



## THE RANCH

(Belvedere Tiburon Joint Recreation Committee)

### Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 16, 2020 7:00 p.m.

Dairy Knoll, 600 Ned's Way, Tiburon CA 94920

#### Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Schaefer called the meeting to order at 7:05p.m., with the following Board members present:

Julianne Schaefer – Belvedere Representative, Chair	Present
Jason Rosell - Tiburon Representative, Vice Chair	Present
Jerry Riessen – Tiburon Representative	Present
Erin Burns – Tiburon Representative	Present
Melissa Feder – Belvedere Representative	Present
Chelsea Schlunt - Belvedere Representative	Present
Sherry Wangenheim – RUSD Representative	Present
Bob McCaskill - Belvedere Council Member	Absent
Jon Welner – Tiburon Council Member	Absent

#### Staff in attendance:

Jessica Hotchkiss, Recreation Director  
Michelle Barsky, Minutes

#### I. Public Comment

No public comment was made.

#### II. Message from Board Chair Julianne Schaefer

Schaefer announced that McCaskill position on the board would end, as his Belvedere Councilmember term has ended. Schaefer thanked McCaskill for his many years of service on The Ranch Board and welcomed his replacement, Sally Wilkinson.

#### III. Minutes

##### A. Approval of Minutes for the Board Meeting held September 21, 2020

**Motion Rosell Second Wangenheim Vote 5 In Favor, 2 Abstained, 2 Absent**

**Motion Passed**

Voted on as follows

AYES: Schaefer, Rosell, Riessen, Schlunt, Wangenheim

NAYS: None

ABSTAINED: Burns, Feder

ABSENT: Welner, McCaskill

#### **IV. The Ranch Recreation Director Report**

Hotchkiss began her report by thanking McCaskill for his official time on the board. McCaskill had been a sense of security and reason during the uncertainty of the past few months. McCaskill first joined the board in 1991, when The Ranch offices were located on Paradise Blvd in the Landmarks Railroad Museum and bringing in around \$295K in gross revenue each year. Hotchkiss shared her gratitude for his assistance and advocacy for The Ranch. Hotchkiss then welcomed Sally Wilkinson, who would be replacing McCaskill's Board seat. She stated that she is looking forward to strengthening The Ranch's relationship with Belvedere City Council and getting to know Wilkinson better.

Hotchkiss continued with re-capping that since the September meeting, The Ranch has continued to be able to offer programming for youth and adults. For a short while, Marin County moved into the Orange Tier, which had allowed for larger class sizes and low capacity for indoor adult programming. Since that increase, the County has slipped back into the Red Tier causing a decrease in attendance again. Schlunt was curious about staff morale. Hotchkiss replied that The Ranch is in a good position and is busy in a new way and that staff has had plenty of time to adjust. She expressed concern for the next few months—there is currently six part time staff, but if in-person schooling advances in stages, fewer staff will be necessary to facilitate programming. Hotchkiss doesn't see a near future for when staff are able to return to full time. Feder asked if Hotchkiss has a sense of how neighboring departments are operating. Hotchkiss replied that most neighboring departments are offering similar programming, but that The Ranch is offering much more adult programming. Neighboring departments have benefited from being able to rent outdoor field space. This has not been a possibility for The Ranch as the organization doesn't manage parks or open spaces.

The Ranch continues to offer the Academy Club learning pod program and had coordinated with Marin County Office of Education to receive funding to assist local children. That funding ended in October, but funding was coordinated through other organizations like Tiburon Peninsula Foundation. Hotchkiss plans to modify the Academy Club program to align with the RUSD Phase 3. She is advocating to the school district to be allowed to hold the program on Bel Aire campus so that this demographic can be served.

Hotchkiss continues to work with fellow Marin County Recreation Directors to lobby to the state for more clear directives in relation to recreation centers and for Ranch instructors to be able to teach the same amount of cohorts as a public teacher can. As winter approaches, Hotchkiss would like to continue to keep an eye on financials and county directives.

#### **V. Finance reports**

##### **A. Review of September 2020 Income Statement of Actuals Year to Date 20/21**

Hotchkiss provided the September updated actuals and explained that to date; The Ranch is in the negative in relation to our profit and loss for the year with a growing negative year end number due to the ongoing changes in county health and school district directives. With every local change, The Ranch programming is affected, making for a negative bottom line currently and projected by year end. To put the fall of 2019 into perspective versus fall 2020, Hotchkiss offered the following comparisons: special events offered 7:0; unique youth programs 109:38; unique adult programs 63:30. In fall of 2019, The Ranch has 18 employees and 9 of those were full time. Currently, all 11 employees are part time.

Feder asked if the negative number showed on the report dipping into the reserves. Hotchkiss clarified that this report is always cash income and loss and will never include savings. \$316K is what is available in addition to \$11k in savings. Hotchkiss anticipates ending the year \$196K in the bank. Rosell asked what assumptions, in regards to Marin COVID levels, Hotchkiss was making for her projections. Hotchkiss clarified that the presented projections were made while the county was in the Red Tier. Because children are spending more time at school in person, The Ranch's revenue will be lower.

## **B. Planning of the 2021-2022 Budget**

Hotchkiss expressed that she and staff had worked to create a budget based on best educated guesses. She has yet to be able to create a 2021-2022 budget that will be able to cover business expenses and keep a core team of staff in place. She will continue to work on the budget with staff and the ad hoc finance committee so that it can be presented to the board for consideration and approval at the January 2021 meeting.

Hotchkiss continued saying that she is open to suggestions on fundraising ideas to help rebuild The Ranch and to supplement the revenue streams. In the past, most fundraisers have been special events which will not be able to be held in the near future. At this time, she is working on a 2020 year-end tax deductible donation letter campaign and ideas for a bocce ball or tennis tournament. She is also planning a Dine and Donate night at Amy's Kitchen in Corte Madera. Riessen said that a goal should be to request more funding from the City and Town and to ensure that staff morale is good. Hotchkiss is concerned going into another fiscal year with a proposed negative budget and a lack of safety net.

## **VI. Discussion Item**

### **A. Tennis and Pickleball Court Update**

Hotchkiss began by announcing that The Ranch had sold out of tennis court keys for the current season. She does not want to purchase any more keys fearing that the courts will become too impacted and lead to disputes. In early November, Hotchkiss was made aware of a player who witnessed an injury out on one of the Point Tiburon courts due to a slippery spot where the gripped paint had worn away. Out of an abundance of caution, the court was immediately closed until it can be repaired. The Town of Tiburon is responsible for the repairs of the Point Tiburon courts, so Hotchkiss is to hear when the repair will be re-scheduled to take place. A repair had already been scheduled, but was cancelled due to poor weather.

Hotchkiss mentioned that she has received several requests from the community that they would like more courts painted with pickleball lines. Currently, there is only one court at Lagoon which has pickleball lines in addition to the tennis lines. The pickleball lines have been in place since July 2019 and players are stating that it is increasing in popularity. Lines can be added at any time by a professional company, but she is waiting to see if interest and The Ranch's finances continue to grow. Rosell asked what kinds of methods are being used to track the usage of the courts for tennis versus pickleball. Hotchkiss replied that there currently is not a way of doing so. Wangenheim suggested allowing reservations for the pickleball courts. Feder suggested that the next season's keys should be priced incrementally higher because of the increased demand.

Hotchkiss went on to say that there have been continued issues with local, non-Higgins Inc., tennis instructors teaching for private use—primarily on the Point Tiburon Courts. She has reached out to these individuals first by emailing a warning, then by going out in person and speaking to them at the courts. The issue has also been stated to the Town of Tiburon, Hotchkiss is now discussing with the Town the next steps that may need to be taken. There has been discussion of installing cameras or getting lawyers involved.

Schaefer asked if the police could get involved with the situation. Hotchkiss replied that the police should only get involved if there is an altercation, but not for enforcing recreation policies. The next step would be to get the town lawyer involved. Feder recommended that cease and desists be sent to the individuals which Hotchkiss noted as the next step. Rosell questioned how these instructors are getting onto the courts. Hotchkiss stated that key holders are bringing the instructors onto the courts. Wangenheim asked if the key holders had received email communication pertaining to this specific policy—Hotchkiss stated that they had at least twice. Feder voiced that it was imperative that a stern stance be taken now to prevent any potential claims of discrimination down the line. Burns recommended that once finances allowed for it, to switch the courts to electronic entry.

## **VII. Action Item**

### **A. Nomination and Election of Jason Rosell as Board Chair for 2021**

**Motion** Schaefer **Second** Wangenheim **Vote** 6 In Favor, 1 Abstained, 2 Absent

**Motion Passed**

Voted on as follows

AYES: Schaefer, Burns, Riessen, Feder, Schlunt, Wangenheim

NAYS: None

ABSTAINED: Rosell

ABSENT: Welner, McCaskill

### **B. Nomination and Election of Chelsea Schlunt as Board Vice Chair for 2021**

**Motion** Burns **Second** Rosell **Vote** 6 In Favor, 1 Abstained, 2 Absent

**Motion Passed**

Voted on as follows

AYES: Schaefer, Rosell, Burns, Riessen, Feder, Wangenheim

NAYS: None

ABSTAINED: Schlunt

ABSENT: Welner, McCaskill

### **C. Consideration of Bob McCaskill as Community Member on Ad Hoc Finance Committee**

**Motion** Riessen **Second** Schlunt **Vote** 7 In Favor, 2 Absent

**Motion Passed**

Voted on as follows

AYES: Schaefer, Rosell, Burns, Riessen, Feder, Schlunt, Wangenheim

NAYS: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: Welner, McCaskill

**D. Consideration of Independent Contractor – Higgins Tennis Inc. as tennis provider for The Ranch for 3 year contract effective March 1, 2021 – February 28, 2024**

The following public comment was made by William Higgins of Higgins Tennis Inc. Higgins stated that he had been running The Ranch’s tennis program since 2008 and had grown this program strictly through having a strong team and set curriculum. Within the first two years of leading the program, youth users grew from 30 children to 100 per week. Revenue from group lessons has also fluctuated from \$30K to \$150K per year. The focus of the Higgins Tennis program is to provide a high quality, convenient and inclusive program. The success of the program can be attributed to this and the fact that it strives to stay relevant and responds to the needs of the participants.

Hotchkiss clarified that the proposed contract is an exact duplicate of the current contract which shows a 74% / 26% split with The Ranch receiving 26%. These figures would adjust to an 80% / 20% split if in a fiscal year Higgins Inc. exceeds \$150K in gross revenue. This agreement has been in effect since 2008. In addition to this, Higgins Inc. has its own insurance and its own team of staff.

Feder asked if an open bid notice went out or was required to go out. Hotchkiss stated that contracts with instructors are left up to director discretion this was only added to the agenda because it had been such a hot topic in years past. Although it was not mandatory, by placing this action item on the agenda, that serves as public notice. Rosell asked how much Higgins Inc. contributed to the 2019 budget, Hotchkiss responded with \$56K net revenue. Rosell pointed out that this is not an exclusive contract and that the board could consider a contract with another tennis provider simultaneous to Higgins Inc. Riessen asked which courts and times are allotted to Higgins Inc. Hotchkiss stated that roughly 90% of programming occurs at Del Mar. Feder said that she wants to be sure that all due diligence was done to ensure that the public was informed. Hotchkiss reiterated that this contract is not required to be made public as it is up to director discretion; however anyone who had previously inquired about the term limits of the current contract were provided with the information and the date of this meeting when the contract would be discussed.

**Motion Riessen Second Wangenheim Vote 7 In Favor, 2 Absent**  
**Motion Passed**

Voted on as follows

AYES: Schaefer, Rosell, Burns, Riessen, Feder, Schlunt, Wangenheim

NAYS: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: Welner, McCaskill

**VIII. Adjourn**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 25, 2021 at 7:00pm. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month in order to skip over the holiday that falls on Monday, January 18, 2021.

There being no further business before the Board, Chair Schaefer adjourned the meeting at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michelle Barsky