

GREATER BOCA RATON BEACH & PARK DISTRICT
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
April 15, 2024

The MEETING took place at the Swim & Racquet Center and was live-streamed for viewing & listening through Zoom. The meeting was called to order by CHAIR Wright at 5:15 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Craig F. Ehrnst
Steven M. Engel
Robert K. Rollins, Jr.
Susan Vogelgesang
Erin Wright

CHANGES TO AGENDA:

PUBLIC REQUESTS:

Mr. Art Turpel highlighted the excellence of the Patch Reef Park pickleball facility's design. He suggested that the District allocate the additional funds to ensure the facility's construction aligns with its original design. He encouraged the Commissioners to consider this proposal positively to maintain the facility's high standard.

Mr. Raul Travieso presented pickleball statistics and advocated for modifications at Patch Reef to accommodate regulation-sized courts measuring 64 by 40 feet. He emphasized safety to prevent player collisions with fencing, echoing the recommendation of the USA Pickleball Association.

Mr. Cil Ciliberti appreciates Boca Paddle's cooperation in adjusting prices and suggests hiring locally to reduce operating expenses. He views the situation as a great opportunity for all involved and expressed optimism about receiving positive news from the Boca Paddle group update.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS BOARD MEETINGS:

MOTION was made by Commissioner Vogelgesang and seconded by Commissioner Engel to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on April 1, 2024, at 5:15 p.m.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Ehrnst	Yes
Commissioner Engel	Yes
Commissioner Rollins	Yes
Commissioner Vogelgesang	Yes
Commissioner Wright	Yes

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

REGULAR BUSINESS:

1. Boca Paddle Update

Members of the Boca Paddle group (Malcolm Butters, Catherine Butters, and Stewart Davis) provided an update on the Boca Paddle project. Boca Paddle proposed several changes to increase accessibility and inclusivity at their facility. They welcome members and non-members, with non-members required to pay a daily guest fee and can make reservations up to 24 hours in advance. The daily fees vary based on residency, with Boca residents charged \$35 and the general public charged \$40. Boca Paddle plans to eliminate the initiation fee to encourage membership, making it easier for individuals to join.

Additionally, they propose reducing the concession fee, setting it at the lesser of 1% of annual revenue or \$100,000, to offset the revenue loss from removing the initiation fee. Moreover, Boca Paddle is introducing Community Memberships, offering a discounted alternative to Full Memberships with no initiation fee and affordable monthly dues of \$49. Community Members have access to the facility on weekdays from 10 AM to 4 PM, including court reservations, clinics, private lessons, and open play sessions. They also benefit from a 14-day advance booking horizon for court reservations and special pricing during Community Hours, making pickleball activities more accessible to the community.

A discussion ensued, emphasizing the necessity of reviewing the complete agreement with the Boca Paddle group. Executive Director Harms intends to schedule individual meetings with each Commissioner soon to review the draft concession agreement with the Boca Paddle group.

Public Comments were opened:

Mr. Cil Ciliberti believes that concessions should be included in agreements to account for potential outcomes, and exploring alternative options should minimize risk for all parties involved.

2. North Park Vegetation Maintenance Plan

A vegetation management plan is necessary for North Park as part of the site plan approval process with the City of Boca Raton and the District's ongoing commitment to sustainability. A component of developing this vegetation management plan is creating a pilot plot of approximately 1.4 acres. This effort will demonstrate the District's comprehensive plan for invasive species removal while preserving the natural sound barrier adjacent to residential areas along the railroad tracks. The proposed scope includes cutting Brazilian Pepper canopies, reviewing and protecting desirable trees, clearing and grubbing areas, treating understory species, and grading for future planting.

The District's existing vendor, South Florida Bushog Service, Inc., furnished a quotation amounting to \$41,000. Staff proposed endorsing the work with a cap of \$50,000 to accommodate unforeseen vegetation or unknowns in the area that may surface during clearance. Executive Director Harms notified the Board that there would be forthcoming expenses for planting new vegetation in the area.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Rollins and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to approve the North Park Pilot Program and give South Florida Bushog a budget to complete the work, not to exceed \$50,000.

Discussion: Commissioner Ehrnst expressed hesitance as he sought clarity on the comprehensive cost.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Ehrnst	Yes
Commissioner Engel	Yes
Commissioner Rollins	Yes
Commissioner Vogelgesang	Yes

Commissioner Wright Yes
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

3. Patch Reef Park Pickleball Construction Update

In the process of finalizing the design for the roofing of the Patch Reef Park Pickleball courts, the District staff and District consultant, CGA, identified a critical requirement adjustment needed to accommodate ASBA/USA Pickleball sanctioned play dimensions. The Board was presented with the following three options for consideration:

- Option 1: Maintain the dimensions of 499' x 132' with the current design, accepting the facility's limitation to non-sanctioned event status due to reduced court lengths of approximately 60' instead of the sanctioned 64'.
- Option 2: Retain the 132' width while transitioning from tapered to straight steel columns, achieving the necessary clear span for sanctioned court lengths of 64'. This modification incurs an additional expenditure of \$125,000.
- Option 3: Expand the facility width to 136' to accommodate the use of tapered columns, aligning with both aesthetic preferences and sanctioned event specifications. This approach necessitates an additional investment of \$168,000.

Staff recommended Option 3 and anticipates that additional credits will be received for this project, which already remains significantly under the budget of \$10 million, coming in at \$7.3 million.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Ehrnst and seconded by Commissioner Engel to approve Option #3, expanding the facility width to 136', for an additional investment of \$168,000 for the Patch Reef Park Pickleball project.

Roll Call Vote:
Commissioner Ehrnst Yes
Commissioner Engel Yes
Commissioner Rollins Yes
Commissioner Vogelgesang Yes
Commissioner Wright Yes
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

APPROVAL OF PAYROLL AND INVOICES:

MOTION was made by Commissioner Ehrnst and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to approve the payroll and invoices as presented, totaling \$2,059,106.70.

Roll Call Vote:
Commissioner Ehrnst Yes
Commissioner Engel Yes
Commissioner Rollins Yes
Commissioner Vogelgesang Yes
Commissioner Wright Yes
MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Executive Director:

District's 50th Anniversary Celebration Events:

The District's 50th Anniversary Archival Display is exhibited at Sugar Sand Park.

The District's 50th Anniversary Celebration at Sugar Sand Park will take place on April 21st from 11 to 2 p.m. and include free activities for the kids, food trucks, and live music.

Gumbo Limbo:

The Tower Project is advancing well and appears impressive. The opening date is yet to be determined.

The Coastal Stewards have received a rehab permit from Palm Beach County, allowing them to resume sea turtle rehabilitation at Gumbo Limbo.

North Park

The first Community Appearance Board meeting with North Park took place, and positive feedback was received from the city. They requested extensions to buffers along the parking lots by the condominiums. Miller Legg is currently incorporating buffer extensions into the design and site plan as requested by the city.

YMCA

Executive Director Harms participated in a YMCA event centered on team leadership over the weekend. She was inspired by the enthusiastic participation of young people in the community who helped package 15,000 bags of food for the Haitian community.

District Counsel:

House Bill 7013

The Legislature approved House Bill 7013, which awaits the Governor's signature. Notable aspects include a 12-year term limit for Independent Special Districts elected members, effective post-November 2024, with allowances based on District charters. Special Districts must define goals, objectives, and performance metrics by December 1 annually, and reports must be made available on District websites.

JJ Morley Litigation

As of March 27, the defendant submitted an answer and filed defenses. Additional legal procedures, such as discovery and depositions, are anticipated to clarify the case.

Ethics Training Chapter 112 Section 3142

In 2023, the House and Senate approved a bill regarding legal education credit obligations. Starting January 1, 2024, individuals must fulfill four hours of credits by year-end. This legislation, ratified under Chapter 112 Section 3142 and endorsed by the Governor, officially took effect on July 1, 2023, with enforcement commencing on January 1, 2024.

Boca Paddle Agreement

Work on the agreement is ongoing, with further refinement needed for certain provisions.

Commissioners:

Commissioner Engel enjoyed the recent opening display of the District's 50th Anniversary at Sugar Sand Park and gained valuable insights about the District's history. To ensure a
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thorough review of information received by presenters at the District meetings, Commissioner Engel requested that they provide materials by the Wednesday before the meeting for adequate preparation.

Commissioner Ehrnst suggested inviting the Governor to the April 21st picnic celebrating the District's 50th anniversary to promote its community value and urge the signing of House Bill 7013. He commended a recent city meeting for its transparency and community engagement and hopes for similar events in the future. Additionally, he expressed concerns about ongoing fires in Boca's scrub area, emphasizing the need to apply lessons learned elsewhere and preserve natural areas. He proposed seeking further assessment from fire authorities once the situation is resolved.

Commissioner Rollins emphasized the importance of underbrush maintenance to prevent park fires. He also requested updates on the Coastal Stewards' partnership with Gumbo Limbo. Additionally, he expressed concerns about the accessibility of defibrillators in parks. He suggested better ways to contact park rangers during emergencies, proposing options like security stations or emergency pull stations for immediate assistance.

Commissioner Vogelgesang suggested providing online information about the locations of AED defibrillators within the parks and expressed her appreciation to staff for their efforts in celebrating the District's 50th anniversary.

Commissioner Wright noted some frustration with the Butter's group regarding price negotiations, stressing the importance of balancing their profit and taxpayers' interests as a public entity. However, she expressed confidence in reaching a mutually beneficial agreement soon.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION was made by Commissioner Engel and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Ehrnst	Yes
Commissioner Engel	Yes
Commissioner Rollins	Yes
Commissioner Vogelgesang	Yes
Commissioner Wright	Yes

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED



Erin Wright Chair



Craig F. Ehrnst Secretary-Treasurer