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SCGA Unveils Financing Plan To Keep Sligo Golf Open

Course Breaks Even with Fair Management Fee

August 17, 2009 – After a thorough review of publicly available budgets, the Sligo Creek Golf Association today announced a financing plan that eliminates the need for additional money to keep Sligo Creek Golf Course open for another year. Adopting the SCGA plan will give Montgomery County and community groups enough time to develop a comprehensive program that makes the course permanently self-sustaining.

The plan hinges on the Montgomery County Revenue Authority charging the course a management fee in line with its size, expenses and personnel needs. The course is now being charged a disproportionately high fee compared to other courses and facilities under MCRA management.

“Sligo is being charged the same management fee as courses two and three times its size,” said Karen Howland, president of SCGA, a non-profit working to preserve this historic “gateway to golf,” which serves kids, seniors, women and minority golfers in the down county area. “A fair fee would make up most of Sligo’s projected deficit.”

MCRA currently charges a flat management fee of \$139,000 for each of the 9 courses under its control. That means Sligo, a 9-hole course, is charged the same as Northwest, a 27-hole operation. Even though it is only a third the size, golfers play nearly 30,000 rounds a year at Sligo compared to 64,000 at Northwest, the second busiest course in the system.

“While Falls Road pays only 5 percent of its revenue to the MCRA, Sligo Creek sends 25 percent to Rockville, a crushing overhead burden that no business can support,” said Woody Brosnan, head of the SCGA government relations committee. “A fee equal to what it actually costs to run Sligo would allow the county to keep it open while spending less money than has already been appropriated for shutdown expenses.”

The county has threatened to shut Sligo Creek Golf Course on Oct. 1. While the SCGA welcomes County Executive Ike Leggett’s pledge to seek an additional \$150,000 to keep the course open for another two years, the support group recognizes the county faces budget problems. The non-profit group has been meeting with key county officials to develop a plan to keep Sligo open that minimizes the cost to taxpayers.