



STAFF REPORT
Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting
April 16, 2024

Fitness

Membership at the fitness center continued at a high level through the early part of February with the total active members still eclipsing the 300 mark. Membership levels historically drop off slowly during the later part of March and pick up again in the early fall. Personal training remains a top choice for our residents with a remarkable 505 sessions booked in the second quarter of FY24. Coffee and Conversations is growing in popularity with residents, the next session is on plastic surgery, specifically addressing procedures following injuries and weight loss. This session is scheduled for 11am on Friday, April 26th – it is the final talk of the season, wrapping up a series of seven monthly discussions that began in October. Topics have included healthy eating habits, the importance of sleep, alcohol consumption, maintaining a positive mindset, and heart health.

Programming

The winter session that began the week of January 7, saw a big uptick in adult program registration with a five-fold increase (6 to 30) from the fall session. The popularity of the language programs, Mah Jongg, and the addition of Ballroom Dance were the primary reasons for the increase. Adult programming continues to be an area that staff expect continued growth in the coming years. Youth enrichment saw a 10% increase and youth sports saw a 25% increase in participation from the fall session.

Special recreation sponsored events, which include Family Event Nights, continue to gain in popularity. The Valentine Family Social held on February 9, saw families dancing and enjoying light bites, games, and a photo booth. The Mandel 4th Birthday Bash, which took place on January 20th and included a light brunch, inflatable games, live entertainment, and more was touted by several families as “one of the best events to date”. Staff received a multitude of compliments throughout the event with many saying they can’t wait to see what is in store for the 5th birthday. Spring Celebration, held March 30, received a bit of a makeover this year. With only one time slot and four age groups, hundreds of residents and visitors came out on a beautiful Saturday morning to scramble over 4,000 eggs. The addition of games, face painting, and a photo op with the bunny provided several opportunities for fun throughout the morning. The next event is the Mad Hatter Tea Party on April 20, which wouldn’t be complete without a visit from Alice in Wonderland. Participants will enjoy tea on the front lawn with photo ops, crafts, and more. Staff are already planning a fun-filled 2024-25 special event calendar.

The After School Program is taking registration for the upcoming school year with resident registration ongoing and nonresident registration starting May 1st. Recent program enhancements continue to draw excitement from parents and participants.

Camp Palm Beach registration is in full swing. Resident registration is ongoing, and nonresident registrations will be processed on April 15. Several weeks throughout the summer are already more than halfway full of resident and Town employee participants. The Friends of Recreation has once again generously donated funds for Town employees' children to attend camp. This is their fourth year and biggest donation yet at \$12,500. A huge thank you to the Friends of Recreation for their continued support!

Staff are working diligently to transition to the new point of sales system called DaySmart. This marks a significant stride towards enhancing the customer experience, both in person and online. With features like online reservations and streamlined program registration, accessing recreational services will be more convenient than ever before.

Seaview Park

The rope drainage project, completed in late December, seems to have solved the issue with the amount of water the field was retaining, making the project a huge success. Staff completed the annual mole cricket treatment at the beginning of April and the ongoing maintenance has put both the athletic field and the front lawn in excellent shape moving into the warmer summer months.

Staff successfully planted a row of cocoplums along the western border of the tennis pavilion. This strategic addition not only enhances the visual appeal, but also fortifies security measures. Staff also applied a layer of mulch to the playground, achieving a dual purpose: enhancing safety and elevating the overall aesthetics.

Tennis

The tennis centers continue to experience high demand. Tennis professionals, led by Head Pro Dejan Minic, USPTA/PTR, and his dedicated team, have fully booked schedules on most days with lessons and clinics. Team tennis season is coming to a close. Tryouts for all divisions have been posted and will be held in April at Seaview Park Tennis Center for Open, D1, and D4 divisions. Phipps Ocean Park Tennis Center will host D6 tryouts at the beginning of May.

Seaview hosted the Men's Town Championship on March 2nd and 3rd with Chad Layton taking home the championship and Sam Herschaft coming in second. The Town Mixed Doubles tournament will be held at Phipps Ocean Park Tennis Center on April 13 & 14th.

Phipps Ocean Park Tennis Center hosted Valentine's Day mixed doubles social in February. The event was enjoyed by a capacity turnout of 8 teams. The Seaview Tennis Courts hosted a spring break clinic/camp for participants aged 7-15. This year, the camp/clinic hosted 10 participants from March 18-22. Participation at the Tennis Centers continues to move in a positive direction. Daily passes are up 20% in FY24 over FY23.

On the operational side of the Tennis Centers, new water fountains have been installed at Seaview. New windscreens have arrived and continue to be installed for both Seaview and Phipps. The Seaview Tennis Court/Fencing project remains on schedule to start June 1st.

Pickleball continues to maintain interest in both lessons and clinics. The indoor courts are utilized most days with clinics seeing growth, averaging up to eight participants. Lessons have shown growth as well with pros booked to near capacity.

Par 3 Golf Course

The Palm Beach Par 3 is enjoying another robust season despite weather playing a big part in reducing play with 16+ days of rain and wind that greatly impacted play this winter. The Palm Beach Par 3 continues to offer a friendly, fast, and fun golf experience to all who visit.

The number of golf outings are reduced from November through March to allow more time for open bookings, which has a positive impact on business. This month, staff will conduct a few local charitable outings on Fridays that the course has hosted for several years.

Tim Campbell, golf course superintendent, and his team did a great job this January under very bad weather. The golf course held up extremely well and was back to averaging 200 rounds a day in February and March. Staff are testing out new robotic mowers this summer, if all goes well a greater investment in the technology will be made in FY25. The typical summer maintenance of aerification and DryJecting will take place at the Par 3: June 3-5, July 29-30, and September 2-3.

Golf instruction continues to thrive, and later this spring, we will offer a junior program. Based on interest, more junior programs will be added. Also new this season was guest instructor, Danny Edwards, offering his “Chipping Equation” short game clinics.

Additional recreation highlights and notes:

- Facility rentals continue to grow in popularity, with the Mandel Recreation Center hosting 11 rentals from January-March. Rentals included community forums, association and business meetings, birthday and holiday parties, a gala and a tennis event.
- Marketing and communication efforts of the department are continuing to grow, with the weekly RecConnect reaching 2,643 current subscribers. Instagram followers (townofpalmbeachrecreation) have officially surpassed the RecConnect and are currently up to 2,656 and counting. In the last 30 days, the number of our accounts reached has increased by 67%, and our accounts engaged has increased by 194%
- ARCOM approved the pergola project during their March 27th meeting and final approval was given by Town Council during their April 9th meeting
- The Mandel Recreation Center is the central polling location on the island and held the Town’s municipal election on Tuesday, March 19th
- Staff plan to start on the construction of the hitting wall on the activity court this summer
- The footbath that was removed at Phipps Ocean Park Tennis Center will be replaced

- The ice machine for Seaview Park Tennis Center is in the proposed FY25 budget
- New benches will be ordered for the Seaview Park Tennis Center this summer
- Offers have been made and accepted for the Tennis Manager position and the Pro Shop Assistant position at the Par 3, both candidates are completing the background check process
- Seal coat and striping of the clubhouse parking lot will be completed this summer
- The golfontheocean.com website and online booking capability remain excellent, and the database of customers has surpassed 41,000 golfers
- Strategic plantings are planned at the Par 3 along the course's border and A1A, including adding around 50 fan palms and 15 silver buttonwoods

This season, staff achieved remarkable progress in enriching the array of services, spanning from dynamic fitness programs to captivating special events. The unwavering commitment of staff, coupled with robust community support, has been pivotal in driving these successes. Staff look forward to embracing continued growth and exploring new opportunities across all facets of recreation offerings. The guidance and support from the Recreation Advisory Commission has been invaluable, inspiring the staff team to consistently build on achievements and strive for excellence, without resting on their laurels.