

Hackney City Tennis Club Limited- Board of Directors

Minutes of Board Meeting held on 16 July 2020 (virtual meeting held on Google Meet)

Present

Directors: Howard Bennett (Chair), Francesco Caselli, Cristian Winder, David Harrison, Daniela Aramu, Maurine Lewin, Lisa Watch, Alison Hunter

In attendance

James Mills (Managing Director)

Conflicts of interest

None reported

The minutes from the last meeting were approved

Action points from the last meeting

- The public court bookings were changed to 10:00pm

Managing Director's report

JM presented his previously circulated MD report. Hackney Tennis continues to follow government and LTA COVID-19 guidelines and new banners have gone up across the HT sites with the new guidance that allows doubles and coaching in small groups.

A mouse has been seen in the pavilion and the Council's pest control team attended on Wed 15 July to apply treatment.

It was reported that Natalia has completed all the necessary steps to qualify her as HT's Welfare Officer and this has been recorded with the LTA.

JM presented his previously circulated management accounts and reported that since reopening the HT courts, demand for courts has been incredibly high with close to an additional 3,000 bookings taken in June 2020 compared to June 2019. Given the potential projections when HT first went into lockdown, the financial outcome was felt to be very positive

FC reminded the board about the assistance provided by the financial projections produced at the start of the lockdown and requested that this work be repeated to factor in the possibility of a second lockdown. JM given action to produce these.

CW asked for a breakdown of the expenses listed as events and campaigns in the profit and loss. JM thought this would be a combination of marketing costs and tournaments costs but would check on Xero and provide the board with a full break-down.

JM said that all but one of the HT admin team have now been unfurloughed. The pavilion is now staffed until 9:15 in the evening on weekdays and until 7:30 on the weekends.

DH asked if there could be any potential issue with HT's application to become a charity and holding substantial reserves back. JM said that HT should hold a sinking fund and that he thought this would be in the region of £250k. HB said that any surplus above the sinking fund would be put back into HT capital projects.

DA asked if the Council would be repairing the fences at Clissold soon. JM said that the council had quotes for this work but does not believe it was planned to take place in the short term. JM actioned to chase up with LBH. HB explained that LBH's finances have been deeply affected by Covid and this may affect their future spending.

HT's summer term programme started back on Monday 29 June. The take-up has been very good with 47 of the 69 classes fully booked. The term programme was released as 4 weeks for juniors and 6 weeks for adults. Summer camps and performance camps will start from Mon 27 July and run for five weeks. These classes are now bookable online and are being marketed through a variety of channels. Initial demand for the camps appears to be high.

JM noted that the HT assistance measures for coaches have now drawn to a close and he will be asking coaches to start working back the hours owing to HT.

JM provided an overview of the current coach booking system introduced after reopening, and a tiered system where the court time for coaches is released in timed bands, based on LTA coaching grades. JM explained that the Council has agreed to relax coaching court restrictions and provide coaches with more flexibility on the courts they can teach on. It was agreed to continue with the tiered system for the final release of restricted courts to help with a smooth transition back to the regular coach court booking system.

CW queried if there were any measurers in place to stop players from booking courts for coaching. JM outlined a medium-term goal, to add in additional text to the booking agreement so players must confirm that they're not booking a court for unregulated coaching.

DH asked if enough communication with members has taken place to inform them of why there are difficulties booking courts and it was explained by JM that this information is on the homepage and has gone out in newsletters. JM agreed that communication with HT users was an area in need of development.

DH mentioned Haggerston tennis courts and suggested that the three extra courts there would be worth investigating for use by HT. JM said that he was aware of the courts and after discussions with the Council believes that we may be able to get a level of access to the courts.

JM provided an overview of the long-standing priority system for individual lessons that has been in place at HT. The system has graded players A-E and been used primarily to help provide committed juniors consistency with their individual lessons. The board reviewed the positives and negatives of the system and it was decided to stop running it in its current form and agreed that an amended system would be devised to help ensure HT's academy players have training consistency.

JM proposed that the Spin League app could be opened to all HT members which would remove the need for a separate membership category. This would also mean that Spin players would pay directly through the Spin app and remove the need for Ganesh to invoice HT. It was agreed that JM should move towards this methodology and sit down with Ganesh and negotiate the current fees and the potential to link a charity project to the Spin app.

JM updated the board on court resurfacing at Clissold Park, which has been successful but repeated delays have meant that the final court painting has been postponed until 31 August, so that the works don't affect the summer camps.

A progress report was given on the charitable status paperwork and JM informed the board that Brabners Solicitors are currently in the process of producing HT's new Articles of Association.

It was reported that two funding applications for community coaching projects had been unsuccessful.

HB asked for agreement on which month to hold HT's annual general meeting, and it was decided that this would be held in December.

HB then brought the meeting to a close.