

SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT OF TWO COUNCILMEMBERS TO SERVE ON A COAL CREEK GOLF COURSE FOOD AND BEVERAGE CONCESSION SERVICES TASK FORCE TO PROVIDE ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE: OCTOBER 7, 2025

PREPARED BY: DIANA LANGLEY, CITY MANAGER

PRESENTED BY: DIANA LANGLEY, CITY MANAGER

SUMMARY:

Staff requests that the City Council create a task force comprised of two Councilmembers, the Recreation Advisory Board Chair, and staff to evaluate options to provide food and beverage services at Coal Creek Golf Course.

BACKGROUND / PRIOR DISCUSSIONS:

On September 23, 2025, staff provided a termination notice to the current food and beverage concessionaire at Coal Creek Golf Course (golf course) for breach of contract, effective immediately. This means that golfers and the public will have limited access to pre-packaged food and snacks and non-alcoholic beverages until another option is implemented.

The concessionaire was allowed to use the concession space for the purpose of offering food, non-alcoholic beverages, licensed alcoholic beverages, and related services to golfers and the public. A summary of the scope of services is as follows:

- Furnish and pay for all equipment, goods, labor, transportation, supervision and services necessary to provide food and beverage services.
- Maintain an adequate stock of food and beverage supplies, condiments, dishes, silverware, napkin dispensers, salt and pepper shakers, cups and glassware, and any kitchen utensils or bar equipment, as necessary to serve the demand for such items.
- Provide high quality food and beverages and a high level of public service, at fair and competitive pricing, relative to comparable restaurant facilities in Louisville.
- Provide “ready to go” options such as pre-made sandwiches, burgers, hot dogs, bratwursts, and other snack foods, to be sold in the restaurant and beverage/food carts.
- Provide and operate a minimum of one beverage/food cart in order to provide food and beverage services on the grounds of the golf course from April through October.

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- Submit bi-annually a list of all items to be sold in the concession space and proposed prices for all such items.
- April 1 to October 31, food service operation shall be open for business not less than one-half hour before the first available tee time and remain open until at least sundown (April 1 to October 31). November through March, the hours of operation are 10 am to no earlier than 2 pm daily, at a minimum, subject to closures due to inclement weather.
- Have the first option to provide luncheons or other meals for special occasions, including but not limited to league meetings and tournaments.
- Obtain and pay for all licenses necessary in connection with its operation, including but not limited to, a County Health Department Food Services Establishment inspection, a Hotel-Restaurant with Optional Premises Liquor License, and a City business registration and sales tax license.

The concessionaire paid the City a Concession Fee of \$30,000 annually plus 5% of revenues in excess of \$575,000. In addition, as an incentive to improve the concession space, the City agreed to offset a portion of the Concession Fee by 50% of the cost up to \$50,000 in capital improvements. Staff are not aware of any improvements being completed.

Prior Council Action

- **September 17, 2024** – Approval of Coal Creek Golf Course Food & Beverage Services Contract
 - Upon soliciting bids for food and beverage services, one complete bid was received from Western Golf Hospitality. The term of the contract was January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2028, with the option for up to two additional one-year terms.
- **December 15, 2020** – Approval of Coal Creek Golf Course Food and Beverage Concessionaire Contract
 - Contract expired with the vendor, Sweet Spot LLC. Staff issued a Request for Proposals for services and received two proposals. A contract was awarded to Western Golf Hospitality. Sweet Spot LLC had provided services since 2015.

ANALYSIS:

The termination of the food and beverage concessionaire creates an opportunity to re-evaluate food and beverage services at the golf course. While this is an operational issue, it is also a policy issue which will require Council consideration.

Staff is requesting that the City Council create a task force comprised of two Councilmembers, the Recreation Advisory Board Chair, and staff to evaluate options to

provide food and beverage services at the golf course. A sample of options that could be considered include:

- Issuing a Request for Proposals to solicit proposals for food and beverage concession services.
- City staff develop a business plan and hire staff to provide the services.
- Discontinue on-site food preparation and sale of licensed alcoholic beverages and only offer pre-packaged food and non-alcoholic drinks to patrons and the public.
- Enter a public-private partnership with a local restaurant to operate the concession space.

The benefits of creating a task force are:

- It will allow a small, focused group to dive deeply into the issue.
- The task force can include community members and business owners, to collect diverse perspectives and build consensus around options to recommend to the full Council for consideration.
- The task force will operate with a defined scope, timeline, and outcome to maintain momentum with a goal of having a plan in place prior to April 1, 2026.

Mayor Pro Tem Dickinson, Councilmember Hamlington, and Recreation Advisory Board Chair Norgard have volunteered to participate on the task force.

2025 COUNCIL WORK PLAN:

This item relates to Economic Vitality as food and beverage services are a significant factor in the operation of a golf course and experience for the patrons. Once patrons learn that full food and beverage services are not provided, they may opt to go to another golf course that provides such services.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Budgeted?: **No**

As noted previously, the prior contract required that the concessionaire pay the City a Concession Fee of \$30,000 annually plus 5% of revenues in excess of \$575,000.

The loss of food and beverage services at the golf course will likely impact revenues to the Golf Fund. In addition to the many golfers that reserve tee times daily, there are many special tournaments and other events scheduled at the golf course. If high quality food and licensed alcoholic beverages are not available, those patrons and organizations may elect to go elsewhere.

To entice people to continue to choose Coal Creek Golf Course, staff is evaluating lowering the fees, which will further impact revenues.

ALTERNATIVE(S):

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Do not establish a task force and direct staff to develop alternatives and bring them forward to the full City Council for consideration. This approach may take a longer amount of time to evaluate options as it could require multiple meetings to discuss alternatives and receive direction.

RECOMMENDATION:

Create a task force comprised of two Councilmembers, Mayor Pro Tem Dickinson and Councilmember Hamlington, Recreation Advisory Board Chair Norgard, and staff to evaluate options to provide food and beverage services at Coal Creek Golf Course.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Staff Presentation



Establish a Coal Creek Golf Course Food and Beverage Concession Services Task Force

October 7, 2025

Background

- September 23, 2025 – Current food and beverage concessionaire contract was terminated for breach of contract.
 - Utilized the concession space to offer food, non-alcoholic beverages, licensed alcoholic beverages, and related services to patrons and the public, including the operation of at least one food/beverage cart.
 - Operational period:
 - April 1 – October 31: Food service operation open for business 30 minutes before first available tee time until sundown
 - November – March: 10 am to 2 pm, subject to closures due to inclement weather
- With the termination of the contract, staff are offering pre-packaged food and non-alcoholic drinks.

Prior Council Action

- 2015 – Sweet Spot LLC provided food and beverage services.
- December 15, 2020 – Food and beverage contract awarded to Western Golf Hospitality.
- September 17, 2024 – Food and beverage contract awarded to Western Golf Hospitality, with a term through December 31, 2028, and the option for up to two additional one-year terms.

Analysis

- Termination of the food and beverage concessionaire creates an opportunity to re-evaluate food and beverage services at the golf course. Options may include:
 - Issue a Request for Proposals.
 - City staff develop a business plan and hire staff to provide the services.
 - Discontinue on-site food preparation and sale of licensed alcoholic beverages and only offer pre-packaged food and non-alcoholic drinks.
 - Enter a public-private partnership with a local restaurant to operate the concession space.

Analysis

- Staff is requesting that the City Council create a task force comprised of two Councilmembers – Mayor Pro Tem Dickinson and Councilmember Hamlington – the Recreation Advisory Board Chair, and staff to evaluate options.
- Benefits of a task force are:
 - Allows a small, focused group to dive deeply into the issue.
 - May include community members and business owners, to collect diverse perspectives and build consensus around options to recommend to the full Council for consideration.
 - Operates with a defined scope, timeline, and outcome to maintain momentum with a goal of having a plan in place prior to April 1, 2026.

2025 Council Work Plan

- Economic Vitality – Food and beverage services are a significant factor in the operation of a golf course and experience for the patrons.
 - Golfers may opt to go elsewhere if “ready to go” food, high quality food, and licensed alcoholic drinks are not available.

Fiscal Impact

- Prior contract required the concessionaire to pay a Concession Fee of \$30,000 annually plus 5% of revenues in excess of \$575,000.
- With only pre-packaged and non-alcoholic drinks available, staff is anticipating a loss of revenues due to patrons going elsewhere.
 - Staff is evaluating lowering the fees to entice golfers to continue to play at the golf course.

Alternatives

- Do not establish a task force and direct staff to develop alternatives and bring them forward to City Council for consideration.
 - This approach will likely take longer and require multiple meetings to review alternatives, receive direction, and implement the recommendation.

Recommendation

- Create a task force comprised of two Councilmembers, Mayor Pro Tem Dickinson and Councilmember Hamlington, Recreation Advisory Board Chair Norgard, and staff to evaluate options to provide food and beverage services at Coal Creek Golf Course.