

OAK HILLS PARK AUTHORITY

July 8, 2010

MINUTES

PRESENT: Larry Andronaco, Chair; Bob Virgulak; Tom Aikenhead; Paul Cifatte; Mike Corsello, Ralph DePanfilis

STAFF: Vincent Grillo Jr., Executive Director; Tom Vorio, Superintendent; Danaë Frangenes, Office Administrator; Jeff Gocke, Barbara Cavaliere, Charl van der Merwe and Jenna Phillips (Oak Hills Tennis Club).

ABSENT: Bill Kementzides; Martha Lemmon; Kristrun Romano

PUBLIC: Gene Arick, Rich Setti, Mark & Marianne Maged, Ron Pasqua, Ron Plankamura

Mr. Andronaco called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

****MR. VIRGULAK MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF JUNE 10, 2010.**

****MR. AIKENHEAD SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY WITH ONE ABSTENTION FROM MR. CORSELLO.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gene Arick stated that he has been a tennis player at Oak Hills for 15 years and organizes the Men's Group at Oak Hills which consists of 50 members. In prior years their group has had 4 courts, Sat and Sunday and holidays 10-12 pm worked out great. When Jeff Gocke was granted the license he promised the same schedule as in the past, however there is an issue during the week and the hours that are available during the week are limited, often 1 and sometimes 2 courts available because the courts are being used for clinics and lessons. Courts are only available after 12 pm during the week, and the men that are requesting them are senior men, and this has become an issue. It was understood in the contract that there would be a minimum of 5 courts available for public use other than organized activities at all times. Gene Arick feels that this has not been adhered to and not consistent with the contract. The other issue is during a holiday weekend and courts were also not available. Courts were only available 12-2 pm and not 10-12 pm.

Ron Plantamura stated that there are no courts available even a week in advance. Six or seven courts are being used for clinics and "their profit making machine" and there are only 2 courts available but there are children that are playing on them or they are being used as a day-care area. The courts are not available to use because the children are next to them on the courts.

Ron Pasqua stated that he made reservations on 3 occasions for the weekend and when they arrived for their designated time, they were told that those times were not available. In the past, this was never an issue, and it started getting bad in July. He stated that in the 20 years that he's been playing tennis at Oak Hills that this has never been a problem up until this year.

Mark Maged and his wife Marianne moved to Norwalk a few months ago and he stated that he will be 79 yrs. old and it is not equitable to force those people of his age to play after 12 pm. The tennis contract does specify certain availability of courts and they are not being made available.

Ron Pasqua stated that he has been a member for 6 yrs. at the Tennis Facility. He compared the tennis court times to golf tee times as being "sacred" times. If those golf times were never available it would be similar to not having the 10-12 pm courts available. He stated that it was a difficult situation for the seniors to play in the hot sun after 12 Noon.

Mr. Andronaco thanked the public for attending the meeting. He stated that the Tennis Liaison committee will be meeting with Mr. Gocke and his staff to go over these issues. Mr. Andronaco stated that the issues presented in tonight's meeting are top priority and will be discussed by the committee.

Mr. Arick additional stated that his membership for the Men's Club consists of 50 active members and of these, 25-30% of these members also have their spouses as members. He stated that they represent \$10,000-\$12,000 in terms of membership. Mr. Arick also stated that there is a petition that has been signed by Tennis Members.

Mr. Aikenhead stated that the Authority will not devise any sort of agreement without it being a mutual agreement and a trial agreement will take the court times and hours into consideration.

Mr. Corsello wanted to clarify that there were three issues that needed to be addressed 1.) an insufficient amount of courts available at certain times 2.) court time is not being reserved when tennis players are showing up to play and 3.) holiday times (Mondays) are not available for play.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

Tennis / Restaurant Liaison Committee

Jeff Gocke passed out a copy of a schedule of events (see attached) for the Tennis Courts. He stated that Mr. Arick has a group of men that play every Saturday (10-12 pm) and there are courts available for them (4 courts) and he also has a team of matches that play Thursday nights. He explained how the week's scheduling works. Mr. Gocke explained that there is more demand for the courts than there was in year's past and it is hard to accommodate everyone. Mr. Gocke reported that there have been behavioral problems with this certain senior men's group and they have been verbally abusive to other women tennis players. Mr. Gocke reported that he would like them to be more appropriate in their behavior. He'd like some direction from the Authority as to how to handle their behavior.

Mr. Virgulak asked the question why reservations are not in the schedule when certain tennis players come to play and why it has happened 3 times. Mr. Gocke asked Jenna to explain this issue. Jenna explained that they shout out their court time for next week's time, but they do not come into the office and make the time in the proper way. They shout it through the window and the reservation is assumed to have been made. Mr. Virgulak asked if it was incumbent upon the tennis staff to tell the tennis players the procedure for properly booking time and if there are written procedures that have been given to this group of tennis members. Charl and Barbara explained that proper procedures are written in their materials and on their website. Mr. Andronaco suggested using confirmation numbers that could be given out to the members once their reservations have been made.

Mr. Cifatte suggested that on a short-term basis, until July 23rd, the courts are still going to be booked and they we will look at next year's schedule to try and come to some arrangement. Mr. Cifatte suggested a court-etiquette sign be hung up at the tennis facility. A code of behavior needs to be followed and Charl should report any behavioral issues to Mr. Grillo.

Mr. Cifatte suggested a simple solution to the problem, starting next year, the men's group will be given 3 courts from the 10-12 pm slot and the holiday issue is something that the men's group has gotten used to and expects, but perhaps they shouldn't.

Mr. Aikenhead suggested to Mr. Gocke that he is the "enforcer" and he should put something in writing about what he can offer this group of men and have a "meeting" of the two sides. Mr. Cifatte said that he will be responsible to communicate to Gene Arick's group to come into the tennis office in an orderly fashion and make their court time.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Grillo reported that June was a slow month. Compared to last June where it rained 20 days, we only did 130 more rounds. The golf course is up a few dollars but it is only because of the fee increase but down about \$40,000 from 2008. It is definitely the effects of the economy. Mr. Grillo reported that years ago there were leagues from companies such as Burndy, Perkin Elmer, Purdue Frederick and Norwalk Hospital. Norwalk Hospital used to pay \$15,000 in advance in April a few years ago in advance, but they no longer have leagues. Early afternoon and late morning tee times are now available where years ago tee times were booked.

Mr. Grillo reported that the course is dry and they are purchasing water. A golf special is scheduled for July 19th, \$40 per person. The Mayor's Trophy tournament is scheduled for August 16, 2010. Mr. Grillo reported that they have paid a bond payment of \$122,000 which covers the restaurant interest and principal, and also consists of the \$75,000 that we funded more money on the restaurant and the cart path work. Mr. Grillo stated that if we cannot make a payment we will have to ask the City to take it out of our escrow payment.

Mr. Grillo reported that there is a new credit card compliance law as of July 1, 2010. Credit cards are not allowed to be kept on file and a third party needs to be involved. A new fee will be associated with this new compliance issue.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Mr. Vorio reported that the golf course does not do well with weather extremes due to the ledge. Mr. Vorio reported that last June we had 8 inches of rain and this year we have heat and no rain and it is getting dry very quickly. In order to be in compliance with DEP, we are only allowed to take 50,000 gallons of water out of the pond and we need to buy the rest. We have been using all 50,000 gallons plus additional water just to keep the greens alive this past week. Mr. Vorio stated that he is trying to buy as little City water as possible. His staff has been focusing on watering greens and tees, the roughs are done and fairways are going into dormancy.

Mr. Virgulak asked about smoking on the golf course and the precautions that need to be taken. Mr. Andronaco stated that there are signs posted in several spots cautioning the golfers not to smoke on the golf course due to the dry conditions.

Mr. Vorio stated that due to the dry conditions he has raised the height of the mowers and his staff is not mowing as much and concentrating on repairing divots.

Mr. Kemenzides asked whether or not the rough was going to stay the way it is. Mr. Grillo stated that it gives the course more character.

Mr. Vorio stated that the hybrid irrigation system seems to be working as it's supposed to. Our consent order is up the end of October. Mr. Andronaco stated that he spoke to Martha Lemmon

about the July 15th deadline and she wanted to wait until the end July or beginning of August and get in touch with the DEP then and follow up.

Mr. Vorio stated that Joe O'Connor is rebuilding the aerators and he is extremely busy and is working on it.

Greens, Facilities & Water Use Committee

None.

Finance Committee

Mr. Aikenhead reported that he'd like to wait until Wally Englert's audit before we talk about the last fiscal year. Mr. Aikenhead stated that revenue was a disappointment for June 2010, the expenses are consistent and there is nothing out of line.

****MR. AIKENHEAD MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE BUDGET PRESENTED FOR '10-'11 AS SUBMITTED.**

****MR. CIFATTE SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Human Resource & Policy Committee

Mr. Andronaco stated that he wants to make sure that the sign is posted up at the Tennis Facility and that Mr. Grillo handle any disciplinary issues that come up.

Legal Committee

Mr. Corsello had been alerted to the problem at the Tennis Facility by Mr. Cifatte and had been given a copy of the lease. Mr. Corsello noted that there is a provision in the lease that states that 5 courts should be available to the public except during organized events. Mr. Corsello asked what is an "organized event" and "who is the public"? It is a complicated issue to enforce the lease and it needs to be clarified. Mr. Corsello recommended that when a new lease is drawn, the Oak Hills Authority would not want to leave this vague.

Master Plan Committee

None.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Grillo suggested that they should make a date for the Authority to go see the mini golf course in Paramus, NJ. It was agreed that a group of Authority members would travel to the mini golf course at 3:00 pm on Wednesday, July 14, 2010. They would meet at the Maintenance parking lot at Oak Hills.

NEW BUSINESS

Nominating Committee

Mr. Cifatte, the Chairman of the Nominating Committee, submitted the following nominees: Mr. Larry Andronaco, Chairman; Vice Chairman, Mr. Robert Virgulak; Treasurer, Mr. Thomas Aikenhead.

****MR. CIFATTE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE NOMINATIONS FOR 2010-2011.**

****MR. AIKENHEAD SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Cifatte thanked the nominees for "coming to the front" one more time.

Mr. Andronaco invited everyone to the Mayor's Trophy Tournament on Monday, August 16th and asked if anyone wanted to organize a foursome to play.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Andronaco thanked Mr. Cifatte, Chairman of the Tennis Liaison Committee, and his committee for all the work in the last month.

The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

****MR. ANDRONACO MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

****MR. DEPANFILIS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

****THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Danaë Franges