

MINUTES OF THE RACQUET SPORTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
May 12, 2021

The 4th meeting of the Racquet Sports Advisory Committee was held on 5/12/21.

ATTENDEES:

Rhett Parsons	Susan Morris	Cami Rogers	Gail Keiling
Terry Underkoffler	Araceli Popen	Karen Kaplan	
Patsy Workman	Patty Felix	Bob O'Malley	

Call To Order

The meeting was called to order by Rhett Parsons, Committee Chair.

Minutes

Minutes of the 4/13/21 meeting were sent out to committee members and approved in April and then posted on the Racquet Sports page of oceanpines.org as well.

Review of the Discussion of Completed Current and Planned Projects

Unfinished Business

- Signage at 4-way on Manklin Creek Rd: Debbie D. is working on procuring a temporary signage banner, as permanent signage is a longer-range goal.
- Installation of 911 location signage on grounds
- Racquet Center Brochure – update and revise, add Timeless Tennis under Platform Debbie
- Wifi code for guests-no update to report – waiting on Comcast
- Playground safety/parking issue: Debbie Donahue is in the process of applying to the county for a variance for installation of speed bumps.
A suggestion for in-street **Children Playing** signs is being considered for heavily attended events
- Parking lot light repair/replacement -poles have been installed and should be completed shortly
- Scanner for member registration is ready for installation. Members will need OP I.D. or Amenity Card to scan in
- 2 “touchless” water fountains to be installed, one near front and one on the side of the club house. Timeline unsure.

- Budget Update/YTD revenue.
 - Terry reports revenue short fall is a big concern and the efforts we are making with merchandise and events will help but we need to continue to recruit new members.
 - Reminder we have water bottles and shirts for sale at the clubhouse.

Update on issues from last meeting

- Meet Up group for OP Racquet Sports has a cost that may not be feasible, however Rhett will continue to look into this and Cami will see if funding can be obtained.
- 3-4 motion activated security cameras installation around tennis building is complete. The addition of motion activated lights will be considered if the new parking lot lights do not provide the required light around the building.
- Daily rate fee for platform and tennis: \$6 resident, \$7 non-resident
Tennis Guest Fee is \$10. **There is no longer a 6 visit limit for tennis guests players.**

Project updates-Tim

- Pickleball courts are drying, and Tennis hard courts repairs are nearly completed.
- Har-Tru Tennis courts maintenance completed- were reconditioned and redressed
- Cracks on platform courts next to be repaired
- Pickle ball courts court construction is currently in the architectural design phase with Vista Design and will be submitted to the county for approval after completion.
- The design and engineering for the ADA/instructional combo-court is on hold until after the new Pickle Ball courts are completed.
- Instead of canvas awnings, all 3 sports will get new umbrellas, including cantilever umbrellas, locations and timeline tba
- 4 new benches that were made for The Wall That Heals are now at the platform and pickleball courts

New Business

- Memorial Garden- contact Dale Ash with request for memorial plaques
- Bob suggested that the closing of all the pickleball courts to paid members during clinics and camps is an issue that should be discussed further
- Water in the tennis clubhouse will be provided for 25 cents per bottle/honor system (John McNult)
- Coffee and go-with items in the tennis clubhouse will now be funded by members donations.
- Sue Morris raised the issue of parking and a discussion was started on ways to reconfigure the layout of our expansion to provide options for parking. This discussion will continue with Vista Design and Terry.

Events Schedule

- June 5th Celebration of Life for Jim Freeman
- June 12th Dedication Ceremony for Paul Rusko on Court 3 after tennis round robin
- June 19th –USTA doubles tournament
- June 12-13th OP Classic 23rd Golf Outing

Pickleball:

- June 4th-6th NIKE Camp
- Linda's Drills: 3-5:30PM on Weds.
- Shoot-Out on Thursday evenings
- July 7th - 9th LEVEL UP- pickle courts will be closed
- August 7th Mary Mac Benefit Tournament
- September 7-9th Level Up
- October 9th- Pink Ribbon

PROMOTION

OP Platform Tennis 3-Point Vision to Increase Membership-see attached proposal for details.

1. Timeless Tennis clinics had 50 participants, 9 new memberships so far
2. Next up is promotion of Platform Tennis
3. Introduction of SPEC TENNIS on the Platform courts

The committee will meet on the second Wednesday of the month. Next meeting is on June 9th.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Kaplan
Secretary pro-tem

Ocean Pines Platform Tennis Association

3-Point Vision 2021-2022

Proposal by Araceli Popen and Karen Kaplan submitted for RAC agenda 5/6/2021

Like most OP amenities, the Platform Tennis Club membership was down in 2020. We have no way of knowing the extent to which COVID-19 affected any of the membership rolls. The OPPTA club has developed a 3-Point Plan to increase its membership by promoting Timeless Tennis, promoting Platform Tennis, and by introducing Spec Tennis as a platform sport. In turn, new memberships will offset the cost of operating our club and will generate income for the Ocean Pines Association.

1. Increase membership via promotion of Timeless Tennis.

Background: In 2014, Araceli Popen and Jim Freeman of Platform Tennis proposed Timeless Tennis to the Ocean Pines Association Board as an offshoot of the Platform Tennis Club. Last month, Araceli's connection with Kelly Resaro recently brought both Timeless Tennis and Ocean Pines Tennis under the wing of the USTA/Middle States/Delaware District with Kelly as our tennis service representative. This brings more credibility to Timeless, to Platform, and to Ocean Pines Tennis as well.

Timeless Tennis is a bridge to & from tennis.

It provides a simple pathway for anyone to get into tennis and makes tennis fun again for those who are no longer fans of the full-size tennis court.

The Plan: Earlier this year, our Platform Membership Committee formulated a plan to promote Timeless Tennis by offering four free clinics in April. Our goal was twofold: introduce more members of the community to this fun tennis game on the Platform courts, and increase Platform Tennis membership. If our plan was successful, we could apply a similar promotion strategy to attract new dedicated Platform Tennis players.

Here is how we approached the promotion of the Timeless Tennis clinics (at our own expense):

- Created a Facebook page **Timeless Tennis OP** (also purchased an ad boost)
- Created a **Timeless Tennis OP Website:** timelesstennisop.org
- Purchased 2 cases (48 cans/3 balls per can) of low-compression tennis balls for the clinics
- Purchased business cards promoting Timeless (for members to hand out)

- Purchased and hung a substantial 3' x 8' Timeless Tennis OP banner to promote Timeless at the Platform courts and to lend credibility to the sport
- Submitted numerous articles and calendar posts about the clinics to *The Courier*, *newshub@delmarvanow*, *The Bayside Gazette*, and *The OP Independent*
- Created flyers and posted them around the community
- Contacted the OP Marketing Department to garner mentions in *This Week in Ocean Pines* and requesting any other help that they could arrange
- Platform members Araceli Popen, Barb Dau, and Karen Kaplan managed and provided instruction gratis at all four clinics (hosting 50 players)

Goal Achieved: The Timeless Tennis clinics hosted both ladies and gentlemen attendees. Number of attendees: Clinic 1: 16; Clinic 2: 12; Clinic 3: 12; Clinic 4: 12. Since the April 16th clinic, seven attendees have purchased Platform Tennis memberships. Numerous others have been utilizing their 30-day trial membership by regularly attending the Timeless drop-ins. Timeless has been received with much enthusiasm, and we anticipate that after the 30-day trial, more players will either purchase a Platform Tennis membership or pay the daily fee to attend the drop-ins, thereby generating increased revenue.

2. Increase membership via immediate promotion of free Saturday lessons for Platform Tennis using the same promotional processes that brought us success with Timeless Tennis: increased exposure with the assistance of the OP Marketing Department, spotlighting our club and Saturday lessons in *Ocean Pines This Week* and social media, a mention on the Ocean Parkway marquees, the submitting of articles and calendar events to the local papers, the posting of flyers, distribution of business cards by our members, and our creation of a Platform Tennis FB page.

3. Increase membership with the introduction of a new sport for the Platform courts: SPEC TENNIS. Spec Tennis is played with Platform Tennis paddles, an orange dot low-compression tennis ball, and uses no-ad tennis scoring. Players get only one serve, so the majority of the time spent on the court is actually playing Spec Tennis. It's played on a 44' x 20' court. . . Perfect on our Platform Tennis courts!

Spec Tennis is a bridge to & from tennis.

It provides a simple pathway for anyone to get into tennis and makes tennis fun again for those who are no longer fans of the full-size tennis court.

Generate Income: We will utilize the same techniques to promote Spec Tennis that we have used with Timeless Tennis and Platform Tennis to generate interest and participation. This in turn will increase membership, thereby generating income and offsetting club operating expenses. Additionally, we will create “for fee” programs to be promoted by the OPA in the Activities Brochure, The Ocean Pines Report, and other local publications.

- Offer free introductory adult lessons/clinics
- Host drop-ins and establish leagues, i.e. increase Platform Tennis membership
- Create “**for fee**” Spec Tennis Kids’ at 2 levels: Grades 3-5 & 6-8,
- Create “**for fee**” family programs

On behalf of the OPPT, we ask for the moral support of Tennis and Pickleball, as we are all working together to maximize the potential and efficiency of the OP Racquet Center. We ask for the moral and financial support of the OPA in providing us with the support that we need (publicity and supplies) to execute this plan successfully. We believe we have a track record with the success of our Timeless Tennis project.

We look forward to getting approval to move ahead with this project, which will benefit both Platform Tennis the OP Racquet Center and The OPA.