

TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Information for Town Council Meeting on January 9, 2024

To: Mayor and Town Council

Via: Kirk W. Blouin, Town Manager

From: Grier Pressly, Recreation Advisory Commission Chairperson

Re: Recreation Advisory Commission Annual Presentation

Date: January 9, 2024

GENERAL INFORMATION

The contents of the annual Recreation Advisory Commission (RAC) report include the following:

Commission Membership/Meetings
Par 3 Golf Course
Tennis Operations
Morton and Barbara Mandel Recreation Center

Commission Membership/Meetings

The RAC is comprised of seven regular members. Each member serves a three-year term, with a chairperson and vice-chairperson selected as necessary. The Commission held three regular meetings in the calendar year 2023 (January, April, and October). The current Commission membership is as follows:

Commissioner	Position	Term Expires
Grier Pressly	Chair	4/25
Peter Harris	Vice-Chair	4/24
Millie Dayton	Regular Member	4/25
Henry 'Budge' Jamison	Regular Member	4/25
David Missner	Regular Member	4/26
Devon Roush	Regular Member	4/26
Susan Watts	Regular Member	4/24

Mrs. Devon Roush was the only new appointment to the Commission in 2023. Mr. Missner's original appointment was in July 2022, to complete the term vacated by Ms. Schonwald Vila.

Par 3 Golf Course

In the face of challenging weather conditions marked by intense heat and persistent rain during the summer and early fall, the golf course persevered and thrived, recording an unparalleled 55,481 rounds in FY23. This remarkable achievement was complimented by robust merchandise sales that reached an all-time high of \$878k. Thanks to these combined efforts and the impeccable course conditions maintained throughout the year, staff proudly announce that they've set a new benchmark by achieving a record revenue of \$5.09 million in FY23! By comparison, in FY21, the record was \$3.6M.

Another notable highlight is the nomination of Tony Chateauvert for the National PGA Merchandiser of the Year Award. This recognition can be attributed significantly to the diligent efforts of Assistant Golf Manager, Sabrina Gordon. Sabrina's expertise in curating and designing the pro shop's collection has been instrumental. Her keen eye for apparel and accessories has resonated well with both residents and visitors, making the shop a favorite destination for many.

On the instructional front, the program experienced its most active year to date. The daily golf clinics and lessons, known for their affordability and engaging nature, have been a hit among enthusiasts.

A huge thank you to Superintendent Tim Campbell and his staff for a successful year of course maintenance and clubhouse projects.

Restaurant

Staff negotiated a 10-year extension with Al Fresco that runs through June of 2033. The restaurant continues to thrive, with another sales record in FY23. This impressive achievement attests to the quality of the restaurant's food and service, its reputation for excellence, not to mention the scenic views.

Some notable improvements to the golf operations this year:

- In September the clubhouse exterior received a fresh coat of paint along with the interior front portion of the clubhouse
- All AC units at the clubhouse were replaced in late September
- The parking lot expansion was completed on the northwest side of the lot in October, additional landscaping is being added to enhance the separation between the lot and the tee box on #9
- The cart path on #17 was rerouted to improve the safety and aesthetics of the course
- Harry Bowers redesigned the putting green and it was nearly doubled in size, grow-in of the green should be done in early January

- Staff continue to take advantage of earned marketing opportunities on collaborations with outlets such as the Golf Channel, in addition the Par 3's Instagram (palmbeachpar3) is up to over 4,800 followers, with professional shots added weekly
- The course was aerified three times this summer in addition to dry-jetting
- Concrete work was done between the parking lot and the driving range to help prevent runoff of crushed rock into the parking lot and other high erosion spots

Seaview and Phipps Ocean Park Tennis Centers

The tennis centers are in high demand, especially in the morning. Tennis professionals, led by Head Pro Dejan Minic, USPTA/PTR, and his dedicated team, have fully booked schedules on most days.

The Seaview Tennis Court recently underwent a significant lighting upgrade. The transition to LED lighting in early June has not only enhanced the quality of light but also improved energy efficiency. Meanwhile, the project aimed at renovating the courts and fencing at Seaview encountered delays. These were attributed to material shortages and concerns over potential disruptions to team tennis. However, the project is expected to commence in early June. To ensure the Seaview Courts remain in top condition for the season, the staff undertook commendable resurfacing work late this summer.

Some additional improvements to the tennis operations this year:

- Both pro-shops received a refresh and expanded lines of apparel with a new logo introduced, merchandise shop sales more than doubled year over year
- A cabinet and ice machine was installed in the Pro Shop at Phipps Ocean Park Tennis Center in December
- Refreshed look for the restrooms at Phipps, complete with a new coat of paint and updated mirrors
- Shade canopies have been added to courts 6 & 7 at Seaview Park Tennis Center
- Staying on top of routine items to limit court downtime at Phipps and Seaview:
 - adding clay, replacing lines, net post maintenance, net repairs, windscreen maintenance, edges being scraped and re-conditioned, and gate repairs
 - irrigation enhancements, landscape beautification
- A contractor was hired to take care of daily court maintenance, this will free up existing staff to work on more projects and maintenance items throughout Seaview Park and all Recreation facilities
- The pickleball lines were removed from Seaview's Court 7, following a decision by the Recreation Advisory Commission in April
- New scoreboards at Phipps and Seaview were added to each court

Morton and Barbara Mandel Recreation Center

Programming

Revenue for the Mandel Recreation Center broke the record set last year by 12.7%, with total revenue exceeding \$926k. The Mandel Recreation Center offered over 200 programs through

FY23. The ever-popular After School Program welcomed 30 participants each day. Camp Palm Beach was at full capacity as 75 kids were welcomed each week of the eight-week camp. The After School Program incorporated several new outreach programs into the daily schedule of activities including What's Cooking Kids, Cox Science Center Portable Planetarium, Get Fit 4 Kidz with a mobile escape room, as well as safe archery and axe throwing. Participants continue to learn about finance and economics with the return of the Dreyfoos Economics Club that comes to teach the After School Program kids on a regular basis.

In the quest to enhance operational efficiency, staff introduced the ProCare App. This application was pivotal in streamlining attendance management and simplifying the sign-in/out procedures. Its success during the summer camp has led to its adoption for all Mandel programs.

The sports offerings witnessed enthusiastic participation. Children actively participated in programs like Story Time Soccer, Perseverance Basketball Camp, and RUSH Soccer. These sports not only keep the kids active but also instill in them the values of teamwork and perseverance. RUSH Soccer is in its second season and has been so successful that it expanded the program to four age groups, doubling its numbers. This program complements our recreation league, where participants hone their skills working up to the competitive league.

Some highlights from preschool and youth enrichment and sports programs include the new What's Cooking Kids where participants learn cooking skills, kitchen safety, and cleanliness as well as how to make healthy food choices. Some programs are so popular that mini-sessions have been added to the schedule to accommodate demand. Youth Flag Football and Lacrosse continue to be popular. Adult programs include language classes, Mah Jongg, and the newly added Ballroom Dance.

Fitness

Personal training has reached unprecedented popularity at the fitness center with staff conducting over 1,100 sessions in FY23, the most in any year. Group Fitness participation also reached an all-time high in the new building during FY23. The fitness center sold a record 357 memberships, with annual memberships continuing to be the most popular choice for members, most likely due to its affordability and the inclusion of complimentary spa-like amenities. The complimentary amenities with the annual membership include the use of the Somadome, Compression Therapy, and the InBody.

Café

The Seaview Café opened in May! See owner-operator Monika Meic for a fresh-pressed espresso or an alluring fresh green smoothie. There are several fresh food options as well, and the menu continues to expand. If you have a cheat day saved up, stop by for the irresistible Italian-style gelato produced by talented local artisans.

Seaview Park

The playground is one of the busiest outdoor properties per square foot on the island! Families enjoy the unique offerings and the shade trees that keep it cooler year-round.

The dominant turf, Bermuda Latitude, is growing and held up well in the extreme summer weather. Staff applied various items over the summer (as much organic as possible) to offset the effects of high temperatures and the extremely wet South Florida summer. The overall health of the turf improved dramatically from late spring to early fall. Mole crickets wreaked havoc on portions of the front lawn, but staff have addressed the issue and placed sod during the second week of October. Staff continues to enhance the outdoor facilities with continued turf maintenance improvement, landscape maintenance, and minor building maintenance.

Some additional highlights from 2023:

- Facility rentals were at an all-time high in FY23 and are already off to a strong start in FY24 as residents are in awe of seeing firsthand the potential of the Mandel Recreation Center spaces. The Smith Family Fieldhouse, within the Mandel Recreation Center, hosted a number of private and community events, including The Palm Beach Civic Association's Welcome Back Community Forum on November 7th
- Marketing and communication efforts of the department are continuing to grow, with the weekly RecConnect leading the way reaching over 2,600 subscribers. The emails have seen a steady increase in open rates, currently 54%, significantly above the 17-21% average across all industries
- Instagram followers (townofpalmbeachrecreation) are up to 2,464 and counting, resulting in more direct communication with the community
- The Torque Tank M4 (modern day sled on wheels) was added to the multipurpose room to enhance the personal training offerings
- A huge map of Palm Beach island was added to the hallway leading to the fieldhouse at the Mandel, it has been well received with residents and visitors often reviewing it
- More robust, portable pickleball nets were added for both the indoor and outdoor courts
- A new commercial washer and dryer was installed at the Recreation Center
- Speakers in the fieldhouse were blown and were replaced under warranty in June
- The proposed pergola, which received the full support of the RAC in January, is awaiting ARCOM approval
- All exterior hard ground and vertical surfaces were pressure washed in early September.
- Staff put on the annual Spring Celebration that nearly 250 residents enjoyed as 4,000 candy-filled eggs were scattered across the Oakley Gage Debbs field
- Staff put on the Mandel's 3rd Birthday Bash on January 21st, 2023 with nearly 300 residents in attendance throughout the event that included steel drums, games, a bounce house, and an appearance by the "Frozen" characters
- The Halloween Happenings event had great participation, with over 250 residents
- Staff continue to host movies on the lawn during the cooler months, with the next one scheduled for January 26th with the showing of The Polar Express
- For the third year in a row a \$10,000 gift was received from the Friends of Recreation to cover up to \$500 for each employee who registered their child for a week of summer camp. This was well received by employees and the funds were fully exhausted
- The Friends of Recreation have also pledged \$25,000 towards the proposed pergola on the southwest corner of the Mandel Recreation Center
- The Palm Beach County City Managers hosted their monthly meeting at the Mandel in September, with 30 representatives from city managers' offices across the county

- Please mark your calendars, the Mandel's 4th Birthday Celebration will be held Saturday, January 20th on the front lawn, enjoy brunch bites and family-friendly games and music

Conclusion

Overall, the members of the RAC, in conjunction with the Department, had an exceptionally fruitful year and are looking forward to the possibilities that 2024 holds. Far from being complacent, we are just beginning the journey towards even greater achievements.

Year-by-year revenue dashboard by division:

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Tennis	\$ 229,140	\$ 220,338	\$ 245,471	\$ 348,178	\$ 426,063	\$ 480,097
Recreation	\$ 305,340	\$ 157,199	\$ 230,911	\$ 565,206	\$ 821,079	\$ 926,179
Golf	\$ 2,245,084	\$ 2,455,267	\$ 2,288,355	\$ 3,651,435	\$ 4,342,191	\$ 5,096,539

cc: Recreation Advisory Commission
Carolyn Stone, Assistant Town Manager
Mark Bresnahan, Director of Recreation
Rance Gaede, Assistant Director of Recreation
Tony Chateauvert, Golf Manager
Ashley Kelly, Office Manager