

Cazenovia Golf Club — Mowing Fleet

Strategy

Fall Member Meeting Handout | Executive Summary for Member

Review

Why This Decision Matters

The club's conventional mower lease expires in May 2027, creating a natural, low disruption decision point for the Board and membership. The choice is straightforward: buy out our current aging conventional mower fleet when the lease expires May 27 for \$1, and assume all future repair and replacement risk, or transition to a Husqvarna autonomous robotic fleet allowing 1,500 man-hours to be distributed to Member priorities, capital projects, recurring maintenance needs, and enhanced playability projects all while saving the Club money.

The financial, operational, and course-quality evidence strongly favors the autonomous transition because it avoids a major capital replacement, reduces annual operating expense, recaptures staff time, and supports a quieter, lower-emission maintenance model.

Current Conventional Fleet: Key Issues

- **Annual operating cost:** \$89,142, driven by diesel fuel, maintenance, and approximately 1,500 operator hours.
- **Labor burden:** All mowing is operator-driven, consuming skilled greenkeeper time that could otherwise support course improvements.
- **Capital exposure:** Replacing the conventional fleet in 2027 would require \$392,372 in capital.
- **Post-lease risk:** A \$1 buyout transfers maintenance liability for aging equipment to the club.

Financial Comparison

Autonomous			
Current Monthly Lease	\$2,996/month Total lease cost was \$179.4K (60 months x \$2,991)	\$4,094/month proposed lease (No payment until May 2027)	Higher lease cost is offset by savings in fuel and maintenance costs of \$15,750 annually
Capital Required in 2027	\$392,372 to replace current mower fleet	\$0	\$392,372 avoided
Annual Operating Cost	\$89,142	\$54,304	\$34,838 saved annually

Autonomous Fleet: What Changes

- **Predictable monthly cost:** \$4,091 per month, or \$49,092 per year, covering hardware, software, maintenance, and connectivity.
- **Major fuel savings:** Electric charging reduces annual fuel cost from \$8,250 to approximately \$523.
- **Labor recapture:** Supervision drops to roughly 210 hours per season, freeing 1,290– 1,440 hours for drainage, bunkers, irrigation, landscaping, and tournament preparation.
- **Improved playing conditions:** GPS-guided daily mowing supports consistent turf height and course presentation.
- **Resilience:** A multi-unit fleet reduces single-point-of-failure risk.

- **Sustainability:** Battery-powered robotic mowing has no direct emissions and lower noise, aligning with member expectations and broader turf-care trends.

Implementation Timeline

Fall 2026	Finalize Vendor Terms and execute new Husqvarna lease, GPS map all Units, test and begin plans for Spring implementation
Winter 2027	Superintendent & Greens Committee complete 2 Year Course Plan identifying labor distribution priorities, capital projects, recurring maintenance needs, and enhanced playability projects.
Winter 2027	Direct the Superintendent and Greens Committee to complete a thorough review of the current mowing fleet, which the club will own as of May 27, to evaluate potential upgrades, sale opportunities, and best practices.
2027 Season	Deploy autonomous mowers while implementing recovered labor plan.

Board Recommendation

Authorize Board to proceed with the Husqvarna Autonomous Fleet lease where the Club takes ownership in Fall 2026 but has no payment until the current fleet lease expires May 27.

Rationale: This transition protects club reserves, improves course care, and gives the grounds team more time to focus on the details members notice most.