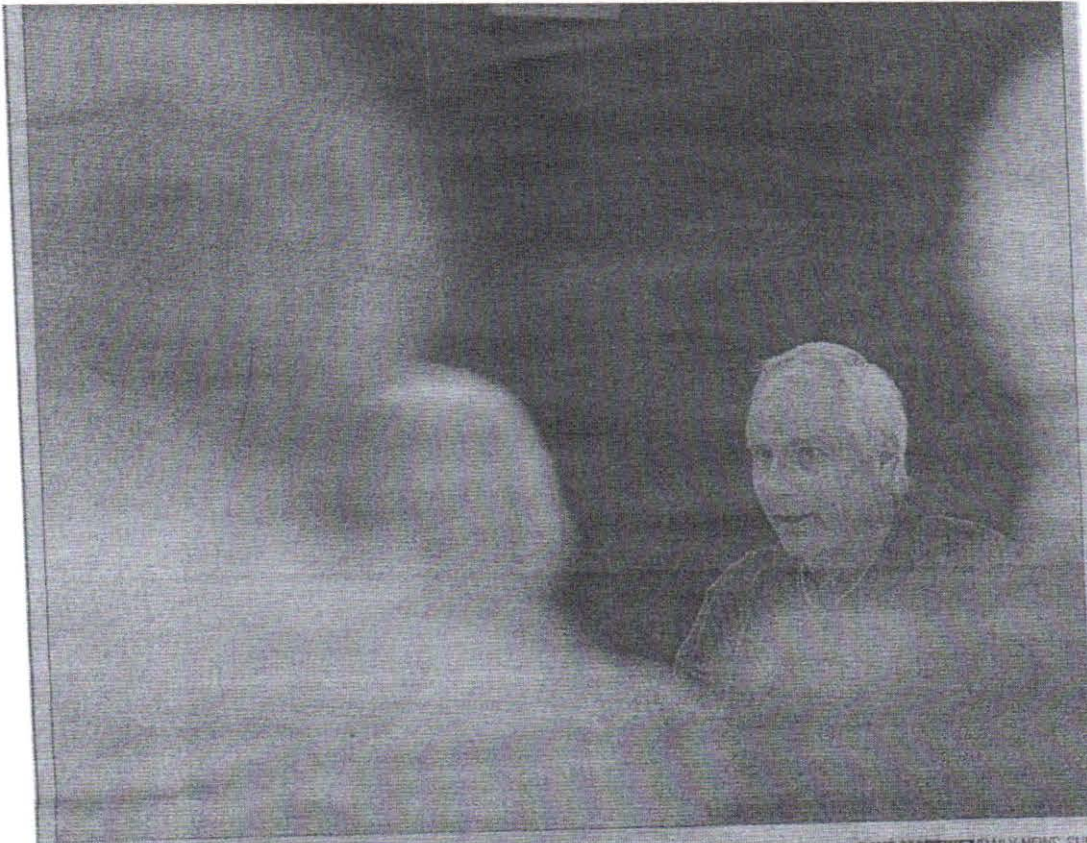
The Recreation Centers of Sun City West has introduced digital guests cards "in an effort to save money on printing costs and increase convenience for members," officials said Monday.

Pink guest cards will still be accepted until all the slots are used, but residents can start buying the new digital cards now, officials said.

Beginning Dec. 1, only digital guest cards will be available for purchase.

"With the digital cards, you don't have to worry about losing your pink card or running it through the wash," Rec Centers officials stated in a release. "In addition, you can put money on your account in increments as low as \$1 — no need to spend \$27 if your guest is only in town one day. Funds must be put on in whole dollars, from \$1 to \$200, using cash or check only."

Each guest will cost \$2.70 a day, just as they do now. Under the new system, instead of stamping the pink card, the monitor will swipe the rec card, take \$2.70 off the account, and print a receipt. That receipt is good for that guest for the rest of the day, officials said. Digital guest cards will be sold at Member Services during regular business hours and at Grandview Pro Shop, seven days a week. Pink guest cards will continue to be sold at the Sports Pavilion on weekends and holidays only through Nov. 30. Beginning Dec. 1, the digital cards will be available only at Member Services and Grandview Golf Course. Guest cards in any format will no longer be sold at the Sports Pavilion after Nov. 30.



DAVE MARTINEZ/DAILY NEWS-SUN

RCSCW Governing Board President Dave Moeller is seen through the crowd during Thursday's meeting at the R. H. Johnson Recreation Center.

RCSCW nixes costly room

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The debate about a \$3.5 million multipurpose room in Sun City West is over.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West governing board voted Thursday against pursuing the idea, which generated a good deal of heat, particularly from those who thought the project would be a waste of money. The vote was 7-1.

Board President Dave Moeller said he's happy the vote brings to an end a debate that he said has kept

RCSCW directors from doing their jobs.

Patricia Tomlin, another board member, said she didn't realize the proposed project would bring so much attention.

Before she was elected to the board, Tomlin said she sat in a meeting where former directors turned down a proposal to set aside \$100,000 for an eventual gym.

"I thought the issue was over then," Tomlin said.

For two months, residents have voiced their concerns over the building,

which would have replaced a fenced-in patio area at Beardsley Recreation Center. The proposal was the idea of a few residents and had to be explored as an option according to RCSCW bylaws.

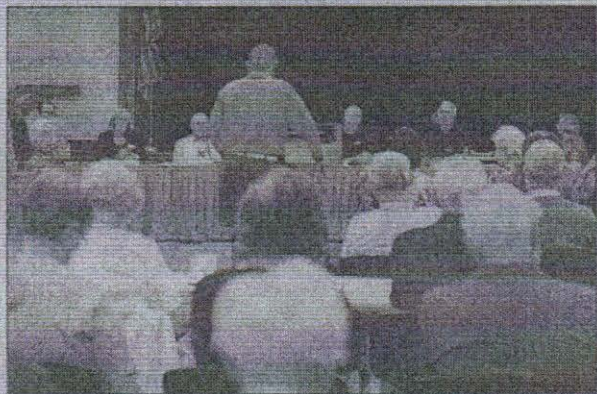
Director Pat Canfield said she's had reservations about the gym from the beginning.

"I just don't think that we can be all things to all people," Canfield said. "If basketball players here are looking for a facility like

SEE MULTIPURPOSE, A5

Friday, October 28, 2011

www.yourwestvalle



DAVE MARTINEZ/DAILY NEWS-SUN

A resident who identified himself as John Pike speaks to the Sun City West Governing Board during a meeting at the R. H. Johnson Recreation Center on Thursday.

MULTIPURPOSE

FROM A1

this, then there are surrounding communities who have underutilized gyms where they can go if they're looking for indoor play."

Lake Westphal, the lone member who voted in favor of the project, said he still believes the gym is essential to Sun City West, especially with the changing demographics.

And he hopes they could revisit the idea in the future. Westphal was a part of a committee that studied the idea of the multipurpose gym.

"I felt like this was important from beginning, and I still believe it is," Westphal said. "And hopefully, this will come around again for us."

Scanned

Friday, April 16, 2010

Sun City West hoists new flag

ERIN TURNER
DAILY NEWS-SUN

"Up it goes!" said Lake Westphal, a Recreation Centers of Sun City West board member and Properties Committee chair, as he admired a new community flag being raised into the bright morning sky.

Surrounded by board members from the Rec Centers and Property Owners and Residents Association, as well as Rec Centers staff, the white flag with golden setting sun and words "Sun City West" underneath was hoisted up the flag pole in front of the R.H. Johnson Sports Pavilion Thursday morning. It flies just under the Arizona state flag and next to the United State flag as a symbol of the community.

And just like that, the brief ceremony and 10-second raising brought an end to a decade-long quest of several organizations, boards and determined individuals to have a unifying marker for Sun City West.

"It shows unity. It shows that we're proud of our city here and what we have and we want everybody to know how great this place is," said RCSCW board member Paul Piper. "We hope that it will bring the community together to make them more proud of where we live."

The story of the flag began more than a decade ago when Edson Allen, a Visitors Center volunteer, helped create new brochures about the community. He solicited help from retired graphic designer Paul Turley, another resident, who came up with the sunburst logo to spice up the brochures. Eventually, Allen said he tried to have Sun City West organizations adopt the symbol as an official community logo but was unsuccessful in his efforts.

PORA board members, too, have attempted to institute a communitywide symbol or flag. The RCSCW board again took up the charge about two years ago, which resulted in the official flag, Westphal said.



MOLLIE J. HOPPES/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Warren Melchert, left, an RCSCW Properties Committee member and RCSCW board member Lake Westphal and Dusty Bowenkamp, PORA president, show off the new Sun City West flag Thursday before a brief ceremony.

In total, six flags were raised Thursday at locations around Sun City West, including PORA offices and the entrance to the community on Bell Road. Eventually, smaller versions of the flag will be sold at the Village Shop at the R.H. Johnson Rec Center and Visitor's Center, officials said.

"The flag represents a lot of hard work and a lot of perseverance — 11 years work of perseverance to get this done," Piper said. "We are very proud of this. We want to see it flying on homes and on the back of every golf car."

PORA President Dusty

the community autonomy. "I think it represents the whole community and that we're different than all the other Sun Cities out there. We're very

unique and we're very proud to have a symbol that displays Sun City West," she said.

"We think it shows everything is here — everything under the sun."

"We hope (residents) will be very excited to have something that represents Sun City West."

DAILY NEWS-SUN

WEDNESDAY, JULY 20, 2005

RCSCW completes Bocce ball court revamp

SPECIAL TO THE DAILY NEWS-SUN

Bocce ball players — ready your pallinas.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West will finish resurfacing its 14 bocce courts this week in time for fall games.

Ten of the courts are finished, with the final four being completed by today, which is expected to come as good news to Sun City West's approximately 1,000 Bocce Club members.

Workers are removing the worn-out carpeting and old adhesive at the R.H. Johnson Rec Center courts. They will fill cracks and add a new artificial turf surface that will last longer than the old carpet.

The carpeting was last replaced in anticipation of Sun City West's 25th anniversary celebration in 2003. The carpet lasts about three years, but by the third year, its oily Olefin base starts seeping through, coating bocce balls and players' hands.

Rec Centers officials have studied various materials to find one that would work better than the carpet.

After learning Sun City was getting about five years out of its artificial turf, the RCSCW decided to try a similar material.

About five months ago, the centers arranged to have vendors install high-grade turf, which costs about \$1,800 per



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Workers use a machine to grind off adhesive on the Bocce ball courts at the Recreation Centers of Sun City West before repairing cracks and installing new turf.

court, and a rubber surface, which costs about \$8,000 per court, on two open-play bocce courts to see which would hold up better in Arizona's summer sun and which one players preferred.

While the turf is expected to last five years, the rubber surface can last 15 to 20 years. Both test courts have held up well in the sun, said Rec Center employees, and both surfaces have repelled divots from players lobbing their balls. However, players found the balls traveled too fast on the rubber surface, making their shots harder to control. That factor combined with the cost convinced the centers to install the turf on the remaining 12 courts.

Funds to replace the bocce surfaces were approved in the Rec Centers' 2005-06 budget.

The rubber material will be kept on the one court so centers' staff can continue watching how it holds up in the sun. A few players say they prefer that court because they enjoy the challenge of the faster surface.

In addition to the bocce courts, some of the rubber material was placed at the front of each mini-golf hole to prevent wear and tear from heavy use in those areas.

Among other projects, Rec Centers staff members are in the process of getting bids to build three pickleball courts at R.H. Johnson Rec Center to meet the needs of the growing Pickleball Club.

How to play Bocce ball

This is an ancient game whose modern adaptation resembles bowling.

- Find a flat, level playing surface (packed dirt, gravel or grass are ideal). A regulation bocce court is 76 feet long and 10 feet wide.

- Divide players into two teams of one, two or four players each. Each team gets four balls, divided equally among the players.

- Have a player from the starting team stand behind the foul line and throw the small ball, or "pallina," toward the opposite end of the playing surface.

- Let the player throw one of the larger balls, or "boccia," trying to get it as close to the pallina as possible without touching it.

- Players from the opposing team take turns throwing their balls until one of the balls stops closer to the pallina than the starting player's ball. If they fail to do so, the starting team tries to outdo its first attempt.

- Starting players take their second turn if the opposing team gets closer to the pallina than the starting team without using all of their balls.

- Continue until all eight balls have been thrown. The team with the closest ball gets one point for each of its balls that are closer to the pallina than the other team's closest ball.

DAILY NEWS-SUN

FRIDAY, JAN. 28, 2005

No vote cans RCSCW project funds

MITCHELL VANTREASE
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The RCSCW governing board rejected two bylaw changes Thursday, pulling the plug on \$1.5 million for improvements to Beardsley Recreation Center and upgrades in the golf and bowling divisions.

The bylaw changes for the Recreation Centers of Sun City West require a unanimous vote. Eight board members voted for the changes, but Director Carolyn Jennings blocked the effort, saying she believed "the wording in those bylaws seemed too loose. We have to come back to the table because the asset preservation fees shouldn't be used for the reserve fund."

Board members are expected to come together again for another vote after more discussions.

The bylaws state that the

From A1

divisions be "operated as independent and self-sufficient financial divisions." However, the proposed change would make it clear that the divisions be allowed to use the reserve funds, but not each other's funds.

The vote prohibits the RCSCW from spending \$624,000 for new scorers and pinsetters in the bowling division — Phase 4 of the Beardsley project — and \$400,000 in major repairs and refurbishment for golf.

"We're in a crazy situation now and hope we can pull it together," said Ronni Hoover, a board member who chairs the association's budget and finance committee.

will vote to pass."

Caldwell said he's surprised that the board members didn't have a unanimous vote. He said they have been working on the revisions for a while and believed everything was clear.

Before the decision, Jennings wanted to make an amendment to the bylaws. But they were denied because they weren't approved by the board's attorney.

In addition, Caldwell apologized for the RCSCW governing board's actions.

"I'd like to apologize," he said. "We need team players who will understand the whole picture."

The board will meet soon to discuss the bylaws again, Hoover said.

The board had to authorize a change in the bylaws, which were amended with an attorney at a workshop Jan. 14, in order for money in the reserve fund to be used. Board President Ray Caldwell said there must be an unanimous vote for approval of a bylaw.

Although Director Bob Beaupre voted in favor of the bylaws, he said he didn't believe they were clear.

"We could have accepted our lawyer's ruling and asked for legal affairs to review and make recommendations for the change," he said. "I do not think that this board would carry through on a destructive path, but because the actions would be so devastating to our community I will not call your hand and

"I believe that we all have to cool off right now," she said.

Hoover said one of the projects will be in immediate jeopardy if they don't make a decision about the bylaws by next month. The RCSCW board has a binding contract with Brunswick Lanes to make an initial payment for new scorers and pinsetters.

Marty Bell, a member of technology committee and RCSCW board candidate, said he's disappointed the board couldn't make a unanimous vote.

"It's a sad day because I have to tell thousands of people that things aren't fixed yet," he said. "If you were my kids, I'd tell you to go to your room until you've come out with a positive answer."

DAILY NEWS-SUN

THURSDAY, SEPT. 2, 2004

Insurance rates for RCSCW will not jump in lawsuit's wake

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The settlement of a former general manager's lawsuit shouldn't cause a spike in RCSCW's insurance rates, one official said.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West's former insurance carrier, the Chubb Group, recently settled a breach of contract and constructive discharge case with Jon Cannon, a former general manager who worked only a few months in that position before quitting.

Centers officials have so far not released details of the settlement, but current General Manager Mike Whiting told the Daily News-Sun previously that the centers would have to pay its \$2,500 deductible in effect at the time the lawsuit was filed. Whiting said he hasn't received any new information on the settlement.

RCSCW President Ray Caldwell did not return calls for comment.

Earl Mackert, who heads the centers' insurance subcommittee, said RCSCW has not yet paid any money to Cannon, but he believes the \$2,500 would be the limit of Sun City West's liability. Chubb is responsible for any other legal fees.

"It was surprising that they settled for a minimal amount," Mackert said.

The other plus for RCSCW, he said, is that the settlement likely means Sun City West won't face increased insurance rates because of the lawsuit.

"Anything we can settle is helpful to D&O — first that

we can settle and settle minimally, and secondly that we don't have any more," he said.

D&O is directors and officers liability insurance, meaning the coverage for board members acting in their official capacity.

The new trend in the industry is not a deductible such as that offered under Chubb but a "retention," which is the liability the insured is willing to retain in the event of a lawsuit. For example, under its new carrier, CNA, the centers' retention is \$15,000, Mackert said. The retention is paid per claim as expenses accrue.

"It's not unusual in the industry, for instance, with D&O coverage, which is your directors and officers liability, to have \$50,000 retentions and more because the trade-off is the amount you'd have in your premium," he said.

The higher the retention, the lower the premium. Another trend nationwide is that those retention numbers are on the rise.

The centers saw a spike in its D&O coverage when it switched from Chubb to CNA, but that was because Chubb had offered a three-year policy and "lost their shirt" with pricey costs involving other clients. The coverage RCSCW had at the time is no longer offered.

"Without a doubt, we're paying considerably more, but it would have gone up regardless," said Mackert.

Still, the centers saved money in its overall insurance package under CNA. "We were able to work out a very good package," he said.

The future also looks good for Sun City West, provided no new lawsuits are filed and the couple that are pending aren't costly, said Mackert.

"We had a big flurry at one

time, a lot of action going on with disputes with the governing board. Right now, I think we're in a reasonable position," he said. "I don't know of anyone out there

that's getting a better retention level than we are."

The centers' insurance policy runs through June 30, but officials are negotiating to change the term date to the

end of March to facilitate budget planning, Mackert said.

Katy O'Grady may be reached at 876-2514 or kogradu@aztrib.com.

SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT

June 2, 2004

RCSCW adopts \$13.7 million plan Fee hikes for golf, bowling and memberships dues

By Cecilia Chan

Independent Newspapers

Sun City West residents will pay higher fees for everything from recreation dues to golf and bowling under a \$13.7 million budget that takes effect July 1.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West Governing Board voted 8-1 May 27 to approve the 2004-05 spending plan, which saw the biggest increase for new homebuyers. Homebuyers will pay \$1,700, up from \$900, for a one-time

asset preservation fee, which helps pay for repairs, replacement and improvement to the community's facilities and equipment.

"I think it's unfair. I think it's unequitable," said board member Richard Ahlgren, the sole dissenter. "I think it's too much money."

Mr. Ahlgren said real estate agents have told him the fee increase would definitely impact the sale of homes in Sun City West.

See Fee — Page 3

Fee

Continued From Page 1

Board President Ray Caldwell, however, said he has spoken to three Realtors who said the fee increase would have no impact because the housing market in Sun City West is so strong.

Mr. Ahlgren made the motion to increase the asset preservation fee to \$1,200 instead, but received no support from fellow board members.

Board member Barbara DePonte said the fees help ensure the community stays top-notch for the future. For new residents buying into Sun City West, the fee increase is negligible because their pensions and salaries have

kept pace, she said.

The only other alternative to generate revenue would be to assess residents, who would feel the financial pinch more, considering they are living on pensions set 20 to 30 years ago, she said.

"Today is a happy day for the board, for you will approve an untouchable budget," said 23-year resident Bill Dinn, a retired senior budget analyst. "But it's a sad day for residents and those moving in."

Mr. Dinn suggested the board raised the fees and dues gradually and in increments.

Fee hikes include recreation dues going up \$207 from \$180 and tenant membership cards increasing to \$150 from \$144. Fees for bowling and golf also will

increase.

President Caldwell said the fee increases are necessary to make up for past budgets that failed to address the community's needs.

"We believe it to be the first step to financial stability," he read from a statement. "We needed to recognize and address issues that for far too long, had either been ignored or not given the appropriate consideration."

duplicate

DAILY NEWS-SUN

THURSDAY AUG. 26, 2004

RCSCW spurns union bid

90 percent of employees turn down representation

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

RCSCW's employees this week beat down a new attempt to unionize their ranks.

Nearly 90 percent of 207 Recreation Centers of Sun City West employees who cast ballots in an Aug. 24-25 election voted against having Office and Professional Employees International Union Local 56 represent them. The results came just more than a year after a majority of two employee groups embraced the idea.

General Manager Mike Whiting attributes their change of heart to a successful campaign RCSCW has been conducting the last several weeks to convince employees they don't need a third party to represent their interests.

"That's the whole idea behind the campaign, to get the company's message out to employees that we can represent them better than a union," Whiting said.

The governing board in the past year has attempted to calm employees' fears and in a written statement reaffirmed bylaw provisions that the general manager is in charge of operating the centers, including hiring and firing, while the board sets policy.

From A1

Allegations of micromanagement were part of the problem a year ago when former General Manager George Grimstad voluntarily recognize the union without board approval. Some employees said at the time they feared rumors the governing board was going to institute layoffs or cut wages and benefits.

"It was quite unsettled a year ago," said Whiting, who was hired in February after Grimstad was fired. "There were a lot of things being said that are not being said now."

The centers' campaign, according to National Labor Relations Board rules, cannot include promises of raises or other benefits that weren't already promised by the association.

Whiting said the board, as part of this year's budget process, included 3 percent across-the-board raises, which employees will get in their second paycheck in September.

"We've given 3 percent raises for the last four years," he said.

But union organizers Tim Marquez and Maribel Martinez allege the centers not only made promises, but threatened some Hispanic workers with deportation if they voted for unionization.

The NLRB confirmed the union has filed two charges against the centers, one for firing an employee and one for harassment. The charges are under investigation.

"I'm not surprised with the turnaround that we had," Marquez said. "Basically they put the scare into them that, 'If you do this, you're going to be deported.'"

Whiting vehemently denied the allegations. "Regarding deportation, there is

absolutely nothing that could possibly have been said that way.

"I'm familiar with the charges. There were no specifics on it," Whiting added. "This is not unusual. In any campaign there's always six to 10 allegations. I don't view this as a problem."

Martinez said despite the election results, employees are now familiar with unionizing should they need it in the future.

"They know it only takes a phone call because that's what they did last time," she said. "These workers know how to organize, and I think they realize the power they have because this company had to spend so much money to fight them."

Marquez estimated RCSCW spent \$200,000 in legal fees fighting the union.

The union had been campaigning throughout August to represent more than 250 hourly employees, according to the centers. Of the 207 employees who voted, 25 wanted union representation and 182 did not. The results mean the union cannot attempt another reorganization for at least a year.

Linda Vedo, spokeswoman for OPEI Local 56, said the union is happy the employees were able to vote on the issue, and the union won't plan another election next year unless employees ask for it.

"It's what the workers wanted, and that's what we've said all along, whatever they want," she said. "I don't initiate anything. I only do what they ask me to do."

Vedo said she could foresee another turnaround in employees' sentiments over the next year if the board and management don't live up to expectations.

See UNION, A5

DAILY NEWS-SUN

FRIDAY, MAY 28, 2004

RCSCW may open to community neighbor

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City West residents may welcome future Fitzpatrick Ranch residents into their recreation centers if a facilities-use agreement between the two communities is drafted and approved.

Timothy Fitzpatrick, developer of the planned subdivision, has requested the agreement, said Recreation Centers of Sun City West Director Randy Fuller.

The long-delayed Fitzpatrick Ranch is finally moving forward at Deer Valley Road and Veterans Drive. The project includes 15 homes on 5 acres, with the possibility of another 5 acres being developed in the future.

At Thursday's governing board meeting, directors voted to forward discussion of the possible agreement to the centers' properties committee.

In other action Thursday:

- The board voted to have the properties committee look into the possibility of having Del Webb Corp. and Pulte Homes build on two empty lots at the end of Sonora Lane.

Fuller said the lots had been kept vacant but landscaped and gated in order to provide a company called PMI with access to its adjacent property. PMI had sued Maricopa County, saying the county rendered its land useless by not providing access. To settle the issue, the county purchased PMI's property.

"In the meantime, Del Webb built

the gate," Fuller said.

To prevent the gate from being opened in the future, which would allow more traffic through Deer Valley Drive, Fuller proposed the board look into possible uses for the lots, such as having Del Webb build two homes on the lots and eliminating the gate.

- The board unanimously approved two policies regarding Controlled Neighborhood Play for golf and bowling.

The policies allow the general manager to accept residents from area age-restricted communities to golf and bowl in Sun City West, rather than requiring the board to approve separate motions each time new communities are developed. In previous, separate actions, the board has invited residents from Sun City, Sun City Grand, Corte Bella and other such communities to participate in the programs.

One resident questioned whether 19-year-olds living in retirement communities could take advantage of the program. Assistant General Manager Barbara James said that was a possibility, but board President Ray Caldwell said that hasn't been a problem with the Controlled Neighborhood Play program already in place.

Director Cher Petersen, who chairs the golf committee, added, "We want any color green. If they're 19 and older, come and play," she said.

General Manager Mike Whiting said a list of acceptable communities will be updated to make sure

starters know which communities qualify. He also said he hopes the broadened program will help fill the community's courses on the weekends.

"That's the peak time anywhere but here in Sun City West," he said.

- The board reversed a decision made recently to open the walking track at the northwest end of Sun City West to multi-modal users. Fuller announced that further study has shown the track to be safe only for walkers, rather than the bikers, in-line skaters and joggers who had been invited to use it in the last several weeks.

- The board approved naming its attorney, David Ronald, as its statutory agent. The agent is named in filings with the Secretary of State's office as the person to whom all legal correspondence is directed.

- The board approved first readings of several proposed policies that will be brought up for a vote at the June 17 meeting. The policies deal with "retained earnings," which are surplus funds remaining in a division's coffers at the end of a fiscal year; circumstances under which property owners' dues and fees may be refunded; requiring the general manager to report the centers' financial performance four times a year; and defining how maintenance labor and costs will be distributed among the divisions.

"These were really just cosmetic changes to these policies," said Director Ronni Hoover, who chairs the budget and finance committee.

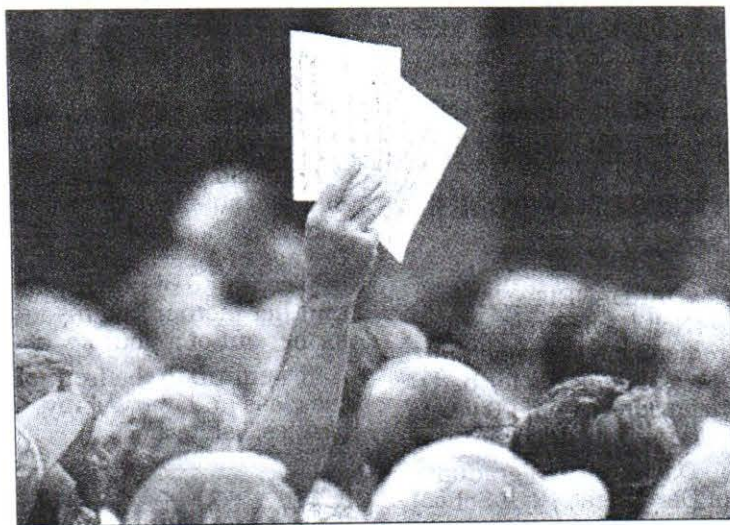


STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City West residents, left, listen to specifics about the upcoming budget proposal at the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center. Below, a resident holds up questions for George Grimstand, general manager of the Recreation Centers of Sun City West, during Friday's meeting.

Budget breakdown

Golf tops list of concerns in Sun City West



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

MICHAEL MARESH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City West residents Friday morning saw a first glimpse of the RCSCW's proposed 2003-04 budget.

Hundreds of residents showed up to listen to George Grimstad, general manager of the Recreation Centers of Sun City West, provide details about the proposed budget totaling more than \$14 million. He also answered written questions from residents for about an hour.

Although the presentation was generally well received by residents, they still had some questions, particularly about

golf.

Grimstad admitted golfers will have to pay more for golf next year.

"There is a small increase," he said. "It comes out to \$2 a round, and that is not substantial.

"This is a golfing community," he added. "Somehow we have to pay for our horses. We would like to give you unlimited golf for \$10, but there are expenses."

Golf fees would not be the only increase under the proposed budget.

Annual membership fees would increase from \$174 to \$180, contributions to the facility reserve would

increase from \$14 to \$15, guest activity cards would increase to \$20 from \$10, resale transfer fees would rise from \$150 to \$170, asset-preservation fees would increase from \$845 to \$900, and tenant activities cards would increase from \$136 to \$144.

On the golf front, current members owning \$825 K Cards are allowed to golf for a \$6 surcharge. Under the budget proposal, people could choose from three options: \$1,125 for 50 rounds with no surcharge, \$825 with a \$6 surcharge for 50 rounds, and \$625 with a \$10

OVER

See GOLF, A5

From A1

surcharge.

The major increase, according to Director Patrick McBurnett, would come after the first 50 rounds are used.

In the budget proposal, residents playing 51 to 100 rounds of golf would be charged \$12 a round. Those playing 101 to 150 would pay \$8 per round. Any additional rounds would cost \$4. Unlimited golf passes would cost \$1,900.

Residents are now paying \$6 a round regardless of the number played as long as they have purchased a Kachina Card for \$825.

McBurnett said he does not like the golf-fee proposal and will propose to Grimstad an \$800 card with surcharges of \$5, as well as a \$150 range-pass card.

"I think \$1,125 is abominable," he said. "How are you going to sell (passes) for \$1,125 if you can't sell them for \$825?"

Hillcrest Golf Club of Sun City West is selling golf passes for \$999, meaning the centers is shooting itself in the foot with its proposal, McBurnett said.

"We would lose 100 to 200 golfers to Hillcrest," he said.

Former governing board member Dudley Gibson, who once chaired the RCSCW golf committee, said he believes all rounds should be sold for \$10.

Gibson said the budget



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

General manager George Grimstad answers questions from residents about the upcoming budget for the Recreation Centers of Sun City West during a meeting Friday at R.H. Johnson Recreation Center.

proposal was well done, but added, "What I want to object to is where the prices are going."

Resident Mal Jacobson also said the presentation gave members a lot of information, but added questions remain about the golf costs.

"I think the price is a concern," she said. "I want to know what it is going to cost me before I renew anything."

Jay Fernstrom thought the presentation was insightful.

"It was very articulate and

thorough," he said. "(Grimstad) seems to know what he is doing." Fernstrom added the proposal seemed to address the community's needs.

Resident Carl St. Bernard said the presentation was informative, but it is not final yet as the board still needs to vote on the budget.

"We just found out how things are going," he said.

Michael Maresh can be reached at 876-2513 or [mmaresh@aztrib.com](mailto:mmmaresh@aztrib.com).

SCW lawsuits moving ahead

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Intertwined lawsuits involving the Recreation Centers of Sun City West may be about a year from trial, but they're inching forward.

The centers are involved in at least three lawsuits, two of which sprang from circumstances involving Jon Cannon, a former general manager. The third involves an injury that allegedly occurred at Grandview Golf Course.

In June, 2003, Cannon sued RCSCW, then-board member Bob Finn and Finn's wife, Kaye. Cannon, who quit two months after becoming general manager, alleges two counts of constructive discharge and one count of breach of contract against the centers and Finn. He also is pursuing defamation and libel counts against the Finns.

Citing personal reasons, Finn resigned from the board March 25 but remains a defendant in the case.

According to Maricopa County Superior Court records, a new lawyer was substituted for the Finns on March 3. Robert Bruno of Sanders & Parks had been representing the Finns and RCSCW. Bruno will continue as RCSCW's counsel while Rob Royal of Tiffany & Bosco has become the Finns' attorney.

Finn said the substitution occurred because Sanders & Parks "had a conflict of interest because of the letter the insurance company wrote."

The insurance company, the Chubb Group, which no longer insures the centers but is still responsible for coverage in this lawsuit, wrote in a July 9, 2003, letter to the centers that it might not cover some claims against Finn if he is found to have acted outside his duties as a board member.

"It is apparent that Robert Finn was acting outside of his capacity as an insured," the letter states. "As such, there may be no coverage for him under the terms of the policy."

Finn declined further comment except to say the Chubb Group is paying his legal expenses.

RCSCW board President Ray Caldwell confirmed the insurance company is paying Finn's legal costs. "We're not on the hook for a penny," he said.

Royal said it's not uncommon for a second lawyer to be appointed in cases where both a board and one of its directors are named in a lawsuit because of the perceived conflict of interest.

"What's best for one may not be best for the other, or at least perceived that way," he said.

Royal said he estimates the case could go to trial in about a year.

"At this point, the plaintiffs are not prosecuting the case very strongly," he said. "I'm sure they'll get back on track and do it pretty soon."

Cannon's attorney, Mark Kirkorsky, said the case is progressing "slowly" but the discovery process, in which information is gathered for trial, is about to begin.

Royal said the second case involving RCSCW could also go to trial in about a year since both were filed about the same time.

"They are interesting, intersecting cases," he said.

In the second case, a former RCSCW employee is suing RCSCW; former centers employee Mauryne Hall, a former centers spokeswoman; The Wester, which is a Sun City West newspaper; and one of the paper's reporters, Jack Hawn.

"It kind of goes back to the other case," Royal said.

The former employee, Florice Gustafson, and her husband, Lloyd, are alleging defamation because of a story written in The Wester after

Florice Gustafson appeared on a videotape Finn made in an effort to delve into allegations of financial



Hubbs

improprieties on Cannon's part. In the video, Gustafson said notes she took while employed with the centers point to questionable conduct by Cannon. The Wester story, Royal said, quoted RCSCW officials denying Gustafson's remarks.

"She made a number of comments that resulted in this article in which people said what Florice said in the video were out and out lies," Royal said.

Royal is representing the centers and Hall. Several former board members, including Finn, were originally named as defendants but Royal said they were never served in the case.

"They are not being pursued," he said.

On Dec. 9, 2003, Sun City West resident and District 4 Rep. Carole Hubbs filed a motion to dismiss the case against Hawn.

"I did it just because he asked me to," said Hubbs. "I've known him for a long time."

Hubbs said she didn't see a conflict of interest in filing a motion on behalf of a reporter who covers part of her district.

"I was just doing it to buy time. It's not my area of law," she said, adding she was trying to give Hawn time to file an answer to the complaint against him. She said she tried unsuccessfully multiple times to get a hold of the Gustafsons' attorney, Andrew Mankowski, to file for an extension.

Hubbs said she is now planning to help Hawn find a new lawyer.

"I'm not going to continue to represent him," she said.

Hawn said he's known Hubbs for years and didn't see a conflict in her intervention.

"I asked her about some assistance with another legal matter and at that same time I asked her to look into this one," Hawn said. "On my behalf, she filed for dismissal."

Pat Shannahan, state ombudsman-citizen's aide, said there is nothing in legislative ethics rules that would indicate whether Hubbs' intervention was a conflict.

"The ethics part is, I think, very complicated and difficult to understand if you get outside a financial conflict of interest," he said.

The House and Senate have committees that deal with specific ethics questions, Shannahan said.

Calls to Mankowski were not returned, but in his response to Hubbs' motion, Mankowski not only requests the motion be denied but asks the court to impose sanctions against Hubbs for violating legal procedures in the way she filed her motion.

"Mrs. Hubbs' motion to dismiss, taken as a whole, is frivolous, lacks merit, and is not based on the well-established legal theories and principles," Mankowski's response states.

The court has not yet ruled on the motion to dismiss.

The third lawsuit pending against the centers was filed in October 2002 by Sun City West resident Joy Streit, who was allegedly injured at Grandview Golf Course, where her husband, George worked. Caldwell said Streit bypassed barriers protecting a construction site and ignored the warnings of centers employees when she went through the construction to visit her husband.

"Against our advice she just walked right up there," Caldwell said.

Streit declined to comment and directed calls to her lawyer, James Brook. Brook did not return a call for comment. Trial has been set for 9:30 a.m. Aug. 25 in the Central Court Building and is expected to last four days according to court records.

July 29, 2003

Logging on

RCSCW in midst of computer system transfer

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Tucked in a former dressing room behind the R.H. Johnson Social Hall is Sun City West's communications and security future.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West's new computer system stored in the old dressing room and a nearby storage room will link the centers' facilities through fiber optics running underground through the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center parking lot and connecting with Qwest lines under R.H. Johnson Boulevard.

The centers is in the midst

of replacing its old computer and communication equipment, which dates back to 1996, with an upgraded, integrated \$370,000 system that will tie the golf courses and administrative offices together. The system also will provide the ability for future security features such as computerized card access to centers' facilities.

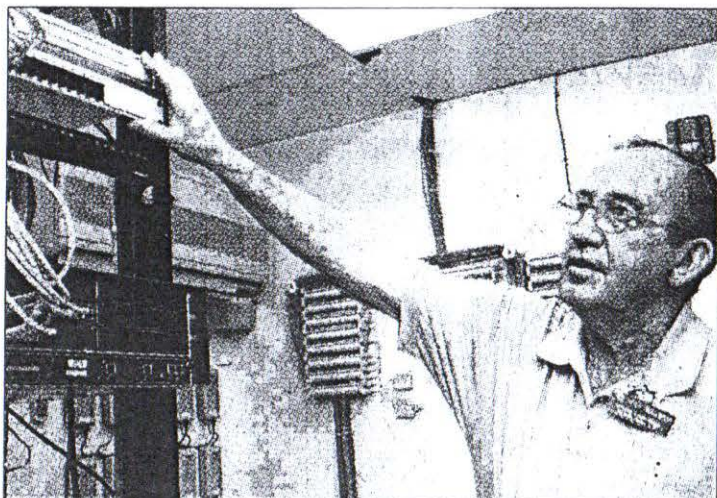
"We've actually been working on it for three years to get all of this together," said Roger Smallwood, the centers information systems manager who is overseeing the transition.

The board approved funding in March and the project



JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Roger Smallwood, the centers information systems manager who is overseeing a computer transition in Sun City West, shows off a new touch screen for staff members to speed up operation.



JOY LAMBERT-SLAGOWSKI/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Roger Smallwood points out the RCSCW's new translator and data communication system, also known as a wide-area network, RCSCW is installing.

is proceeding in three phases. Funds are coming from asset-preservation fees, which new homeowners pay when they move to Sun City West.

"The whole system is going to be up and functioning on Oct. 1," Smallwood said.

The centers current system is more than outdated by computer standards: Some of the system still operates on Disk Operating System, modems are used rather than a Digital Subscriber Line, and 11 separate servers are required.

It takes the pro shop managers about 45 minutes per morning per course — and Sun City West has seven golf courses — to transfer a batch of information to the accounting office. Credit-card

machines at the pro shops can't be used during that time, and the accounting office then must translate the information into its own format.

Membership information then has to be transferred from the administrative building to each of the pro shops.

"It's a very delayed system," Smallwood said. For example, a resident who signed up for golf on Friday might not be in the golf courses' computer records until Tuesday.

The new system will bring in personal computers with Windows XP and touch-screen functionality; a single major Windows 2003 server; Qwest fiber optics; and a

domain name specifically for the centers that allows multiple e-mail accounts to be added at no extra charge.

One of the first groups to notice the change is likely to be golfers, who will be able to log onto the Internet to schedule tee times. The centers currently use an automated phone system based at Pebblebrook. Players dial up and follow the automated system to request a tee time on a certain day. A lottery held four days prior to a specific day determines who gets which time that day.

With 1,200 tee times and about 8,000 golfers out of Sun City West's 33,000 residents, not everyone gets their

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pick, particularly in the busy season.

Smallwood said the Internet will allow residents to pick specific available times after the lotteries, or to enter themselves in the lotteries for advance requests.

"The phone system is intimidating as well as the computers to most of the older people," Smallwood said. "At each of the golf courses, we're going to have a computer kiosk."

The simplified computer reservation system at the kiosks will allow residents without Internet access to schedule tee times, with staff members in the pro shop available to help them as needed. For those hard of hearing, the Internet may be a welcome alternative to the phone system, Smallwood said.

"I would say we'll end up to be one of the only

automated communities," Smallwood said.

Phases one and two are about 70 percent complete, and staff training is set to begin next week.

"I think it's great myself," said Graham Abbott, information support specialist with the centers. "The old system is nothing compared to the fact you've got cheat sheets up on the screen" and the ability to call up tee times for all seven courses at once.

"There's so much more data available to you it's incredible," Abbott said.

The information aspect of the new system includes not only updated membership and golf data, but reams of demographic statistics not currently available.

The centers can track the age or sex of golfers or users of other amenities, when and how often they are playing, what's being purchased in the pro shops and on what days, and more. All of that

will allow for more precise budgeting and allocation of resources.

"You've got the budget and golf side of it that's saying, 'Wow, now I don't have to guess all the numbers,'" Smallwood said.

Phase three, which has not been scheduled yet, will bring a whole new realm of security potential to the community.

"Today, anyone can walk off the street and walk into any of our buildings," Smallwood said. "Our tennis courts are all wide open. We don't have monitors on it all the time. If Fred down in Surprise here wants to go in and he looks 55, no one's going to question him."

In the future, the centers can purchase additional equipment that will lock the facilities unless the user swipes his or her membership card, Smallwood said.

The system also can provide picture identifications on pro-shop computers, as well

as security control should any parts of the community be gated in the future.

Prior to Smallwood's arrival four years ago, centers had no computer guru and was paying for 117 separate phone lines at \$65 a pop. The centers now pays about half that phone bill, and that will drop again in the near future under the new system.

Despite the \$370,000 price tag, the upgrades should save the centers money or bring in additional revenue as budgets are fine-tuned and wear and tear on facilities due to non-member use is reduced.

Smallwood said Sun City has had discussions with Sun City West about upgrading its own system in the future.

"I think the new system is going to be 16 times better than we had before," he said.

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RCSCW increases rental fees

Hike won't affect clubs

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Sun City West residents using centers facilities for family events will be paying more for the privilege.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City West governing board on Thursday approved a policy for facility-rental charges ranging from \$100 for a ramada at Beardsley Recreation Center to \$900 for the East and West Social Halls at R.H. Johnson or Summit Halls A and B at Palm Ridge.

"What we have found out in looking at the use of our facilities, there are some groups sponsored by a resident who are using our facilities for weddings, anniversaries, what have you, for residents outside of Sun City West," said Director Tom Cook, who was voted in as president later in Thursday's meeting.

There will continue to be no fee for chartered clubs to use the facilities.

The nonprofit, nonchartered clubs that regularly use the facilities, such as Sun City West's many state and social clubs, will essentially remain the same. Those clubs pay a minimal charge, but will now also pay a \$100 cleaning and damage deposit, refundable within seven days of the event if the facility is left in good order.

All uses of the facilities must be sponsored by a resident.

The centers compared its rental costs to other facilities such as those in Sun City and Sun City Grand, and found "we were well below the market," Cook said.

Speaking after the meeting, Cook said one group rented the Palm Ridge Summit Halls

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and the Acacia room for nearly 14 hours and paid only about \$500. "That's ridiculous," he said.

Director Patrick McBurnett wanted to take the new policy a bit further, charging chartered clubs for use of the centers' facilities. Director Carolyn Jennings objected, saying the facility use was one of the major attractions for people moving to the community.

"There are 101 chartered clubs in our community. They all use our facilities," she said. "They are not charged for those facilities. Those facilities were granted to them for joining the Recreation Centers of Sun City West."

Carl Fischer, vice president of Sun City West Owners for Open Government, a group that has been critical of the board's practices,

questioned the need for the new fee structure.

"Do you really need the money that bad? There has been no demonstration at all that we need the money in this budget," he said. "Why do we need the money?"

Fischer also asked directors to wait until July 1 when the new board is seated before taking any action. The board, however, voted on the issue Thursday with Directors Bob Finn and Patrick McBurnett against the proposal, and Jennings, Cook, Bob Hubbs, David Wilson, Stan Warner and Bob Beaupre favoring the change. Beaupre was attending the meeting telephonically.

In other action Thursday:

● Hubbs said the board is considering adopting an Asset Preservation Fee policy to allocate where money from new homeowners is used to maintain the centers'

property.

The tentative policy states 5 percent of the income will be allocated to the centers three reserve funds; 60 percent to the three divisions, golf, bowling and centers; and 15 percent to the directors' discretion. That leaves 20 percent as an administrative margin between the estimated total income from the fee and the authorized expenditures.

For the three divisions, the 60 percent will be allocated according to their book values: 30 percent to golf, 2 percent to bowling and 68 percent to the centers.

"Right now there is no control that says you couldn't spend 100 percent of the money on golf greens or whatever," Hubbs said. "We feel this is ripe for abuse."

Hubbs urged residents to familiarize themselves with the proposed policy before it

comes before the board for formal action.

● Jennings, chair of the water committee, said plans are under way to start a one-year trial of using treated effluent to water Stardust Golf Course.

The centers has 3,000 acre-feet of effluent available for its use, but uses 4,300 acre-feet of groundwater each year on its golf courses. Use of the effluent is expected to reduce reliance on groundwater and result in water and pumping savings.

"The centers is dedicated to the conservation of water," Jennings said.

● Warner said the centers is planning an \$800,000 renovation of the Beardsley arts and crafts building and aquatics center. Construction is expected to start before the end of the year.

Warner also said the centers has made improvements

to its properties following an Americans with Disabilities Act investigation. Most of the improvements are completed and some are in the works.

● Action on creating a contract for professional instructors who use centers' property was tabled so the chartered clubs committee could get some answers to insurance questions. The item will be brought before the board at a future date.

● General Manager George Grimstad left after his report, saying he had work projects to complete before leaving for vacation. His absence later in the meeting during the public comment period drew derision from members wishing to ask him about his controversial acceptance of a union.

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DAILY NEWS-SUN

FRIDAY, AUG. 22, 2003

NLRB cites rec board RCSCW officials charged

KATY O'GRADY
DAILY NEWS-SUN

The National Labor Relations Board has filed a new charge of unfair labor practices against the Recreation Centers of Sun City West, and more may be on the way.

RCSCW officials were notified of the charge Thursday, and the centers' law firm — Ridenour, Hinton, Harper, Kelhoffer, Lewis and Garth — has been retained to investigate the matter. Jim Hinton said he has not seen the charge yet and could not comment on it.

A press release from the RCSCW reads, "The charge concerns the action of governing-board members in questioning employees about union activities and continuing to engage in surveillance of union meetings or giving the impression that they are doing so."

Linda Vedo, office manager and recording secretary for Office & Professional Employees Local No. 56, the union from which two RCSCW groups have requested representation, confirmed the charge relates to "surveillance or the appearance of surveillance."

Specifically, she said, the NLRB was concerned with board member Barbara DuPonte questioning staff members in June about a union meeting. The governing board on June 26 changed its facility-rental policy, and DuPonte said residents asked her how much the union paid to rent the lecture hall for a meeting held after the charge.

DuPonte said she never used the word "union," but asked a staff member which organization had rented the Lecture Hall and how much it was charged. She said a staff member questioned her reasons for wanting the information, and she later got a call from board President Tom Cook telling her not to ask about union activities.

In a message recorded on DuPonte's answering machine, Cook stated, "You cannot talk to the employees

in any way about the union meetings, particularly the folks in the office." Cook could not be reached for comment.

DuPonte said the NLRB charge "is not justified," but said she is now leery of talking to employees.

"I've been kind of staying away," she said. "I am kind of afraid to talk to them ... if one little question got me this, I just asked a question. Things are so sensitive right now."

Vedo said although DuPonte's actions were the impetus for the charge, the union believes the board in other ways has been in violation of a previous settlement agreement on an earlier charge of unfair labor

practices.

"That one was just really overboard," she said, adding the charge names the entire board, not just DuPonte.

The union is looking for a cease-and-desist order, Vedo said: "That they just stop — that's all we wanted to begin with, and if they would just do that, it would be much better."

"I will possibly be filing more charges ... probably next week. It's still under consideration by the lawyer."

The union's involvement with the RCSCW employees began in June, when 39 of 43 employees signed cards authorizing the union to bargain on their behalf. About two weeks later, another 135 of 157 members signed up.

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Officials question RCSCW budgetary expenditures

DISPARITY: Per-member operational expense exceeds that of RCSC

MICHAEL MARESH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

As the governing board of the RCSCW prepares to vote on its 2003-'04 fiscal-year budget Thursday morning, a few directors are looking at what a similar nonprofit corporation spends.

The Recreation Centers of Sun City budget amount is nearly identical to the Recreation Centers of Sun City West proposal, though RCSC membership is 33 percent larger.

The RCSCW, with 28,000 members, proposed expenditures for the upcoming year of \$13.44 million, while the RCSC — with a membership of close to 42,000 — has a

IF YOU GO

- **WHAT:** Recreation Centers of Sun City West governing-board meeting
- **WHEN:** 8 a.m. Thursday
- **WHERE:** R.H. Johnson Social Hall, 19803 R.H. Johnson Blvd. in Sun City West

budget of \$13.91 million. The RCSCW's per-member operational expense is \$480, compared with \$332 for the RCSC.

RCSC directors declined to comment about the disparity.

Barbara DuPonte, RCSCW director elect, said the information obtained from the RCSC should have been made available weeks ago, so the board could have examined why the two organization's expenses are so different.

In a budget workshop on April

29, RCSCW General Manager George Grimstad said he had tried to gather information from the Sun City organization, but was unsuccessful.

"I was glad someone was able to get the information," DuPonte said. "I do know it was easy to get the information."

She said the comparison reveals the RCSCW should look at other communities with similar interests, and added Sun City in many ways mirrors Sun City West. DuPonte said the operational costs were most surprising because Sun City has seven rec centers to maintain, while Sun City West only has four.

"The board should explore it," she said, noting there is not much time to look into the matter, since

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OVER

SUN CITY and SUN CITY WEST RECREATION CENTERS FACTS and FIGURES		
Major Facilities	Sun City	Sun City West
Approximate population	42,000	28,000
Large multi-use centers	7	4
Hot spas	10	5
Swimming pools	8	6
Lake, boating and fishing	1	0
Bowling centers	2 (40 lanes)	1 (30 lanes)
Pool rooms	4 (45 tables)	1 (30 tables)
Golf courses	8	7
Restaurants run by recreation centers	2	0
Snack bars	5	6
Tennis courts	19	36
Fitness centers	5	4
Walk/jog tracks	2	2
Softball field	1	1
Major Budgeted Items	Sun City 2003 Operating Budget	Sun City West 2003/2004 Budget Proposal
Total expenditures	\$13,911,403.00	\$13,442,338.00
Operating expenditures		
per resident	332.22	480.03
Total golf expenditures	5,002,770.00	4,304,584.00
Total golf payroll, pr tax and benefits	2,900,482.00	3,809,742.00
Golf repairs and maintenance	503,566.00	1,137,807.00
Golf equipment leases	0.00	531,543.00

From A1

the board votes Thursday.

Director Bob Hubbs said bylaws dictate the governing board must vote on the budget in the month of May. And DuPonte said that is her understanding as well.

"Once the budget is voted on and approved, it is what we will have to work with," she said, noting new directors taking office in July will not be able to amend it.

DuPonte said it would be a good idea to wait to get more information, but that she knows that is not going to occur.

RCSCW board President Bob Finn said the issue of whether the vote should be delayed was briefly discussed, but it was decided the budget had to be voted upon in May. Finn said he believes the budget will get the required six votes, but added that the bylaws do not state specifically what happens if it is not approved.

Finn said since both Sun Cities are Del Webb communities, it seems logical to compare budgets.

"I just want them to

explain to me or justify why our payroll costs are not the same as theirs," he said.

Sun City golf payroll expenses count \$2.9 million against the RCSC's budget for its eight courses, while the RCSCW would pay out \$3.8 million in golf payroll for its seven courses.

"I thought it would be \$3 million to \$4 million more than us," Finn said when discussing the overall expenditures for the two associations.

"I was shocked," he added. "That threw up a red flag, to me."

Director Stan Warner, still reviewing the budget after being away for 10 days, said he has seen the comparison. Warner said all things, including hours of operation, should be explored before trying to compare the two associations' budgets.

"An awful lot of things need to be taken into consideration," he said. "We need to discuss apples-to-apples. We may be, but I would need more information."

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DAILY NEWS-SUN

TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2003

Fee plans garner criticism

RCSCW: Raising costs of guest cards debated

MICHAEL MARESH
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Chuck Ullman of Sun City West would prefer the Recreation Centers of Sun City West raise his annual assessment fee rather than increase his guest-card rate.

Guest cards, under the proposed budget the RCSCW governing board will vote on

May 22, would go from \$10 to \$20. Cards can be used up to 10 times. Once the quota is met, a new card must be purchased.

Ullman said a few of his grandchildren visited him and his wife, Betty, during spring break and often swam and played miniature golf and shuffleboard. He said each time one of his grandchildren took in an activity, his card was charged.

Ullman said he has no complaints with the \$10

charge, but opposes the rec centers doubling the fee.

"I think it is wrong," he said. "You want family and friends to come out to visit the place."

He said when his grandchildren come out, their friends often join them so going through a complete card in a day is not uncommon.

"That gets to be expensive," he said. "Twenty dollars a card with 10 activities. You can use a card in one day."

Ullman said the centers, under the proposed budget, would be hurting the promotional tool the amenities bring to nonresidents. He said the amenities attract new residents, but said visitors often will not know what exists because of the increased costs, resulting in less use by residents.

"I would rather pay another \$10 in annual fees," he said, noting that would be

See BUDGET, A5

From A1

a one-time cost.

"Raise rec fees," he said. "Don't nickel and dime us."

The RCSCW is expected to earn \$63,670 through guest cards for the current fiscal year. The 2003-04 proposed budget with the increase for guest cards purchased is \$103,640.

Governing board President Bob Finn said Ullman's situation is common among residents who entertain their grandchildren at the recreation centers.

"Anyone who has two to

five grandchildren visiting (them) would see a substantial fee increase," he said. Finn added if increases are needed, they should be marginal.

Finn said doubling guest-card fees could drive nonresidents away from the facilities.

Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association President Randy Fuller said the possibility exists residents could take visitors outside the community to entertain if guest-fee prices were to double.

"If I had guests here I would hope the fees would be reasonable and not

exorbitant," he said.

Fuller said PORA members have contacted the organization with concerns about the proposed budget.

"Some feel we must do nothing that will detract from our community," Fuller said. "Where will visitors go? It's the eye of the beholder."

Barbara DuPonte, a governing-board director-elect, said she buys at least five to six cards a year, and said the cost would still be a bargain if the fees were to double.

"I don't feel that is a sacrifice," she said. "I feel that is a fair fee."

Ullman's wife, Betty, said even if the fees were to double she would not take her grandchildren outside the community to entertain.

"It sounds like a lot, but think what it means," she said. To use one of the rec centers' facilities, guest fees would increase from \$1 to \$2 a person.

"I think it would be ridiculous to put up a big adieu on (the proposed increases)," she said. "There are other things I would (complain about)."

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