

# Report recommends changes at DeLaveaga Golf Course

By HEATHER BOERNER  
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

A new report commissioned by the City Council recommends, among other things, that the city's golf course at DeLaveaga Park be privatized. But both council members and golf course managers said that's unlikely.

"Because the city has long-term contracts with the workers, we don't need to even talk about that," Norm Bedell, chair of the city's DeLaveaga Golf Course advisory committee, said at a committee meeting Friday. "There's no use contemplating privatizing."

Parks and Recreation Director Jim Lang

## Falling revenue at city-owned course concerns council

agreed, adding, "We have a couple options, one of which is to discontinue use of city employees. That's a huge hurdle, and I don't see that happening. The likelihood of that is less than zero."

The report, issued June 19, says the city has four options for reviving lagging revenue at the municipal course. Now that the committee has approved the report, it will go to the Parks and Recreation Commission July 10 and the council July 25.

The options:

■ The status quo, with the city performing

maintenance of the course and leasing out the pro-shop, cart and driving-range concessions.

■ Contracting with different companies for the concessions and course maintenance;

■ Contracting with a single golf-course management firm to run the entire operation.

■ Contracting with one firm and offering additional incentives for it to raise revenue.

The latter three options have raised concerns among the union representing golf workers, who fear they will lose their job if the city contracts out the maintenance work.

G.S.L. Inc., headed by Gary Loustalot, runs

the concessions now.

The report said it would be unprecedented for the city to remove the concessionaire and run the entire operation itself.

"It has no present-day precedent and, from an economic and operations perspective, appears impractical," says the report by Economics Research Associates. "There are very few 'full city' operations throughout the country."

Mayor Keith Sugar said Friday he would like to adjust the operating structure to bring more money to the city, but he said he didn't want to

make additional comment until reading the report.

Members of the golf committee said the city should focus on improving the existing arrangement.

Bedell, committee chair, said revenue has decreased because more golf courses have been built in the area. While many golfers used to come from over the hill, new golf courses in the Silicon Valley and elsewhere are decreasing the number of out-of-town players.

"Play has not gone up as quick as the number of courses, and we'll probably never get back to our previous level," Bedell said. "We need to impress to the council that they need to keep the money we had in the golf course and not use it elsewhere."