

Sample remarks for local town council meetings

Remarks to Hilton Head Town Council: June 14, 2023: McAlister

Good afternoon.

My name is Sheryl McAlister. And I am the Senior Director of Advocacy and Community Development with USTA South Carolina.

Several of my colleagues in the tennis industry join me today. As well as local tennis pro Tom Ruth, a USTA SC board member and Island resident, and Jackie Reynecke, the President of Tennis Association of Hilton Head or TAHHI.

Jackie joins Wayne Lilley as the public face of our local community tennis associations, which are affiliated with USTA SC and are an integral part of our overall tennis infrastructure statewide. Wayne is president of Public Tennis Inc. or PTI. The fact that we have 2 CTAs serving this area will become clear as you hear today why Hilton Head is so critical to the overall tennis community.

USTA is the governing body for all of tennis in the US and is our mother ship. The annual US Open is the primary funder of all things tennis across the organization. There are 17 sections, and we are part of the Southern section – the largest.

The community tennis associations – or CTAs -- are our local market, on the ground network of community tennis players and providers who bring tennis to these communities every day.

In several of our most critical markets in South Carolina, we have 2 CTAs servicing the area. Hilton Head is one of those areas.

There is tremendous strength in the SC Lowcountry for many things, as we know. The tennis industry is one of them. Your neighboring Charleston runs one of the top 5 adult leagues in the country.

And TAHHI and PTI are home to thousands of league and recreational players.

Our partnerships with local clubs, providers, and stakeholders like yourselves are critical for overall success. We have invested in our pros, our clubs and our tennis facilities.

We were first to offer unrestricted grants during Covid to tennis pros who made their living with tennis. These small, unrestricted grants provided some aid to those in the tennis business and helped keep the lights on or put groceries on the table.

TAHHI and PTI partnered with us financially in that effort. We offered similar grants to tennis officials, tennis communities and others who made their living in the sport.

We currently have facilities grants projects in the works in this area. We work with organizations, towns and communities across the country to invest free services and more often than not – funding – to help bring tennis courts back that have fallen into disrepair.

There is money available from National, Southern and South Carolina. And it is being invested here.

We look forward to talking with you more about those opportunities to partner and invest. My colleagues will elaborate on the tennis message here. We appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today.