

Mission Royale Pickleball Club Board Meeting Minutes
October 9, 2024

1. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm in Meeting Room B of the Recreation Center.

Board Members Present: Ron Olson, Rick Bird, Laurie Gigstead, Greg Williams and Jan Santarius (via phone).

Others present: Virginia Sanchez, Sel Sanchez, Carlos Vega, Gary Gilligan, Lana Smith, Alice Scroggins, Tracey Sweeney, Rob Tate, Jim Terry, Greg Scroggins, James Sadler, Allan Baker, Maggiemay Jackson, Stonewall Jackson, Rusty Gigstead, JaNeen Bird, Kristy Carra, Donna Chimino, and Katie Halverson.

2. Approval of Agenda.

Motion to approve the agenda as presented. Rick/Greg. Approved.

Ron gave a summary explaining the three sets of minutes.

3. Approval of minutes – April 11, 2024, April 24, 2024 and July 19, 2024.

Motion to approve the April 11, 2024, April 24, 2024 and July 19, 2024 minutes as presented. Rick/Greg. Approved.

4. Old Business. None.

5. Board Member and Chair Reports.

- a) **Treasurers Report.** The treasurer's report was presented by Laurie for the period of April 11 – October 9, 2024. Expenditures during that period were \$838.09, which brings our current account balance to \$36,882.00.

Motion to accept Treasurer's Report as presented. Greg/Rick. Approved.

- b) **Vice President's Report.** Rick summarized the schedule changes that occurred over the summer months. Winter schedule will start October 14, 2024. The high

temperatures have delayed the start one week. He reported the HOA washed the courts. Open play guest rules were clarified by Katie Halverson. Members were reminded all guests need to check in at the office, fill out a waiver form and obtain a wristband. Local guests can play infrequently (one time per week) and visiting family or house guests can play during their visit during open play times. The HOA has been requested to replace the gravel areas near the gates on courts 2 and 3 with cement to eliminate tripping hazards. The request has been referred to the Landscape Committee.

c) At Large Board Member Report. Greg advised the club needs a volunteer to facilitate lessons for beginners. Lana Smith and Gary Gilligan volunteered to coordinate beginner lessons. Greg advised Dan Rieman would continue to coordinate advanced lessons. Greg is working on replenishing the first aid supplies.

d) Ratings. Virginia advised she did not have a report since there was no October testing. She and Greg will meet and determine upcoming testing dates.

e) Training – None. Dan was unable to attend the meeting.

6. New Business.

a) Fall Schedule Review. Rick advised the schedule is posted. Ron discussed the need for and possibility of building additional courts. He noted if additional courts were to be built with HOA assistance it would be an involved process and could be over two years before that could happen because of the HOA's budgeting process. He talked of other possibilities such as member donations similar to the golf course. Carlos Vega asked about fundraising or pursuing grants. Katie advised everyone is welcome to the HOA meeting at the end of October when the budget is reviewed. Laurie stated the club received an email from Deb Woodard. Deb's email stated that if a committee was formed to review the schedule and make changes, she would be interested in volunteering. Rick stated he's received a number of requests for changes and didn't feel a committee or changes were necessary at this time.

b) Schedule 2024-2025 Executive Board Meetings and Annual Meeting of the Members. It was agreed that the Executive Board Meetings for November 2024 – April 2025 will be held on the second Wednesday of each month at 4:00 pm. Ron advised he would like to schedule working sessions for discussion only prior

to Executive Board meetings. No actions will be taken at working sessions. They will be discussion only and open meetings.

c) Review Rating Procedures. Rick advised that a group of members from the summer feel that the current rating procedures with ballot counting has run its course. They are proposing a skills test only process. They feel the current process has become too bias. The current test would be used but the points needed to pass would be increased by 5 points for each level as follows:

3.0: need 80 out of 120 [old was 75 out of 120]

3.5: need 86 out of 120 [old was 81 out of 120]

4.0: need 93 out of 120 [old was 88 out of 120]

He stated if a 2.0/2.5 is testing for 3.0 you get approved through the round robins. If a 3.0 is testing for 3.5 you get approved but if you are 3.5 testing for 4.0 hardly anybody gets through. His opinion is it is biased. He stated that over the last two years at the 4.0 level only two people have reached 93 points. Doing a skills test with no round robin would allow you to test more people. We might have to tweak the numbers because it will be too hard to move to 4.0. You would only be able to move one level per skills test.

Ron stated there are currently 3.5s players that could play 4.0 but won't test because the group is keeping people out. This would help to move people to the 4.0 level.

Laurie stated in Rick's proposal he is claiming this new process would have only advanced 2 people over the last 3 years. She has been a member of the club for approximately 2 and a half years and during that time 17 people have advanced to 4.0 through the rating process and 3 by their national ratings. That is 20 new 4.0 members out of 51 members. She said the that the comments regarding the number of 4.0 candidates being voted down by 4.0 members is unfounded.

Laurie stated a committee addressing the ratings should be Board directed not self-directed. The skills test is more biased. Deciding advancement based on a skills test only is not the answer. Some sort of play aspect must be included. People can test badly but play well. Our process needs to be well rounded. We should be improving the process if we are changing it. The round robin portion demonstrates skills on the court during play, agility, court awareness, use of skills

in a game situation, and even knowledge of the rules. She believes some type of point based round robin could accomplish this. We should not be making a hasty decision when only a small portion of our club members are here and involved in the process.

Ron stated he talked with an upper-level player at Palm Creek regarding their process. He said they are assigned a mentor and then play with a group at the higher level and their play is evaluated. He said we need to remember we are a social club and are just trying to group people with comparable skills not necessarily same skills.

Lana stated all the clubs in the area are social but even in a social club people like to play competitively, that is social to them. She lived at Palm Creek and their process worked well. A panel of people evaluate you during play based on a defined list of skills and if you have demonstrated those required skills you pass.

Virginia stated that sounds good but we have limited courts and limited volunteers.

Laurie was asked what she thought about the Palm Creek method and she said it would depend on the defined criteria and also asked how the evaluators are trained. Lana stated that it was 4.0 players that did the evaluating.

Carlos stated that Mission Royale used to use a similar process. Why did it stop? Katie stated the evaluation sheets are still available.

Ron stated when he tested it was based on winning 80% in games but he was sabotaged by the opponents only hitting the ball to the weaker player.

Gary stated that at Palm Creek you play with three people at the level you are attempting to advance to and you are evaluated and told right then if you failed and why.

JaNeen stated she has talked to over 30 people at different levels and asked what they thought about the round robin process and most everyone called it a popularity contest. Why not make the skills test harder and put it to a vote of all the club members.

Rick stated if we did a vote to our members, they would want this.

Jim asked why we don't just keep our current method with some tweaks. There needs to be rules/guidance of the evaluation process posted to members know what they are supposed to be evaluating for. Make the members more accountable for their vote. Then give the candidate feedback with specific comments.

Virginia said people don't put their names on the ballot and there are negative comments.

Allan stated that summer play is all level play and the separate 4.0 level play should be banned.

Laurie stated the 4.0's specifically requested separate play but the request was ignored. There is room on the courts for the 4.0 play in the summer.

Rick clarified that he doesn't have a problem with the 4.0 play but if only one court is available that is where they play. Homeowner's have a right to play on any open courts.

Rusty stated groups are divided by level for a reason. An all-level round robin is short sighted.

Rusty stated it would be a mistake to use the skills test as the only basis for advancement – it is not ready for primetime. If bias is the concern, the skills test process will make the possibility of bias worse. All the power is left with one person – the ratings chair. Nothing is defined in our current procedures. The current process does not give specific definitions on the skills. For example, "Serves must be deep within the court to score highest points." Levels should be determined by how they play pickleball not solely on how they perform in a skills test. All of our current levels are watered down. The proposal is short sighted and will make it worse.

Rusty stated ratings are complicated and should have input from more people and involve the club.

Sel stated that he and Virginia inherited the program they did not make it up. We went by the guidelines. We did it for one reason - the betterment of the club. It is time for a change.

Laurie stated in the time she has been part of the club only one person did not move up to 4.0 through our process.

Virginia summarized the statistics on the number of members that would have passed using the proposed point thresholds. (4.0 – out of 25 attempts 3 would pass; 3.5 only 10 would pass by new threshold and by old threshold 15 would pass; 3.0 only 10 would pass by new threshold and 16 by old threshold). It is not going to be easy.

JaNeen stated nobody would state the skills test is biased. They respect the skills test. She thinks it should be put to a vote.

Katie stated as an outsider listening to all the comments it is clear this is a hot topic and cannot be resolved today. I suggest forming a committee with all levels represented to review and make a recommendation.

Laurie agreed and stated each level should meet and propose their designated representatives.

Stonewall stated he doesn't care about being rated he just wants to be able to play at the 4.0 level. He's played in many clubs and people need to be able to play better players to improve.

Ron stated he could do that during open play.

Gary stated he is a 4.0 at Palm Creek but knows our club doesn't accept that and in order for him to become a 4.0 he needs to go through our rating process.

Ron felt it was time to move on to the next item.

- d) Discuss Bylaw Amendment.** Ron advised that it has been determined that the board does not currently have the ability to hold executive sessions or address protests of the rating process and plan to propose a bylaw amendment to the members. First, the proposed amendment needs to be reviewed and approved

by the HOA. After that our board needs to approve the proposal and then it is put out to vote by the membership. The language in the agenda has been revised. The two suggested amendments are:

Executive Board can meet to resolve a club issue in executive session without club members present with a 48-hour notice.

Executive Board can move a club member's rating up or down a level when there is a conflict or protest of the member's rating.

Motion to forward the proposed bylaw amendments to the HOA for review.
(Rick/Greg) Approved.

Review Rating Procedures – Continued. Rick stated we need talk about the ratings. 4.0 and down won't have a problem with the new process but 4.0 and up will be a problem. We need to make a motion.

Laurie stated we need to form a committee with each level represented. I don't think it should be a fast process.

Rick said it can be a fast process and let them vote on the proposal.

Laurie stated that not all levels understand the complexity of ratings. A less experienced player doesn't understand that evaluating play is an important aspect. It is different than standing flat footed hitting the ball to a spot on the court after practicing 900 times. It is not the same thing as playing a game.

Rick wants it sent to the club. Motion to send this to the members. Do I hear a second. (Rick)

Greg stated pickleball involves eye hand coordination and he thinks a skills test can demonstrate that. But the 4.0 level is fast and you need hand eye coordination. He also thought 5 additional points might be too much.

Ron asked if there was a second to the motion.

Laurie stated no, I am not seconding the motion.

Greg stated he would second the motion.

Laurie stated that if the concern is people aren't getting moved up based on Virginia's testimony the new proposal will make it worse. This proposal is short sighted and needs to be reviewed calmly through a committee. We should be improving the process not making it worse.

Jan was asked her thoughts. She stated the survey need to include an area for comments.

Laurie stated that there are 250 members that didn't attend this meeting. If people are voting yes for this proposal, it is because they don't understand the details and solely because they don't want to do the round robin. This skills test does not test the skill of game play.

Motion to send survey with proposal to the members. (Rick/Greg) Approved. (4 yes – 1 no)

Greg asked what about a committee?

Ron said let's get results first.

7. Motion to Adjourn. Motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:44 pm. Rick/Greg. Approved.

Drafted: 10/10/2024

Approved: