

Dear WTA members:

2022 proved to be another eventful and successful year for the Whistler Tennis Association. With the rezoning process for the Northlands Boulevard property kicking into a higher gear, we were very busy advocating for the protection of recreation—and more specifically tennis—in the community. This involved many internal board meetings among the directors, as well as a constant effort to remain engaged with external stakeholders, including resort council, municipal staff, the Beedie Group, and— most importantly—our members. Some of the more notable highlights from this year are as follows:

- In March we produced a 27-page slide deck that highlighted the global growth of tennis and outlined all the economic, social, and health benefits that the sport provides to Whistler. The WTA formally presented this document to both the Beedie Group and Whistler's Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee at separate meetings last spring. The file has also been posted to our website for WTA members to review.
- In April, the WTA collaborated with the WRC to host a Pro Doubles Clinic and Pro Am event that provided members of the Whistler tennis community the unique opportunity to hit with the legendary 12-time Grand Slam doubles tennis champion Daniel Nestor. This event sold-out, demonstrating once again that there is the strong support for the sport of tennis in Whistler.
- In May we organized a meeting between Anita Comella, the Senior Director of Facilities at Tennis Canada, and some local community stakeholders in Whistler, including members of the Beedie Group and municipal council, to discuss the growth of tennis in Canada and the support that Tennis Canada is providing to local communities for the expansion of indoor tennis facilities across the country.
- Last June, in response to the first draft of the redevelopment concepts that Beedie and staff submitted to council, the WTA launched an online petition to Save the WRC. We used this very effective medium to express our objections to the fact that these conceptual drawings had completely eliminated the presence of the WRC on the Northlands Blvd. site without

providing for any alternate location anywhere else in Whistler. The petition gathered nearly 2700 signatures, sent a very strong message to council, and positively influenced the next phases of the rezoning process.

- Subsequent to our online petition, the WTA mobilized the tennis community in Whistler to provide a very strong presence at an open council meeting and a “town hall” meeting that the RMOW held to solicit community feedback on the aforementioned conceptual plans that Beedie had submitted for the redevelopment of the Northlands Blvd property. Once again, our voice was heard and council received the message loud and clear that recreation, and specifically the WRC, must be protected through the rezoning process.
- Also in June, the WTA hosted a fundraiser at the WRC, featuring a morning of free introductory tennis lessons and an afternoon of round robin doubles tennis matches. Although some unforeseen operational issues at the club impacted the event, we still managed to have lots of fun. We also raised over \$3000 from a silent auction that will go toward funding the WTA’s ongoing advocacy efforts. We thank all of those who were involved in planning, managing, and participating in this event.
- Finally, in the fall, the WTA was very engaged in the municipal elections that were held in Whistler. Our board and members had a strong presence at a number of all-candidates meetings, including a very well-attended event that was held at the WRC. Our vocal efforts were successful at influencing the election agenda and making recreation—and in particular the preservation of tennis in the community—an important election issue. Most notably, we directly solicited each candidate to state explicitly where he/she stood on the future of a multi-use racquet/recreation facility in Whistler. We then shared this information with our members to help inform them on their voting decisions. We feel this had a high impact on the process as it put each candidate on record and effected an outcome in which all councilors who were elected have explicitly stated their support for recreation to be a prominent component of the redevelopment process for Northlands.

Despite this long list of achievements in 2022, there are a couple of initiatives that were included in last year's President's report which remain a work in progress. The first is the Common Ground agreement that we had hoped to sign with Whistler's Pickleball community. It was a disappointment to us that we were unable to establish a set of core principles and objectives to which both groups could officially agree. Similarly, we could not convince the Sea to Sky Pickleball Club to exchange explicit endorsements of our respective visions for the configuration of a future racquet facility in Whistler (ours being for six indoor and four outdoor tennis courts).

Nevertheless, I am pleased to report that we have still maintained a respectable and highly collaborative relationship with Whistler's pickleball community. Indeed, many of the WTA's accomplishments this year would not have been possible without the joint support of the Sea to Sky Pickleball Club. This is no small feat, as the inherent conflict between these two sports has proven to be a difficult needle to thread for all tennis associations in North America, not just ours in Whistler. We are therefore proud of what we have been able to achieve together and look forward to more collaborative successes in the future.

The second item that remains a work in progress for the WTA is the resurfacing of the courts at the WRC. Although we cooperated with the WRC earlier this year to successfully lobby the Beedie Group for a comprehensive repair of the indoor courts at the club, the outdoor courts remain in a state of complete disrepair. In fact, this was the first year since the WRC opened in 1993 that residents of, and visitors to, Whistler were unable to play any outdoor tennis at the club. We believe it is not only unacceptable that the owners of a prominent facility in a world-class resort like Whistler neglect any sporting infrastructure to this degree, but we also see it as an outright violation of the covenants that are attached to this property. We have been very vocal with Beedie and council on this issue all year.

The good news is that the Beedie Group has been responsive to our concerns. In fact, just this week we received confirmation from one of their representatives that the costs of repairing the outdoor tennis courts at the WRC has been approved in the company's most recent budget, and that they are now in the process of awarding the work to one of two contractors who have submitted bids.

If all goes according to plan, the courts will be ready for play for the summer of 2023!

As we come to the close of another very eventful year for the WTA, I want to thank my fellow board members for their support and hard work in 2022. As this report proudly demonstrates, these are directors who like to get things done; and I feel privileged to be a part of their success and energy. I also want to thank the management of the WRC for their ongoing support of our efforts and their continued promotion of the sport of tennis in the community. It is equally important for the WTA to acknowledge the help that we received from members of the local media in 2022. Specifically, I want to thank Brandon Barrett at the Pique who wrote a series of articles over the course of the year, including a notable opinion piece, that expressed the need to preserve recreation—and tennis in particular—during the Northlands redevelopment process.

Finally, I want to thank you, our members, for your ongoing support. Here I will simply repeat what I said last year: our mission is all about you and our collective love for the game of tennis. We urge you to continue your advocacy efforts for a year-round tennis facility in Whistler, remain vocal with all stakeholders in the community, and stay active in the sport and at the club. With the Northlands redevelopment process now underway, we are finally approaching the end of this long and grueling match. Although we may have established a commanding lead, we must stay focused and engaged until we win that last and final point!

Ben Cherniavsky, WTA President

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