



News

Residents ready to take over Heather Ridge course, club New metro district of 10 HOAs to own 90-acre site

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AURORA | Less than a year after Heather Ridge residents approved a proposal to purchase the local golf course and country club through increased property taxes, community leaders say they're set to finalize the \$3.2-million deal.

According to Errol Rowland, president of the Heather Ridge Metropolitan District and of the United Association of Heather Ridge, leaders from the metro district comprising 10 homeowner associations encompassing about 1,100 nearby homes, will sign papers Dec. 1 to purchase the 90-acre property.

"We signed the purchase agreement last week, and we sign the bond (Tuesday) at 10 a.m.. At noon tomorrow, the Heather Ridge Metropolitan District will be the new owner," Rowland said Monday. The course will be operated by the residents.



HEATHER RIDGE PURCHASE Russ Barrett practices putting at the Heather Ridge Country Club putting green in Aurora. AURORA | Less than a year after Heather Ridge residents approved a proposal to purchase the local golf course and country club through increased property taxes, community leaders say they're set to finalize the \$3.2-million deal. (Heather A. Longway/The Aurora Sentinel)

In August, residents from the district voted overwhelmingly with a plan to purchase the golf course and the club house.

According to metro district officials, the increased tax will be implemented in January 2010. On average, homeowners will pay \$35 more each month to fund the purchase.

Rowland and other representatives from the neighborhood said that the metro district would work to attract a new clientele to the Aurora course through concentrated public relations pushes and special rates for residents.

"It will be a public golf course. We have a group of people who are in the marketing area. They've come up with some new golf packages — rates, fees, that are pretty innovative. They should compare pretty favorably to any other golf course in the area," Rowland said. "We've got 11,027 homes around this golf course. We've structured the fee schedule to be advantageous to them, to be equal to or better than the tax that they're paying."

Last year, the club reopened under the supervision of the property's receiver, Denver-based Cordes & Company, following the apparent suicide of the facility's owner. Metro district members said they'd work to redirect spending so the club wouldn't fall into the same disrepair and debt that it did under its original owners. Part of the new approach includes a new menu at the restaurant owned by local restaurateur Dumitri Palea.

"We always felt that the country club operation made money (depending) on how the owner spent it," said Van Lewis, a Heather Ridge board member. "They spent it on many things other than rejuvenating the country club."

Heather Ridge officials said that the purchase of the property will be valuable, even if the golf course business fails.

"We're excited to get going," Rowland said. "If the golf course fails, which it could, we homeowners own this open space and we will control its use in the future."

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