

TENNIS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 20, 2023 – 10:00 A.M.
ADAMS TENNIS COMPLEX

Commission Members Present: Mr. Dee Jernigan, Chair
Mr. Rick LaLance, Mr. Newton Molloy, Mr. Chris Massaro,
Ms. Mary Elam Polk, Mr. Shawn Wright, and
Dr. Gloria Bonner (ex officio)

Commission Member Absent: Mr. Robert White

City Staff Present: Mr. Thomas Laird, MPRD Asst. Director
Mr. Eric Quiroz, ATC Superintendent
Ms. Angela Jackson, Exec. Dir. of Comm. Services
Ms. Katie Driver, Staff Attorney
Ms. Mitzi Hughes and Ms. Cayce Neal

After the meeting was called to order, Mr. Jernigan presented for approval the Tennis Commission's meeting minutes of March 23, 2023. Dr. Gloria Bonner made a motion to approve the minutes as read. Mr. Rick LaLance seconded. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Jernigan asked Mr. Eric Quiroz to cover the Program and Events item on the agenda. Mr. Quiroz announced that Rally Cats would start on April 29th, with five Saturday classes set. The fee is \$75.00. He said that Bump was being held five times a week with a range of 20-50 participants, but an average of 30 per time. Junior Bump is held on Friday nights, plus Mixers for Coed, Men 3.0 and above, Beginners, and Super Seniors at various times throughout the week. He added that the name for the senior group is in the process of being changed, since the seniors don't particularly like their current group name. Also, there are summer tennis camps for juniors being offered. He mentioned too that the ATC membership is now at 869, a bit higher than the last time the commission met. Mr. Quiroz explained that the ATC is working on getting all the offerings added online so it will be easier for people to register for the programs and events.

Mr. LaLance said that a financial report for the ATC would be helpful to the commission. He said he had requested one recently. Mr. Thomas Laird then provided the FY23 financial report up through March. He said that the facility is expected to hit the budgeted revenues and that revenues should improve even more after the contract pros are back on track with private and group lessons. Mr. LaLance said that he understood about the pros, but he wanted to make sure that free programs are not taking up membership slots. Mr. Laird said that staff utilizes only the open slots for the extra programming at the facility.

Mr. Newton Molloy commented that the recent Oakland High School invitational tournament brought in a huge crowd. He also commended the staff for keeping the tennis complex clean and trash cans emptied. Mr. Quiroz said that staff worked hard to keep everything in good shape for the tournament, like scorecards, windscreens, and nets. Mr. Molloy said more windscreens were needed before Spring Fling. Mr. Quiroz said more should be in by then.

The commission members next reviewed and discussed a draft copy of the Contract Pro Policy. Mr. Quiroz said that currently contract pros get 70% of what they bring in at the ATC, and the City gets 30%. Mr. LaLance mentioned that at the last meeting the commission agreed that under the new contract pro policy, the pros would only pay a court fee and then keep the rest of their client fees for themselves. Mr. Laird said that was correct. Mr. Laird also explained that the proposed contract pro policy would give two options for the contract pros to consider: 1) They can rent the court(s) they use for a flat rate and then keep all of the client fees they earn, or 2) The pros can assist in ATC programming for a set number of hours per week (number of hours up to the commission), receive a discount for renting the court(s) used, and keep all of their client fees after renting the court(s). Mr. Quiroz explained that when pros help with the ATC programming, they would be paid by the hour at a set percentage of their regular pro fees, which they would determine themselves for their clients. The commission will need to determine the percentage that the pros would get from assisting at the ATC.

Mr. LaLance said that the pros will know which option will be appropriate for them. Ms. Mary Elam Polk stated that she did not want any of the pros to receive less pay than they have been receiving. The commission members all agreed that staff should discuss the proposed contract pro policy with each pro and get input from them. Mr. Massaro added that Coach Jimmy Borendame could give neutral input on the proposed policy. Mr. Laird said that a formal meeting had already been set up once, and only two pros were able to attend. Mr. Quiroz said that he would meet individually with each pro to get their input. Mr. Laird said that he had just wanted the commission to see the proposed policy today that is being developed. Mr. LaLance commented that it would be helpful to the commission to be able to compare the current contract to the proposed one. Mr. Quiroz said he could get that to them.

Mr. Molloy commented on Section 1.e. of the contract: *It will be the Tennis Pro's responsibility to provide the City with a name for each Client, in order to determine the Client's membership status or if a nonresident fee needs to be collected. If applicable, the Tennis Pro shall be responsible for paying the nonmember fee or nonresident fee at the time of the lesson.* Mr. Molloy said that he didn't think the pros should be doing administrative work on the court during someone's lesson time. Mr. Laird explained that the pros will just be required to provide the names of their clients to the ATC staff, and the staff will verify the membership status of the clients. The nonmembers would then pay their fee at the front desk. Mr. Laird further said that occasionally pros may want to teach on a holiday or at a time the facility is closed. The verbiage in Section 1.e. allows the pros to collect the nonmember fees when applicable, and then the pros can pay the front desk when the ATC is open again.

The commission next discussed having beer sales at the ATC for adult tournaments and programs. Mr. Laird said that the ATC is already listed in the current department alcohol policy as being allowed to sell beer with certain stipulations. MTSU sells beer at the ATC during some of their events. Mr. Laird explained that the ATC would follow the model already set by Old Fort Golf Course for selling beer. Ms. Angela Jackson will help get the ATC set up on the accounting end and help acquire the same vendors used by the Golf Course. Staff is proposing to sell beer from a cooler downstairs and from the concessions area upstairs during large adult events. Mr. Laird said that staff needs the commission to set parameters for when to sell the beer and if the beer needs to be kept inside the building. Mr. Massaro asked if people are allowed to walk around with beer at the parks and if people could have it at their picnic shelters.

Mr. Laird answered “no” to both questions and added that beer gardens have been used at designated parks for special events, but the beer had to be kept within the beer gardens. Mr. LaLance said that he prefers beer in glass bottles, but he thought glass bottles would not be a good idea at the ATC. Mr. Jernigan agreed and said cans or plastic would be better. Mr. Jernigan also mentioned that he’d already been asked if wine could be sold. Mr. Laird said he thought they should just start with beer. Ms. Katie Driver said that she thought there would be a different liquor license for wine and that she would research the matter. Mr. Massaro said that MTSU sells beer and wine at their ATC events, and he thought they had different type alcohol licenses. Ms. Polk said that from what she has noticed, golf seems to be more male dominated, and many of those players prefer beer. She added that tennis may lean towards more female players, and many of them may prefer different types of alcohol than beer. She thinks looking into the sale of wine would be a good step. Mr. LaLance and Mr. Jernigan both said that the seltzer type drinks might fall under the category of beer. Ms. Jackson said that the Golf Course sells seltzers. Staff will verify what is allowed under the beer policy and might be able to sell seltzers with the beer sales. No vote was needed due to the ATC being listed in the current department alcohol policy.

Mr. Laird announced that staff is working with an architectural and engineering (A & E) firm, Lee Murray, who will hopefully break ground soon for one turf ball field at Old Fort Park. Also, the City will bid for an A & E firm soon to redo the original eight tennis courts at Old Fort Park, which will be pulverized and totally redone with a new base being poured. There will also be four brick hitting walls included in the work. Further, there will be a skate park with a pump track (a continuous loop) added in the park. Ms. Polk asked where. Mr. Laird said the skate park would be where the old practice fields and volleyball net had been and in the area of the former two pavilions. Mr. Shawn Wright said he’d heard there may be four pickleball courts and four tennis courts put in during the renovation of the courts. Mr. Laird said there were going to be eight tennis courts and that the first Tennis Committee had voted against having pickleball courts at the Old Fort tennis complex. Mr. Laird added that there were pickleball courts at Sports Com, Patterson, and McFadden Community Center, with the two tennis courts at Rogers Park being set for conversion to pickleball courts at some point. Mr. Massaro asked if there would be lights still at the eight outdoor courts after renovation. Mr. Laird said LED lights would be added. Mr. Laird also said more tennis courts were certainly needed on the west side of town.

Mr. Massaro asked when the tennis court work was to be done. Mr. LaLance and Mr. Jernigan mentioned the work should be done while it’s warm. Mr. Massaro asked if the City could consider putting off the work a while since the community is already short tennis courts due to MTSU doing work on theirs. Mr. Laird said that the federal and state monies helping to pay for the court work had to be used in a certain time frame, but Ms. Jackson said that staff would check the timeline. Mr. Massaro said MTSU’s courts were supposed to be ready by this November.

Mr. Quiroz informed the commission that staff was hoping to make available to the public a Supergrid link on the ATC website that would indicate clearly what courts are available for use before they go to the ATC. Currently, it is hard for the public to know what courts are open without calling the ATC to find out. The Supergrid would show a big chart by week of all the

leagues, lessons, programs, and tournaments going on at the ATC. Mr. Quiroz said staff wants to improve customer service and offer more transparency.

Mr. Quiroz next mentioned the 2023 Spring Fling with the many high school teams coming to the ATC to compete for state titles. He said that there would not be a fee for parking at the tennis complex this year. He stated that 65 volunteers are needed, and people can sign up online to help. Mr. Quiroz said that the ATC wants to put its best foot forward for the event since so many visitors are coming to town. He said staff is working hard to get all the courts ready for play and in top shape. Mr. LaLance asked the dates of the Spring Fling. Mr. Quiroz said it would be May 23-26. Mr. LaLance recommended that someone provide passes to the commission members so they can check out the event without having to pay just to monitor how everything was going. Mr. Laird said he would get some passes for them. Ms. Polk said she loved the nets, trays, and trash cans at the end of the courts. She thought a scoring system would be nice and a new stringing machine. Mr. Quiroz said two stringing machines were actually needed. He also wants to order a machine that covers up marks on the courts and have all the ball machines upgraded. He will get things ordered if Council approves the budget items he has requested.

Mr. Jernigan asked if there was anything else to discuss. Ms. Mitzi Hughes asked when the next meeting would be. The commission decided on May 11, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at the ATC. Mr. Molloy asked about recent break-ins in the parking lot of the ATC. Mr. Quiroz said people see items in cars and break the windows. Mr. Jernigan and Mr. LaLance suggested that the ATC patrons be warned of how to keep their valuables safe and to not leave valuables visible. Mr. LaLance recommended more officers be assigned at the different parks during Spring Fling. Ms. Jackson said that she could request the department's Park Smart campaign, to help deter crime, be extended again to MPRD facilities and patrons.

Ms. Polk said she appreciated the mixers Ms. Dana McKee has been holding. She said they were a lot of fun. Mr. Jernigan reminded the commission that the next meeting would be on May 11th at 10:00 a.m. at the ATC. He then announced that the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting adjourned: 11:17 a.m.

Minutes approved:

D. Edwin Jernigan, Jr.
Tennis Commission Chair

Nate Williams
MPRD Director