



Regina City Council;

I appreciate the opportunity to submit the following information and thank you for taking the time to review. I am sure this is one of many items on this Council's docket, but it is a very important one to the Royal Regina Golf Club.

As you will be aware, there is great concern over the amendment that was passed to eliminate the golf course sub-class as a qualification for property tax relief.

There were a lot of opinions stated at the October 29 city council meeting, but not all facts.

While the issue at hand does affect two golf clubs, I can only comment on behalf of the Royal Regina Golf Club, and only how this decision would significantly impact our Club.

The tax exemption in question was implemented over a decade ago to create an equitable operational opportunity when compared to City of Regina run facilities that do not pay any property taxes (Joanne Goulet and Lakeview Par 3) or significantly less property taxes (Tor Hill, Murray). The basis of this remains unchanged.

There have been several references to the Royal Regina being a private Club. That is not accurate and cannot be a point that's simply glazed over. It is the motive for council's agenda, and it is incorrect. There are distinctive differences between a private club and one with public access.

The Royal Regina is not a private golf club and hasn't been for all 122 years of its existence. Public are welcome to use the golf and clubhouse facilities seven days a week. There are customers that use the Clubhouse, driving range and golf course on a daily basis that are not members.

By fact, in 2021 over 3,400 rounds were played by non-members. That does not include the five corporate tournaments the Club hosted that accommodated over 800 more external participants.

There have also been references to the Royal Regina's *lucrative fees*, which isn't an accurate assessment.

Here are some numbers to consider:

An unrestricted membership with the City owned courses at the Tor Hill/Murray is \$2,268. The same membership at the Royal Regina is \$2,958. That's a difference of only \$690 to be a member of one of only six courses in Canada to carry Royal distinction. Far from being considered lucrative.

The Club runs an intermediate program for individuals from 19-36. The member fees work on a sliding scale to allow university students, young families, first time home buyers, and career starters the chance to belong to the Club while going through various stages and challenges of early adulthood.

As part of the program, a 20-year-old would pay \$1,455 less to be a member at the Royal Regina than an equivalent membership at the City owned courses, Tor Hill & Murray.

Further, a 25-year-old would pay over \$1,000 less to be a member at the Royal Regina than to be an equivalent member at a City of Regina owned course. Likewise, a 30-year-old would be \$500 less.

Fees from unrestricted members play an important role in the Club's success as they help subsidize other programs.

The Royal Regina is the only Club in the city that has an active and organized junior membership program. A member at the Royal Regina can have their child under the age 16 be a junior member for free. A junior can join the Club without a parent member for a moderate fee of \$460.

The Club runs Junior Days once a week throughout the summer where children get to play a round of golf, have lunch, then partake in a lesson with PGA certified pro. All subsidized through course operations. In 2021, the Club had 115 junior members and anticipate the program continuing to grow.

The Royal Regina is the only club within the city to run ladies only programming, exclusively for individuals that are not full members. The Ladies League runs every Tuesday and aims to create opportunities for females to experience the social and recreation balance that golf provides, without making a full commitment to the Club. This is a significantly important undertaking as data has shown female participation in golf is declining year over year.

Directly considering the financial impacts, the additional tax would in fact be a horrendous hardship on our Club.

During regular operations prior to COVID-19, the Club recorded modest revenues of \$18,000 in 2018 and \$36,000 in 2019.

Businesses across the world are trying to find ways to financially survive. While golf has become a popular sport through the pandemic, we have been affected by the rising costs of goods just like everyone else.

Gas, fertilizer, food products and other essentials have all seen dramatic cost increases. It would be bad business to simply pass these costs down the line to customers and continue to be considered a desirable option. In fact, the recent Saskatchewan minimum wage increase will add to the Club's expenses by almost as much as this tax impact.

The Club operates under a deferred maintenance plan. This means that course or facility improvements are only initiated as funds become available.

As a registered not-for-profit, any excess revenues at the end of the year are put right back into maintaining the property. An additional expense like this means we have less of a chance to maintain the expansive grounds.

With a 122-year-old golf course, and a 21-year-old clubhouse, maintenance is a continuous and costly undertaking.

The grounds in which the course is situated are considered a flood plain for the city. Wascana Creek runs through the east side of the golf course. While this adds a unique feature to the playing elements, we also frequently feel its effects throughout a summer.

Heavy rainfall, or a quick spring thaw, fills spill ways across the city. When this happens, the weir at Wascana Lake gets opened to maintain the levels. The water then flows downstream and crests over the banks at our course, causing significant damage.

The Royal Regina is maintaining and making best use of this property.

Externally, the Club is a frequent source of tourism for the city and province. Hosting upcoming provincial events like the Sask. Junior Championships in 2022 and the Sask. Amateur Championships in 2024 bring 144 participants per event to the city. Additionally, members of other Royal Clubs have playing opportunities at the Royal Regina. We see frequent visitors from across Canada that take advantage of the program while visiting the area.

I sincerely appreciate you reviewing this information and would further appreciate you not supporting the removal of the golf course sub-class.

Thank you.



Ryan Pollock  
General Manager  
Royal Regina Golf Club