

March 15, 2024

Petaluma City Council
11 English Street
Petaluma, CA 94952

Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Councilmembers,

In our most recent Amended and Restated Lease Agreement dated July 1, 2022, we agreed to no longer use glyphosate at Rooster Run Golf Club. In addition, the following language was adopted in Section 13.9 “the Lessee agrees to comply with the City’s Integrated Pest Management Plan (“IPMP”) upon its adoption. However, if the Lessee’s compliance with the IPMP, as adopted, causes the Lessee significant hardship, the parties agree to negotiate in good faith regarding alternative compliance of the Lessee.”

We are stating for the record that adoption of this ordinance, as proposed, will cause us a “significant hardship.”

We have two proposed solutions. The first of which is to delay the adoption of this ordinance to give us more time to resolve this issue with staff. The second is to modify the ordinance to state that this ordinance applies to all lessees, except ground lessees whose term exceeds ten (10) years. This would allow the proposed ordinance to be adopted and we will work with staff to resolve this issue. In addition, the proposed lease amendment could also include a solution to the City’s desire to locate some wetlands on our private golf course leasehold that are required for the construction of the adjacent sports complex.

The benefit of the second option is it allows the adoption of the ordinance now, under CEQA’s Common Sense Exemption, because it only applies to City Operations. Rooster Run Golf Club is a long-term land lease and, as such, is a private business providing recreational services to thousands of Petaluma residents. A golf course is a living environment and when we are faced with disease or pests, we must act quickly to resolve the problem or risk portions of the golf course dying off. Hundreds of our members expressed their concerns that this ordinance not damage the community recreation facility they enjoy every day.

For the record, we do not believe the proposed ordinance, as written, would qualify to the Common Sense Exemption due to the risk that its adoption could result in the closure of Rooster Run Golf Club and the potential environmental impacts, such as visual blight, fire hazard, and possible reduction in wastewater disposal.

Thank you for taking the time to review our concerns.

Sincerely,

Bill Carson
General Manager
Rooster Run Golf Club