



TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Recreation Department

SPECIAL RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING

April 4, 2001

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL - Mrs. Coniglio, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on March 14, 2001, at the Palm Beach Recreation Center. The Commission members in attendance were Mrs. Coniglio, Mr. Gavigan, Mr. Ochstein, Mr. Gross, Mr. Silken and Mr. Shulman. Alternate members in attendance were Mr. Raffo, Mr. Shore and Mr. Spaziani. Absent from the meeting was Mrs. Morris for medical reasons. Staff members in attendance were Mr. Bitzer, Mrs. Walkowich, Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Dytrych.
- II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Mr. Ochstein made the motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Shore, all were in favor.
- III. APPROVAL MARCH 14, 2001, MINUTES - Mr. Shore made the motion to approve the March 14, 2001, minutes. Seconded by Mr. Silken, all were in favor.
- IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. Annual Palm Beach Pro-Am Benefit Golf Tournament

Mr. Bitzer said that at the last commission meeting it was requested that staff review the tournament to see if it should continue or if we should come up with another format. Mr. Bitzer stated that after a thorough review staff was leaning toward not holding the tournament next year for the following reasons:

1. Fewer named pro's are available and to get named pro's we would have to pay approximately \$2,000 per pro which is \$1,500 more per pro than we pay now.
2. After a review of all expenses, it is estimated that it costs approximately \$14,000 for staff time. Since the proceeds that the Recreation Department received was only \$10,000, it did not seem cost effective.

(Recreation Advisory Commission - April 4, 2001)

3. This past year we were unable to fill all the amateur spots and we had to comp several people just to fill the field. Also participation which at one time was approximately 90% residents has dropped to less than 50% residents.
4. Spectators ticket sales are down considerably and as several of the commissioners have stated at previous meetings, it is getting difficult to get captains in the buildings to coordinate the sale of tickets.

Mr. Bitzer said that although the golf course was improving financially, we still have a debt to pay back to the Town for infrastructure improvements made over the years. Mr. Bitzer said that staff's feeling is if we were to get a title sponsor, this sponsor would probably want to choose a charity rather than the Town for the tournament proceeds. He said that staff did not feel it was appropriate raising money for a charity when the golf course was still in the red. He felt that once we were in the black and making money again we could revisit the idea of hosting a charity tournament.

Mr. Bitzer said that every program has a life to it and sometimes you have to try something different. He said that we could replace this event with another event that is fun for our residents, and that it would not necessarily need to be a fund-raising event.

Mr. Gross asked if the staff ever looked into Mr. Raffo's suggestion from the last meeting about a local pro-am event, where we wouldn't have to pay \$10,000 in appearance fees? Mr. Dytrych said that he spoke with several area club pros and was told that they had too much going on at their own courses. He said that they didn't like the idea of an event during season and they didn't see the logic in a team event at our course. Mr. Dytrych said that it would also be very difficult to get representatives from all the clubs on one day that would not conflict with their own events. He stated that several of the pro's felt slighted when they were told that we would pay them less than \$500, which is what we currently pay the lady pros. They were not interested in playing for less.

Mr. Shore asked what has been the biggest draw over the 18 years, what caused the tournament to be successful? Mr. Dytrych said that in the past we had commissioners who were personal friends of some of these pros and we could get big names for \$500, but that it would now cost us \$2,000 per pro. He said that we had more residents who participated in the event but that this past year we had difficulty filling the amateur spots. He said that the past commission also took a very active role in getting hole sponsors.

Mr. Ochstein said that a big part of the draw was that the money was raised strictly for charity and now we seem to be raising money for the Town of Palm Beach. He said that he felt that we should drop the tournament unless we're going to give 100% of the proceeds to charity. Mr. Bitzer said that he felt that we should not give money away when the golf course was still in the red.

Recreation Advisory Commission - April 4, 2001)

Mr. Shore said that in defense for raising money for the town, a lot of things were done with that money that normally wouldn't have been done. Mr. Ochstein said that he agrees, but that not a lot of people want to donate money to the Town.

Mr. Gavigan asked about the \$14,000 for town staff being a cost factor, he wanted to know if other recreation programs were evaluated the same way. He felt that staff time is a set cost that is not going to change whether you have the program or not, that the staff is there no matter what. Mr. Bitzer said that we do consider staff time when evaluating programs, and that the golf course is a little different as it is an enterprise fund.

Mr. Silken asked if it would be possible to get pro's from the senior group to do it as a charity event. Mr. Dytrych said no, that there is no real reason for them to come to Palm Beach to do a charity when most of these pros have their own charity already and we would still have to come up with at least \$2,000 per player.

Mr. Shore made the motion that we do not hold the tournament this year and study what we can do over the next couple years to see if we can come up with a way to either revitalize it or come up with something else. Seconded by Mr. Ochstein.

Mr. Shulman said that once you get rid of the tournament you'll never bring it back. Mr. Shulman said that Mark Morabito the manager at Publix is very interested in a title sponsorship and that there is somebody specifically that he knows in Lakeland that he would contact, but Russ and Rod said to hold off on doing anything. He said that he knows Lakeland would go for a Publix Pro-Am Palm Beach. Mr. Shulman said that he asked Mr. Morabito for \$25,000.

Mr. Dytrych asked Mr. Shulman what charity he was going to approach the Publix people with. Mr. Shulman said that it would be the same charities we have now, the Rehabilitation Center and the Recreation Department. Mr. Dytrych said that he felt that would be a hard selling point, to ask them to donate money to the Town Recreation Department. He said that if they give us the \$25,000 they're going to want to a couple of teams to play in the tournament, that's \$2,000, and they're going to want to have some name big name players invited, now you're diminishing that \$25,000 again.

Mr. Shulman said that Mr. Dytrych was jumping the gun. He said that he didn't know what they would or wouldn't want. He said that he was not even so sure that they would do it. All he knew was that Mark Morabito was very interested in the tournament.

Mr. Bitzer said that the reason Publix was put on the back burner was because staff didn't want to go and solicit them until it was brought to the commission and discussed first.

(Recreation Advisory Commission - April 4, 2001)

Mr. Dytrych said that he had done this event for 18 years and enjoyed it. He said that it was a lot of fun and people liked the event, but the tournament should be staged at a substantial profit or it should just go out successfully. Mr. Shulman said that in the past Tom Keresey gave money from the bank, he wanted to know what happen to that. Mr. Dytrych said we gave the proceeds to the three hospitals, and the largest year we had, we gave each hospital \$12,500. He said the bank gave us \$15,000 which paid for 20 pro's (\$10,000 in appearance fees and \$3,000 for the purse they played for) and \$2,000 for publicity. He said that was back in 1984 - 1986 now your talking 16 years later and it's not \$500 to the pro but \$2,000.

Mr. Shore said there are so many tournaments in Palm Beach County, every body's got a charity tournament and we need to come up with something different. Mr. Shulman said that things have run its course, he agreed with Mr. Shore. Mr. Shore said that if we let it sit for a couple of years who knows what we could dream up.

Mr. Gavigan suggested instead of using pros, that we may want to look at holding a Town Celebrity tournament, something to draw town people to play. Mr. Bitzer asked if he was talking about a fun type of event for our residents or a fund raising event. Mr. Gavigan said that we wouldn't want to do the event unless we made some money out of it. Mr. Bitzer said that we would at least need to recover our costs for either type of event.

Mr. Ochstein said that he has worked for several different charities and has run different tournaments. He said that as an example, the March of Dimes has the Mets and they can hardly raise any money with the whole NY Mets playing. Mr. Ochstein said that this is a very difficult thing and he didn't know of any golf course that runs fund raising tournaments. He said that charities run tournaments at golf courses not the other way around and he didn't think we had any business doing this.

Mr. Gross said we did have an expense of \$4,000 for the golf course facility usage fee, shouldn't that cover the maintenance staff and the additional supplies that appear the report Mr. Bitzer had given them. (This report is attached) Mr. Bitzer said that the \$4,000 is for lost green's fees for that day, because we close down the course for the tournament. Mr. Dytrych said that the expenses for supplies and maintenance staff are over and above what we need for daily operation. If we didn't have the tournament we would not have to incur those additional expenses.

Mr. Gavigan said that it seemed to him that staff had really thought this over, and that after 18 years it would be over. Mr. Bitzer said that rather than have this tournament dwindle and die, we should phase it out while we are still somewhat successful, and not losing money.

(Recreation Advisory Commission - April 4, 2001

Mr. Gavigan said that he wanted to congratulate the staff. He said that in the past few years that he has been involved with the tournament, it was very nice and you all did a great job. Mr. Gavigan said that it's too bad it has to end, but I guess it's time.

Mr Dytrych said that we should go out on a high note while we are still successful. Mrs. Coniglio said she agreed.

Mr. Shore left the meeting at 9:30 and told Mrs. Coniglio he was in favor of ending the tournament.

Mr. Silken said that after listening to the staff, he felt that we should follow their instructions, with all the time, energy and cost that has gone into this and if it's not going to be profitable we should end it and see if something else comes up in the future. Mrs. Coniglio called for a vote, The vote to discontinue the tournament was 7 in favor and 2 opposed.

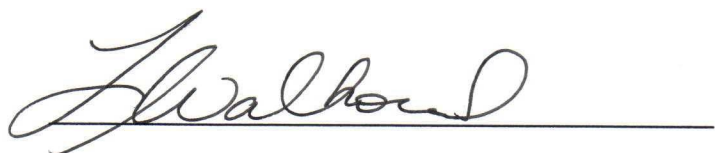
Mrs. Coniglio said that she would like to find some other way of raising that \$10,000 for the Recreation Department or we should go to the town and ask them for some sort of discretionary fund that the commission can draw from and use for those things that we need. She said that the staff does a lot of things for the residents in the way of the 4th of July, the Halloween and Spring Celebration but that we need to have that \$10,000 for improvements for the Recreation Department.

V. NEW BUSINESS - none

VI. ANY OTHER MATTERS

Mr. Bitzer said that this year staff was required to submit any budget items that would significantly raise the budget. He said that this request came in after the commission's last meeting. He said that the capital improvement project that they were presenting was to convert the 2 hard courts into har-tru courts at a cost of \$60,000. Mr. Bitzer said that all this was preliminary and that it would be discussed in more detail at the next commission meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT - Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m. by Gail Coniglio.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely belonging to Gail Coniglio, is written over a horizontal line.

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
Record of Attendance 2001

<u>Regular Members</u>	1/10	3/14	4/4	5/9	9/12	11/14	
Gail Coniglio	P	P	P				
James Gavigan	P	P	P				
Arthur Gross	P	E (illness)	P				
Eileen Morris	P	P	E (illness)				
Larry Ochstein	P	P	P				
Stanley Silken	P	P	P				
Stuart Shulman	P	P	P				
<u>Alternate Members</u>							
Richard Raffo	P	P	P				
Michael Spaziani	P	P	P				
Allen E. Shore	P	P	P				

LEGEND: P = Present
 E = Excused
 U = Unexcused
 A = Absent Pending Classification as "Excused" or "Unexcused"

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
Conflict of Interest Record 2001

<u>Regular Members</u>	1/10	3/14	5/9	9/12	11/14	
Gail Coniglio						
James Gavigan						
Arthur Gross						
Eileen Morris						
Larry Ochstein						
Stanley Silken						
Stuart Shulman						
<u>Alternate Members</u>						
Richard Raffo						
Allen E. Shore						
Michael Spaziani						

LEGEND: X = Conflict of Interest