

## **Mohawk Park Tennis Club – Meeting Minutes (April 14, 2022)**

**Chairperson: Alex Gregory**

**Minutes Taker: Alex Gregory**

### **AGENDA**

#### **Board of Directors Meeting**

**Thursday, April 14, 2022 (7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.)**

#### **1. Call to Order/Welcome**

Called to Order by Alex Gregory at 7:06 p.m.

Members Present: Carole Perrotti, Ravi DeSouza, Katherine Mcinnis, Nicholas Knight, Ingrid Clarke-Pitt, Alex Gregory, Igor Knezic (new member)

Alex called the meeting to order and thanked the board members in attendance at the meeting. A brief discussion was held regarding the availability through virtual means – a format board members were comfortable continuing indefinitely, given that the traditional method of meeting in-person is a concern for some attendees due to past pandemic restrictions and close seating in a physical location.

All of the board members provided introductions to each other prior to the discussion of the constitution and by-laws.

#### **2. Discussion of Constitution and By-Laws:**

Carole provided a brief primer regarding the Club's current Constitution and By-Laws, highlighting the current of the Club's policies and procedures. She noted that there were no major changes beyond past advice from City liaisons to remove the specific year identifier in said by-laws in order to make the Constitution less reliant on a certain time period.

Carole brought up the issue of meeting quorum, specifically regarding the usage of voting via email and surveys canvassing board members as to their preference for signaling their vote on specific topics. Carole noted that it is important for the majority of members to vote as much as possible, particularly regarding major expansion changes that have the potential to drastically change engagement or attendance at the club. She said that responding to either a survey or showing up at a meeting has taken a longer time over the past few months for board members, primarily due to the busy nature of some schedules.

Carole requested that it would be a good idea to have people vote via email within a certain time period and allowing for extra time (i.e. an extra week) so that they can convey their thoughts on certain club discussions or decisions.

Alex agreed with Ingrid's suggestion, noting that the Club has been trying to spur engagement, particularly as organizations have moved towards all-digital formats due to the pandemic, and that as the Club moved through 2020 and 2021, it will be important to communicate more clearly.

Alex summarized the prior discussion for Ingrid, who arrived a few minutes after the start of the meeting, and indicated that the discussion was moving towards what the right amount of quorum would be for an annual general meeting. Both Carole and Alex suggested that 10 per cent of the total membership would be a good metric to steer towards for AGM involvement, particularly as these metrics were based on prior discussions with Sharlene Murray (City of Mississauga liaison).

A suggestion was made to solicit proxy votes before each AGM, so to make the voting process easier on families that may not be able to attend due to their schedules – this could be done when the AGM invite is sent out. The number of potential “votes” per year changes, noted Carole, which makes defining 8-10 per cent of the active membership more difficult, particularly in cases of children voting.

(For instance, if the Club were to raise membership rates for the 2023 AGM, a survey would be sent out asking for voting/feedback, with proxy votes being accepted prior to the meeting.)

### **3. Matters Arising from the Agenda:**

- **2022 Membership Rates / Club Overview (Carole)**

Carole thanked the board members in attendance for their continuing support over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, and noted that there has been a significant amount of changing circumstances in regards to City of Mississauga guidance, particularly concerning by-laws. The Club has seen increased interest for tennis programming across the board, particularly as the City informed the Club that the total number of community club tennis members in Mississauga increased by 39% from 2020 to 2021.

The Club had 135 playing members in 2021 at Mohawk Park, along with 30 individuals who were involved in programs, as well as the open house events that were held throughout the summer of 2021, featuring participants who were not regular members. Although the Club did not have a waiting list, managing capacity scheduling and programming activities weren't easy, given the ongoing challenges of the pandemic and the increased interest from residents regarding programs. Additionally, the Club had interest from numerous participants who asked to book time on the courts despite not wanting to become members. This trend is expected to continue through 2022.

**Regarding the 2022 membership fees, the subject was broached the week before the AGM, and Carole and Ingrid asked to confirm pricing. The planned pricing would:**

**Junior (under 18 years, as of April 1, 2022) - \$60**

**Young at Heart (60 years and above) - \$30 (subsidized by the Club)**

**Adult - \$90**

**Family of up to 4 (living at same residence) - \$150**

Carole gave a brief historical summary of club membership rates, noting that rates have been kept as low as possible, given overhead costs, and that when the pandemic began (and the Club started its season late), \$10 were taken off all membership rates. There are no planned delays or extenuating circumstances for 2022.

The board agreed to accept the planned membership rates for 2022.

A mailing campaign has also been planned to spur membership and engagement over the coming months, via Canada Post. An open house will also be held for members and non-members on the Apr. 23-24 weekend.

- **Compliance Update (Nicholas)**

Nicholas gave a brief summary of compliance efforts for the Club over the past year, particularly regarding instituting a “zero tolerance” code of conduct at the Club, particularly in cases of harassment and bullying.

He noted that an investigation found several instances where this kind of behaviour was happening, and that the new code of conduct will be strict enforced for all members.

Additionally, confidentiality statements (NDAs) have been created for all board members, volunteers and committees. Board members and committee members who have signed that statement will need to adhere to all terms and conditions.

- **President`s Message (Alex)**

Alex gave a brief summary of the Club`s efforts to continue providing tennis programs to local residents over the course of the pandemic, noting how it feeds into the larger goal of getting people active and promoting the sport of tennis within Mississauga.

To that end, the Club has cultivated a long-lasting working relationship with the City of Mississauga – specifically, its Club Liaison, Sharlene Murray. The Club has been very mindful of the changing nature and circumstances facing sports clubs since 2020, particularly as many of those clubs and programs have expanded their offerings to members. To that end, the Ontario Trillium Foundation grant that the Club received in 2021 has been used to augment tennis and physical activity programming for adults seniors and help bridge the Club`s activities to a much wider audience.

Being able to deal with a city liaison who has such a great understanding of the needs of sport clubs has been very beneficial for the Club, especially with its involvement in the registrar program and making sure the board of directors is advised on bylaws and constitution. Augmenting that with the City's changing protocol for sports clubs has been a very interesting experience, and one that the Club expects to continue moving forward for a long time to come, he said.

- **Budget Discussion (Ingrid)**

Ingrid began by mentioning the initial payment for the Ontario Trillium Foundation grant, which was received through a grant process, in Mar. 2021. Because of extenuating circumstances with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Club wasn't able to effectively invest the budget in programming and capital project for the accessibility port-a-lette. This had the effect of causing changes to the 2021 budget, due to the Club not easily having access to capital resources/providers to get several projects done, though court repairs were completed during this time period. The Club was also able to purchase some of the required equipment needed for the grant, including new nets and windscreens, which would be placed up imminently at the Club.

In addition to continuing expansion plans, the Club was supposed to be able to get an accessible port-a-let built, but that was unable to be completed during the 2021 season.

Tennis programming, delivered through the Young at Heart program via the OTF funding, helped subsidize fees for adult residents with focus on residents over the age of 60. In addition, there were several promotional endeavours and events that the Club was able to take advantage of to keep rates low for members.

Of the \$163,000 in OTF funding that was given through the first payment, approx. \$117,000 remained at the end of the previous season. Ingrid noted that the 2022 budget reflects the current remaining amount from the first payment. Ingrid further explained that she hopes the season will commence without any further delays, as there are several projects still due to be completed along with equipment to purchase.

In the non-profit income section, Ingrid noted that she placed a note of a scheduled payment, due to the Club liaising with OTF again in August. At that time, the Club will be able to show them that payment is necessary in order to complete the year, and that by the end of the season, the Club will have spent about \$180,000.

Alex also noted that it has taken a long amount of time for the Club to get familiar with the “eccentricities” of the digital format, owing to virtual meetings and calls with OTF advisors. He said that the Club is hoping to make up for lost time this season and is definitely hitting the ground running on a number of fronts. This includes an official event that will hopefully be held later this year in recognition of the OTF grants, pending completion of the provincial and municipal elections in Mississauga.

Ingrid summarized that the OTF payments for the grant (a three-year project) are set out in scheduled times, and if progress isn't shown on the status of the projects due to be completed, they will not stack payments.

#### **4. Club Pro Update (Ravi)**

Ravi began his presentation by noting the earlier discussion from Alex about the mailout postcard promoting the Club, and how it will increase engagement and enrolment. Additionally, mobile signs have been placed at key intersections in the city in order to attract interest, including a sign placed at Queensway and Hensall Circle, Cawthra near North Service Road and Cawthra near Rathburn Road East. These signs will help boost engagement through the season.

Ravi noted that the Club has been receiving a lot of phone calls and emails regarding interest in the season, which is a great sign for the coming months, particularly after two years of pandemic restrictions.

Moving into set dates, the season will begin with an opening event on Apr. 23. Ravi said he had been working on the possibility of holding events such as tennis trials for kids/adults, or even some social round robin to herald the launch of the season. The schedule for those plans is yet to be determined, but would most likely require advance booking from participants.

Due to COVID-19, new windscreens were ordered, but arrived late due to supply chain programs. This resulted in one part of the Club fence not being properly windscreened for the season.

Ravi said he had been in contact with the contractor who provided the windscreens, and that delivery would be finalized imminently regarding installation of the windscreens for the seasons. The windscreens are nine-foot high screens that go around the entire perimeter of the club and make it feel much more private to play tennis in.

In relation to nets, some grant funding was spent on brand new nets last year. Those nets remained in very good condition at the end of the year, and will be utilized again.

Regarding shoe tags, COVID has caused a shortage of materials, making options for tags more limited. Ravi showed two different shape designs to the board members previously for consideration, and that he would most likely look towards sourcing a silver-and-black shoetag – due to it being in a surplus of availability, as opposed to other colours.

In relation to the round robins, the tournaments are planned to run on two separate slots (7:30-8:30 and/or 8:30-9:30 PM). A Wednesday morning Round Robin session will also be offered from 10:30-11:30 AM, and it will be done through a booking system, either online, by phone or by text or email. The cost per participant will be \$5, to pay for the tennis balls that will be in supply to members at all time. Ravi said he was holding these tournaments on his volunteer time as a Club Pro, and that if there were questions regarding his involvement, to reach out to him.

The Round Robin tournament is a one hour session per member, if space is still available. Ravi noted that last year was a bit of a challenge, as a number of players wanted to play both hours. If space is available this year, members can play for both hours of the Friday session. Ravi also mentioned that the idea of a later tournament is a great idea he would love to see at the end of the season, but it's still subject to availability.

The Club's involvement in Bollywood Monster Mashup has been confirmed for July 23, 2022 at Mississauga Celebration Square – a long-running connection between MPTC and MonstrARTity, the organizers of the event. The Club's booth will include tennis lessons for kids and promotion for the Young at Heart program.

## **5. Membership and Marketing (Katherine)**

Katherine gave a summary of membership for 2021 – with 135 members, 26 of which were family memberships. Additionally, 18 of those memberships were for adult single memberships, 16 were junior memberships, 12 were Young at Heart members and an extra 30 per cent who were not members, but attended the free open houses. Compared to the year prior, the Club had a shift in membership engagement, particularly in the way members could register online and how they needed to go to the Club in person to receive their shoe tag.

The Club has also seen a large number of interested participants who are not members, but who still want to get on the court. This is the reason for the validation process, which is to ensure the validity of registration and ensure the highest level of security possible. Katherine brought up an incident that occurred two years earlier, where a member brought a friend into the club who wasn't registered, which had to be dealt with at the time.

2022 will not have any guest passes issued for interested players. "You're either a member or you're not." This is not the same as the open houses, which are hosted so that people can come in and try out the courts while being supervised.

Regarding DocuSign, an online process was implemented to make communication and document-signing between board members and interested registrants easier, as well as lean in to digital protocols initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic. This will help ensure that the Club has accountability and tracking across the board.

A brief discussion was also held regarding the historical trends of pricing at the Club and helping to subsidize programming through grants and other avenues, particularly given the Club's non-profit status and its prior outreach to residents in the Ward 7 catchment area. A discussion was also held about encouraging female players to get involved in tennis, particularly given the pandemic's disproportionate impact on women and the associated social impact.

The board also briefly discussed different types of activities used to market programs at the club, including past instances of helming Yoga (and TRX) programs, which they hope will carry through and expand in the future through the OTF grants and other associated donations, which will spur outreach and offer subsidized programming.

Katherine and Carole noted that the Club will also be offering a contract role for someone who's able to do coordination for the OTF grant. A job description for the role will be posted on the MPTC website and on Charity Village.

## **6. Other Business – Commercial Liability Insurance**

Carole said that she is currently in the process of sourcing and renewing the commercial liability for the Club, and that she had been talking with two providers regarding directors insurance. That process should be finalized by the end of the month.

## **7. Election and Appointment of New Board Members**

Carole provided a summary of the current Club roles and responsibilities for Directors, including President, Secretary, Marketing, Communications and Special Officers, noting that the descriptions haven't changed since last year. She noted that the documentation will be signed via DocuSign, an online program that utilizes e-signatures as part of binding documents.

The following roles were given an overview and affirmed by the existing Board members, in an expedited manner, contingent on further discussion.

- Alex Gregory affirmed his continued interest in the role of President, and was acclaimed in the role.
- Ingrid Clarke-Pitt affirmed her continued interest in the role of Treasurer, and was acclaimed in the role.
- Katherine Mcinnis affirmed her continued interest in the role of Membership Director, and was acclaimed in the role.
- Nicholas Knight affirmed his continued interest in the role of Compliance Director, and was acclaimed in the role.
- Carole Perrotti affirmed her continued interest in the role of Marketing Director, and was acclaimed in the role.

A unanimous vote was given after all positions were read and interest was affirmed to acclaim all interested board members.

#### **8. Other Business**

Ingrid noted that she had forgot to mention during the budget discussion that an auditor has been appointed for the Club to help with the OTF audits. Chang and Associates will be preparing and filing the Club's corporate income tax and financial statements for review and reporting.

A participant in the meeting, Igor, thanked the board members for inviting him to the AGM, and noted that he was excited as a new member to be playing at the Club. He also expressed interest in helping at the Bollywood Monster Mashup event, which Ravi said he would follow-up with him regarding.

Alex concluded the meeting by thanking the board members and guests in attendance, and noted that if there were additional concerns, that the board could be reached through email and direct in the coming days and weeks.

**The meeting concluded at 8:30 PM.**