




CITY OF RAPID CITY

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
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To: Mayor and City Council Members

From: Jeff Biegler, Director 
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Lon Van Deusen,
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Subject: Winter Activities at Meadowbrook Golf Course

Date: October 7, 2015

Doug Lowe,
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On January 8, 2015 the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board discussed the topic of winter sporting activities being allowed at Meadowbrook Golf Course. The Board took comments from proponents of cross-country skiing and fat tire biking, as well as concerns from a number of individuals in opposition to the idea of allowing winter sports at Meadowbrook. The item was reviewed by the Public Works Committee and the full City Council. At their January 20, 2015 meeting, Council directed staff to return with an update in October.

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After considerable discussion, the Parks and Recreation Department has decided not to recommend allowing cross-country skiing, or winter fat tire bike riding at Meadowbrook Golf course for the 2015/2016 winter season. We want to be clear in our support for all winter activities including cross-country skiing and fat tire biking. However, staff feels there are a sufficient number of other locations already available where these and other winter sports can be enjoyed. Cross-country skiing is allowed at all other city parks, and along the greenway. There are also countless areas throughout the Black Hills where cross-country skiing is permitted.

Protecting the Meadowbrook Golf Course Resource

In 2014 the Parks and Recreation Department commissioned a 10- year Capital Improvement Plan along with a Golf Course Maintenance Plan which is designed to bring Meadowbrook Golf Course back to championship quality. The course underwent an extensive bunker renovation project in 2014/2015 and is due for additional improvements in coming years. New maintenance equipment was purchased to facilitate an increased level of course maintenance. The course professionals and staff feel that inconsistent levels of snow received in Rapid City each winter could open up the course to possible damage if skiing or bike use was allowed on a thin base of snow.

Fiscal Responsibility

Meadowbrook Golf Course is an Enterprise Fund facility and as such, it is imperative that annual maintenance costs be kept to the absolute minimum possible. Allowing cross-country skiing and other winter activities at Meadowbrook would add to the cost of course maintenance due to the need for winter cross-country ski trail set-up, monitoring, and spring turf repair.

Public Input Opportunity

The Parks and Recreation Department staff is beginning the master planning process for Robbinsdale Park as well as for a comprehensive city-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Input gathered from these two master planning projects will determine 1) whether there is sufficient interest in cross-country skiing to incorporate a dedicated course in one of our City parks, and if so, 2) in which park(s) a dedicated cross country ski course should be established.

At this time we will not be considering cross-country skiing or other winter sports at Meadowbrook Golf Course. Please feel free to contact me with questions, or concerns.