

Alberni Valley Golf Club

Background — *The Alberni Valley Golf Club is aware of recent public statements and community concern surrounding this year's staffing changes. We provide this statement for clarity, with respect for everyone involved, and for reassurance to our members, patrons, and the broader community who we know care deeply about this course.*

The Club is a member-owned, not-for-profit organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. Our responsibility is to safeguard the long-term health and financial stability of this community asset so it remains accessible and affordable for future generations. Staffing decisions are made collectively by the full Board, with care, and always with this responsibility in mind.

Statement from the Board of Directors

For Immediate Release

Port Alberni, B.C. — Every winter—like most golf courses on Vancouver Island—our operations naturally slow down; seasonal layoffs are a standard part of our annual cycle. In past years when resources allowed, we did our best to keep full-time grounds staff working through the winter despite a lack of maintenance needs, as a way to provide stability for those employees and their families.

This year, extenuating circumstances created significant new legal and wage-related costs associated with the newly signed collective agreement. Combined with the usual reduced winter workload, these realities meant as a not-for-profit organization we simply cannot continue our previous practice of maintaining full off-season staffing. Three full-time groundskeepers were temporarily laid off due to these financial constraints. These layoffs were not retaliatory and not a rejection of unionization—they were made solely to protect the long-term viability of the golf course.

Recent public claims suggest the Club has violated its collective agreement. We want to be extremely clear: we have followed the agreement and the grievance procedure exactly as outlined. Several matters are already moving through the formal arbitration process. As a respectful employer we will not comment on matters before arbitration and will continue to allow these issues to work through the proper process in good faith.

We also recognize that the public dialogue has prompted calls for boycotts. While we understand the intention behind these actions, they've led to cancelled events and reduced activity in our restaurant and clubhouse—causing hardship for other employees, many of whom are not part of this dispute and rely on winter hours and tips.

We value our employees and have always taken pride in being an employer that cares for and supports its staff, both before and after the recent unionization of the grounds crew. We recognize that these decisions are difficult for all involved and are mindful of the personal impact they have on employees and their families. We remain committed to fair and equal treatment for all our employees and to bringing our grounds crew back as seasonal operations resume.

We ask our community to look beyond the escalating rhetoric and continue supporting the people who work here and the Alberni Valley Golf Club we all care deeply about—by playing here, dining here, and helping ensure this course remains strong for generations to come.

— **Board of Directors, Alberni Valley Golf Club**

For further information, please contact:
Alberni Valley Golf Club – Board of Directors
Attention: President, Ken Sander

Quick Facts

- **Member-owned, not-for-profit organization** governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.
- **Mandate:** Safeguard the long-term health and financial stability of the course so it remains accessible and affordable for the community.
- **Workplace:** Includes both union and non-union employees; first collective agreement signed in Spring 2025.
- **Seasonality:** Winter slowdown is normal, and seasonal layoffs occur annually.
- **Historical practice:** Some grounds staff previously received year-round work despite limited winter tasks.
- **Current layoffs:** Three full-time groundskeepers were temporarily laid off due to reduced winter workload and increased costs associated with the collective agreement.
- **Labour process:** Grievance items are progressing through the formal arbitration process.
- **Community impact:** Boycott calls have led to cancelled events and reduced restaurant activity, affecting other staff and overall viability of not-for-profit organization.