

From: [Cathleen Crowley](#)
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] ITEM 15.3
Date: Sunday, January 8, 2023 1:41:01 PM

Hi

My name is Cathy Crowley. I am writing to voice support for the increase in golf rates proposed by Touchstone. The increase is very reasonable. Thank you.

From: [Steve Stevens](#)
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Cc: [Steve Stevens](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Agenda Item 15.3 BVGC FEES - From E. Steve Stevens
Date: Sunday, January 8, 2023 10:18:27 AM

I am a long term annual member at the Bennett Valley Golf Course, and the facility is the primary reason that I continue to remain a resident of Santa Rosa.

To date, Touchstone Golf has done an admirable job in managing BVGC for the city.

I have reviewed the proposed fee increases and find that they are fair, necessary, and reasonable. I also believe that everybody that plays golf at BVGC would agree.

Please pass Touchstone's proposal with a majority vote.

Thank you,

E. Steve Stevens

Sent from my iPad

From: [salina gonzalez](#)
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BV golf rate increase
Date: Sunday, January 8, 2023 9:32:30 AM

I support the rate increase, those who use it can afford it and it should be kept in good condition. The field near storage area that backs up to Saint Paul Drive needs to be cleaned up. It's unsightly for the Sonoma Ridge apt neighbors.

Salina Gonzalez

From: [Paul Horwath](#)
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: Rate proposal for Bennett Valley
Date: Sunday, January 8, 2023 8:30:30 AM

- Paul Horwath
Sent from my iPad Pro

Begin forwarded message:

From: Lynn Horwath <lynnhorwath@gmail.com>
Date: January 8, 2023 at 8:28:09 AM PST
To: cc-comment@srcity.org
Subject: Rate proposal for Bennett Valley

Yes, I am in favor of the rate hike and hope you accept it ASAP

- Lynn Horwath
Sent from my iPad Pro

From: [Lynn Horwath](#)
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rate proposal for Bennett Valley
Date: Sunday, January 8, 2023 8:28:16 AM

Yes, I am in favor of the rate hike and hope you accept it ASAP

- Lynn Horwath
Sent from my iPad Pro

From: [kenneth kerst](#)
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support For Rate Increase
Date: Saturday, January 7, 2023 3:38:14 PM

Hello,

We definitely want this rate increase to occur, supporting this Santa Rosa treasure!

Kathy and Ken Kerst

Sent from my iPad

From: Sheila Bell
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Cc: [Sheila Bell](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 1/10/23 SRCC Meeting, Agenda Item #15.3
Date: Monday, January 9, 2023 9:34:10 AM

Dear Santa Rosa City Councilmembers,

My name is Sheila Bell and my comment is regarding agenda item #15.3. I have been a resident of Santa Rosa over 45 years. I am commenting today to share my support of the proposed golf course rate increases presented to this council. I provide my support for a variety of reasons. As we all know, cost of living has impacted us all for several years and more significantly over the past 2 years. Rates at the Bennett Valley golf course have not been increased since 2017 when the City of Santa Rosa initiated a Capital Improvements Assessment fee of \$2.00. This Touchstone rate proposal removes that Capital Assessment fee allowing revenue to flow into the Golf Course Operating fund, enabling a much broader use. The proposed increases overall are nominal. For example, for Seniors the increase is \$2.00, and no increase is being presented for Junior players.

As important as the cost-of-living implications at the Golf Course, as you know from the studies, is the necessity to support funding of much needed critical infrastructure repairs and maintenance. Considering the irrigation/water drainage system for example, significant improvements have not been done for over 40 years. Still utilizing its wells, updated irrigation systems allow for controlled watering of the fairways and greens that is much more in line with current water conservation actions, so essential to our city.

This golf course is the only municipal course in our city. It supports the golfing community for individuals, families and our youth, at an affordable cost, even with rate increases. It is my understanding, that Touchstone has placed a strong focus on establishing more inclusive youth and mentoring golf programs throughout the city. A valuable investment for all within our community.

Beyond the golf course, the reopening of the Restaurant/Event Center, can return to offering affordable events for our entire city. As many of you may know, there are few viable/affordable options available in Santa Rosa. Having this facility is a benefit to all and that includes our soccer, pickleball, tennis and softball communities. They can enjoy gathering at the restaurant again for great food and celebrate events. To draw people in, amenities and atmosphere need to demonstrate good quality and value. With the revised management structure of the course and restaurant/event center being combined, the proposed rate increases can help provide support with these goals as well.

As a community, our continued stewardship is critical for keeping this important treasure alive in our city. For that reason, I support the proposed rate increases presented by Touchstone. Thank you for your consideration of this important proposal.

Sincerely,
Sheila Bell

Sheila Bell Consulting

Personnel Management: Coach ~ Trainer ~ Speaker

"The Power of the Question"

From: [James Gurke](#)
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] January 10 City Council Meeting Item 15.3
Date: Monday, January 9, 2023 4:57:20 PM
Attachments: [Untitled.pdf](#)

Attached are my written comments in favor of the Bennett Valley Golf Course fee increases proposed by Touchstone Golf. I'm providing these as my attempt to provide a voicemail version may have failed or been cut short by the permitted time limit.

I trust these comments will reach the City Council members for their consideration. Thank you.

James Gurke

My testimony is in regards to Council agenda item 15.3, the Bennett Valley Golf Course fee increase proposed by Touchstone Golf. I wholeheartedly support the fee increase before you with a little background information as to why.

I've been an annual member of the course since 2013, our first full year since moving to Santa Rosa. I'm retired so am able to play an average of two to three times per week. Even before retirement I've been an avid golfer where my typical green fees exceeded \$40, walking at former club. What a discovery to come to Santa Rosa and find a gem of a public golf course charging only \$28 to walk and \$44 if using a power cart, less than what I previously paid walking at my former golf courses.

Each Monday morning I play with a 48 member senior men's club, a function of a men's social club known as Sons in Retirement. I can't speak for it as we are a non-political, non-religious organization. However, in our monthly lunch meetings I've brought up the rate increases under consideration. I can attest that there's a general understanding about operating costs and capital improvements that necessitate a fee increase.

Once a week I play nine holes with three other retired friends followed by a visit to the Bennett Valley Grille. The BV nine hole twilight cost is \$17 to walk. Less frequently, and largely because of cost, we play the Windsor Golf Course where the nine hole fee is \$28, a 65% difference.

I think the BV Golf Course, the community center and adjacent Galvin Park are vital to well governed city that values sport and recreation. For that reason I've strongly supported the Save Bennett Valley network. So I'm pleased the City Council became part of that movement to keep the acreage 'green' and designated for athletics and social gathering.

The last fee increase occurred in 2017, spanning a time where inflation and operating cost have risen while revenue has remained the same. I should also state that I'm a member of the BV advisory committee. In that capacity I've had the chance to examine the fee increases in detail. I fully support the fee structure proposed by Touchstone and before you for approval.

But the course is now 55 years old and in need of capital improvements. It's my understanding that every dollar in profit goes into an enterprise fund to support future capital improvements. Besides some equipment purchases and minor drainage improvements, BV has realized virtual no capital improvements. A new irrigation system is a top priority.

Sometime in the past a prior City Council thought so much of the course that it decided to add a community center and new clubhouse to the venue. But that came at a cost - one still borne by the club to the tune of over \$350,000 in annual debt service. Yet still, the course has proven to be profitable and is routinely recognized by the Press Democrat annual rating as the BEST venue in the county.

In closing, I hope that the City Council give unanimous support for the proposed fee increases as presented in Item 15.3.

From: George Philpott
To: [City Council Public Comments](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bennett Valley GC
Date: Monday, January 9, 2023 4:25:16 PM

To the City Council:

I am writing with regards to the proposed fee increases for play at the Bennett Valley Golf Course, specifically Item 15.3. I believe the fee increases requested by the Touchstone Golf Management team are reasonable and make clear sense, given both the need for capital improvements on the golf course as well as to adjust to the inflation impacts we have all encountered lately.

Bennett Valley Golf Course has always been a great deal here locally, which is of great benefit to the community here, myself included. It is an asset to our city, and a beautiful place to play golf. As a golfer who plays there often, I would love it if fees stayed as they are. However, as a golf course architect, I understand there are very real reasons that a fee increase is necessary. Deferred maintenance items such as large, dead or dying trees need that to be removed. Irrigation changes and upgrades are long past due. Drainage improvements to facilitate better and more play during winter months. These types of things, on top of simply keeping the course maintained and in good condition all come at a cost. I am aware how thoughtfully Touchstone has addressed the issue of what I feel are modest fee increases and I applaud them for how they have thought it through.

Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

George Philpott
President, Legacy Golf Course Architecture
707-293-7937