



April 29, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Great Southern Golf Club will cease all operations on Monday, May 9, 2022. Initially, the club's management thought the club could continue to operate just 9 holes after the closure of the front 9 holes south of the railroad tracks on May 1st, but not enough members were willing to continue their memberships and public play would not have sufficiently sustained the club's operation according to its President, Ellis Hill. Hill said, "I'm very, very saddened to make this announcement. The Great Southern Golf Club has been a community treasure for generations. Locals and visitors alike have shared fond memories associated with the course."

The course closure comes from a Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing in June 2017 at which time the ownership passed to the mortgage holder, a Mississippi LLC. The LLC sold the property to Arbor Properties of Tallahassee, FL in May of 2020, after which the Great Southern Golf Club, Inc. leased the land from Arbor Properties.

Hill said the root cause of the bankruptcy dates to Hurricane Katrina, which leveled the clubhouse, destroyed almost 400 trees, damaged the on-course restrooms and irrigation control equipment, and damaged all the greens. Prior to Katrina there were 387 members. After Katrina, the membership dropped to 4. By the time the course was able to resume play, members had joined other courses and fewer than 100 returned to the Great Southern. This was exacerbated by hurricanes in 2017 and 2020. Although the course has been open to the public, this has not been enough to operate profitably consistently and the course conditions suffered, which negatively impacted revenue resulting in additional debt being incurred to improve playing conditions. Many ideas were considered such as placing a hotel on the beachside of the property, creating a golf resort, and building condos in unused areas and forming a HOA to support operations. Ultimately these ideas did not get funding. "There were several deals to save the club that were very near closing, but did not happen", said Hill.

Hill stated that Arbor Properties plans to display some memorabilia such as photos of President Wilson playing the course as well as photos of golfing legends such as Ben Hogan and Gene Sarazen.

Other memorabilia such as the paving stones bearing the names of contributors to the club and hole sponsorship plaques will be available for pickup by the contributors or their representatives from May 8th to May 31st. They are asked to contact the clubhouse.

The club will sell the removeable assets of the club such as 50 gas powered golf carts, sprinkler heads from the irrigation system, scrap metal & building frame, kitchen furniture, pots, pans, cooking utensils, plates, dishes, silverware, ice machine, prep station, refrigerator, freezer, and food warmer, etc.

#30#

Contact:
Ellis D. Hill, President
Great Southern Golf Club, Inc.
Mobile #: 205-995-8866
ellis@researchfirst.com