

## **TRING SQUASH CLUB**

### **MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2022**

#### **1. ATTENDED BY**

Mark Bullard (MB), Joanne Preston (JP), Matt Duncan (MD), James Walton (JW), Keith Warman (KW), Peter Barham (PB), Merril Trueman (MT), Joni Duncan (JD), Chas Lefevre (CL), Anthony Palmer (AP), Kelly Gascoine (KG). Clive Birch also attended the meeting.

The minutes of the previous were approved.

#### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Jan Kerry (JK), Katie Winterstein (KW<sub>i</sub>),

#### **3. CO-OPTION OF NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER**

MB welcomed Anthony and Kelly to the committee. Anthony is welcomed back to the committee having been a past committee member. Kelly is welcomed onto the committee for the first time. Kelly currently captains the ladies 2<sup>nd</sup> team and has been heavily involved in the social side of the club.

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

Door locks – discussed at previous meetings. Would be controlled by MMM fobs. MB has been down to Aylesbury and the locks have been installed there and working well. MB to speak to the bar team leaders to give them a heads up regarding the new process. New quote received. It will remove the requirement to have a number of bar keys floating round and will also allow a lock to be put on the ladies changing room.

Greater club engagement

- Jamie Hough running the new Friday club night from Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2022.
- MD and MB have discussed getting a TV moved into the lounge and possible locations. They will do some tests to confirm they can split the signal so the TV can be on in either room (same channel if both TVs watched). It was noted that we may need to keep an eye on the volume and the atmosphere in the bar. In time, there is potential to put a larger screen in the committee room.

Club sign on the outside of the club building. Two options:

- Blockout panel to replace expired details (£250)
- Complete new panel (£690)
- A discussion was held and the general consensus was that given the branding has changed it was worth getting a full refresh.
- MB also suggested adding an invite to the squash club homepage that any prospective members are welcome to attend the club nights to try out the club. MD noted that there may be England Squash posters which could be used on the website.

AP is looking into whether we should update the defibrillator.

## **5. OFFICERS' REPORTS**

### **A – CHAIRMAN**

The weekend of the 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> was extremely successful:

- GWR
- Squashathon was very successful
- Hog roast support was ok. It would have been nice to have more attendees.

### **B – TREASURER**

Final accounts were signed off by the auditors. PB noted that the auditors had not increased their fees in a number of years so next year they would be going up from £500 to £600.

### **C – MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

Below are the figures as of the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022:

**Total – 346 (down from 350 last meeting)**

Adult – 231 (down from 241 last meeting)

Junior – 58 (up from 55 last meeting) – inc students

Life - 28

Social – 26

Introduced a £5 guest fee which has uncovered a number of people who had been playing without membership. JD is reaching out to members who are booking solo courts to ensure that they are aware of the guest rules (anyone who plays regularly should be a member).

There are a number of members with renewals due and members with fobs not working / inability to book courts are encouraged to confirm that their membership is up to date.

### **D – SECRETARY**

No report

## **6. TEAM REPORTS:**

### **Men's Captain** –

The men's team squash commenced last week with all three teams losing their opening fixture. Many players are getting back in to the routine of team matches and once they do, our results will hopefully improve!

### **Ladies' Captain** –

The ladies teams have gotten off to a good start to the season, winning 3 out of their first 4 matches. We held a ladies evening on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022 which

was well attended again and look forward to holding another one during the season (date tbc).

## **7. JUNIOR REPORT**

No report.

## **8. OTHER REPORTS –**

### **House –**

- No report

### **Social Report -**

15th October 2022 – Dung Beatles

29<sup>th</sup> October 2022 - private party

17th December 2022 – Xmas Party – Abba Tribute

4<sup>th</sup> February 2023 – band night

18th February 2023 – Private Party

15th April 2023 – Private Party

3rd June 2023 – Dolly Parton Tribute

14<sup>th</sup> October 2023 – band night

25<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – private party

16<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – Elvis Tribute

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2024 – band night

There was a discussion regarding ensuring that the band nights are spaced out over the year. AP noted that its getting difficult to sell tickets post covid. There are also other ideas for evenings that can be held at the club therefore the band nights need to be spaced out. MB to speak to BT about the band night scheduling.

Discussion re MMM ticket sales not working as desired, as its difficult to get list of attendees. To be considered whether to stop using MMM until the functionality has improved for social events.

MD noted that he had looked into whether it was possible to take a deposit for social events through MMM. It is possible and post the event, MD can either refund the account or refund the card from the Stripe account. Its in the club social policy (on the club website) that there is a £100 deposit to be taken for social events (not required for meetings). JD/MD to speak to people with existing bookings to take the £100 deposit. For future events to be confirmed, deposit needs to be taken in advance.

### **Systems/Operations –**

No report

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Development plan update:

- General feedback from the AGM and from discussions post the meeting has been that the plans are good plans
- However the cost has become the main topic of discussion, as the cost for doing the proposal is high and a stretch for the club.

- MB and Clive Birch have gone away to review what could be done to keep the vision of freeing up the space between the courts for a lower cost. The vision was presented to meet the key wishes from the members survey, including a ladies changing room and attracting new members.
- There was a discussion regarding the costs and what the club would be happy to spend on improvements, and if there is a shortfall, how it would be raised. It was felt that it was not probable that the members would vote to proceed with a bank loan and fund raising efforts would be limited. Grants are a possibility but won't be known before the EGM. There are other options to raise funds for the club, such as increasing the subs and court fees.
- CL noted that there were a number of items, such as funding, Pendley approval etc which needed to be in place before the final sign off was sought from members.
- AP noted that there were a number of other improvements that the club needed which would also require funds which needs to be considered.
- Clive Birch noted that the original plans for the courts have free space between the courts so it may not be a significant cost to free up that space.
- Clive Birch noted that the improvements to the bar area etc could be done in conjunction with the development plans.
- MT noted that there should be 2 plans put to the members:
  - i. consolidate the simplified plans and apply for grants etc.
  - ii. Improve the existing facilities etc.
- Clive Birch noted that planning applications were taking a number of months within Dacorum therefore it would be a while before any planning permission was given. However there was a possibility that it could be approved quicker with delegated authority and until a discussion with the planners had happened that route was unknown.
- A discussion ensued about what the priorities of the members were now and whether they had changed over time since the membership survey had been undertaken.
- JW noted that he had spoken to a company who had provided a recommendation for improvements to the bar area.
- MB has started introductory discussions with people who have been successful in getting grants. To have detailed discussions, a revised set of drawings need to be produced.
- Current thoughts of MB is to present a revised scale of option 4, revised down and looking to get a cheaper quote which would have a viable funding plan. MD noted that it's not a feasible plan at the moment and there are a number of steps to be done before the plan becomes feasible.
- JP noted that there was a concern that the member's views may have changed since the membership survey was taken and priorities may differ now from what they were.
- PB noted that there was another way to look at the project and we could consider what funds the club had to spend and therefore the plans should be based around what we had available to spend.
- AP questioned whether we could estimate the cost of the new plans based on the average per sq metre cost. Clive Birch noted that these were available for commercial building work but it was difficult based on the size and design of the potential building. However the proposed design was about half the size so a back of the envelope price of £175k to £200k has been estimated but further drawings would be required for a further cost.

- The current proposed date of the EGM was discussed as difficult as there was not enough time to get the information in place for the revised plans.
- It was agreed that the bar needed work doing to it and would be reviewed by the committee.
- The development plan should be presented to the members as it's a major change with a potential funding requirement.
- It was discussed that participation remains down in the club, and committee members are aware of similar situations at other clubs / in other sports. JP noted that the ladies have started to come back and we have some new members but its take a lot of effort from certain of the ladies to get everyone back on court.
- MT questioned what the income for the club had been over recent years. On average it was £5-£10k, with highs in the £20ks pre covid.
- MB noted that there is a Herts Sports Partnership which is a collection of people who would like to donate for local developments and are known to have provided sizeable grants to local sports businesses which is worth exploring at the right time.
- PB noted that in his opinion, he would be comfortable in supporting an aspirational project up to £200k (inc VAT) due to the cash in the bank and the potential for raising income. This was a personal opinion, not an official one as treasurer of the club.
- Proposed next steps
  - i. Work up a revised plan 4a which involves:
    1. Work with the architect to get it drawn up
    2. Have a pre-application meeting
    3. Discussion with Pendley to confirm
  - ii. Once these were known, hold an EGM with a committee proposal put forward.
- While this was going on, work would continue in the background to look at improvements to the bar including new furniture and new television.

## **10. NEXT MEETING**

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

The meeting closed at 22:10.

Joanne Preston

Tring Squash Club Secretary