

Racquets Advisory Committee – Westport Parks and Recreation Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 16, 2024

I. Call to order

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm via Zoom videoconference for the scheduled 33rd meeting of the Racquets Advisory Committee (“RAC”).

II. Roll call

Committee Members Present: David Acselrod, Chairman; Lloyd Clareman, Ward Doonan, David Kaplan

Representing Westport Parks and Recreation (“WP&R”): Carmen Roda, Manager; Dave Floyd

III. Approval of Minutes from September 19, 2023: minutes were approved

IV. Public Comment: None.

V. Parks and Recreation Update: (Carmen Roda)

- a) Carmen advises that we will be attempting to add members to the Committee.
- b) We will add staff this year to monitor use of the courts, including unauthorized lessons monopolizing the courts.
- c) The upgrade to Chelsea for pickleball reservations is going well. There will be no more telephone reservations; this should assist in monitoring usage and preventing unauthorized use.
- d) The Committee discussed the need for clearly articulated policies regarding who can play and what constitutes a lesson.
- e) Calcium chloride was added three times last year.
- f) A range of fee increases is being proposed. Carmen has the list.
- g) We will be adding an “all racquets” pass for \$385 instead of \$445; and an all inclusive handpass for tennis, golf, pool where everything is bundled for \$510.

- h) Fee increases: Carmen described the fee increases, which in many instances were substantial. Lloyd Clareman expressed displeasure and disappointment that there was neither data nor analysis supporting these increases. More specifically, he observed that the increases appeared to assume that demand for the various passes was completely elastic and that a similar number of passes or season reservations would be purchased regardless of the substantial increases in price. No analysis of how many units of passes/reservations were projected to be sold was provided, and how much additional revenue was therefore projected to be raised. As significantly, the Committee was given no revenue and cost data for the various racquet sports that it would need in order to make any informed or intelligent analysis of whether the fee increases were justified, i.e., whether they were necessary or advisable for the purpose of offsetting increased costs of our racquet sports programs; or whether the increases were intended to or might be used to subsidize unrelated programs and activities. More generally, Lloyd expressed that if the opinion of the RAC was actually desired with regard to this and other subjects, sufficient information needed to be provided in order to obtain a worthwhile opinion. In the absence of that information, it appeared that what was being sought was an unthoughtful rubber stamp. David Ayselrod, Ward Doonan, and David Kaplan expressed similar views.

VI. Tennis Discussion

- a) Nothing to report as it is winter.

VII. Paddle Discussion

- a) Masters (50's and 60's) is moving to Monday. Ward Doonan says Xavier is doing a great job.

VIII. Pickleball Discussion

Winter programs are proceeding as expected.

IX. Meeting Adjourned at 8: PM