



City of Racine, Wisconsin

Common Council

AGENDA BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

COMMITTEE: Executive Committee

AGENDA ITEM: 0609-26

AGENDA DATE: July 13, 2026

DEPARTMENT: City Attorney's Office

Prepared By: City Attorney Scott R. Letteney

Reviewed By: N/A

SUBJECT:

Communication sponsored by Mayor Mason requesting to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to enter into an agreement with Leipold Johnson Golf Group for shoreline stabilization, habitat restoration, clubhouse construction, and a long-term lease for the operation and maintenance of Shoop Park.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Mayor Mason proposes that the City enter into an agreement with Leipold Johnson Golf Group (LJGG) for shoreline stabilization, habitat restoration, clubhouse construction, and a long-term lease for the operation and maintenance of Shoop Park. LJGG will pay the City a one-time upfront payment of \$1,960,000, plus \$25,000 annually, which payment will be adjusted for inflation each year. The one-time payment will be designated to the Parks Department for the new King Center. LJGG will spend at least \$10 million to redesign the golf course (including a new irrigation system, clubhouse, and equipment), stabilize the bluff of Shoop Park on Lake Michigan, and restore the existing golf course to a more environmentally friendly prairie dune habitat, including development and construction costs.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS:

Mayor Mason proposes that the City of Racine enter into an agreement with Leipold Johnson Golf Group (LJGG). Pursuant to such agreement, LJGG will undertake to stabilize the shoreline, restore habitat, construct a clubhouse, and enter into a long-term lease for the operation and maintenance of Shoop Park. On March 10, 2026, Keiser Golf Group and Leipold Johnson Golf Group made a presentation before the Committee of the Whole regarding potential improvements and a long term lease agreement with the City of Racine for Shoop Park.

On January 1, 2025, by Resolution 0056-25, the Common Council authorized the City's administration to negotiate and enter into an Option to Improve and Operate Agreement as to Shoop Golf Course, with the City of Racine granting an option to Keiser Golf Group and the LJGG.

In the interim, Mayor Mason and members of the City's administration have negotiated terms of an agreement with LJGG. The City's exiting agreement with Troon Golf for the operation of the golf course at Shoop Park authorizes the City to make whatever capital improvements it deems necessary or desirable at any time at the Shoop Park golf course. The activities proposed to be performed by LKJGG fall within the City activities contemplated by the agreement with Troon. The existing agreement with Troon Golf to operate the golf course at Shoop Park will expire December 31, 2027.

The principle provisions of the prospective agreement with LJGG are as follows:

- LJGG and the City will enter into a 10-year lease that may be renewed at LJGG's option for four additional 10-year periods (50 years total).
- LJGG will spend at least \$10 million to redesign the golf course (including a new irrigation system, clubhouse, and equipment), stabilize the bluff of Shoop Park on Lake Michigan, and restore the existing golf course to a more environmentally friendly prairie dune habitat, including development and construction costs.
- The shoreline restoration will protect the bluff from collapse and maintain public space for pedestrians.
- LJGG will lease Shoop Park for a one-time upfront payment of \$1,960,000, plus \$25,000 annually, which payment will be adjusted for inflation each year. The one-time payment will be designated to the Parks Department for the new King Center.
- The existing golf course at Shoop Park will be upgraded into a 9-hole course designed by the Keiser Golf Group with a new clubhouse.
- The golf course on Shoop Park will be known as Lighthouse Dunes at Shoop Park. The golf course will maintain the City's logo and branding. The golf course will remain open to the public and will not be turned into a private club.
- City of Racine residents will enjoy a green fee of \$24 for the first two seasons. There after, the resident green fee for 9-holes will not exceed the highest 9-hole rate (including the cart rate) then in effect each year at Johnson Park. This reduced rate will only be available to City of Racine residents.

- LJGG will partner with the “Caddie Academy” to develop a caddie program for City of Racine youth ages 14 to 16 years-old, making them eligible for the Evans Scholarship, a full-tuition and housing scholarship.
- LJGG will be required to get appropriate approvals from the City Planning, Heritage, and Design Commission, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Army Corps of Engineers, and all other legally required authorizations.

BUDGETARY IMPACT: LJGG will pay the City a one-time upfront payment of \$1,960,000, plus \$25,000 annually, which payment will be adjusted for inflation each year. The one-time payment will be designated to the Parks Department for the new King Center. LJGG will spend at least \$10 million to redesign the golf course (including a new irrigation system, clubhouse, and equipment), stabilize the bluff of Shoop Park on Lake Michigan, and restore the existing golf course to a more environmentally friendly prairie dune habitat, including development and construction costs.

OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES:

To approve, thus recommending the Common Council authorize and direct the Mayor and City Clerk to execute an agreement with Leipold Johnson Golf Group for shoreline stabilization, habitat restoration, clubhouse construction, and a long- term lease for the operation and maintenance of Shoop Park.

To deny.

RECOMMENDED ACTION BY MAYOR MASON: To approve.

ATTACHMENT(S): As attached to Legistar Agenda Item 0609-26.