

**GREATER BOCA RATON BEACH & PARK DISTRICT**  
**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF**  
**THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
August 18, 2025

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

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

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

**PUBLIC REQUESTS:**

*Zachary Newell* emphasized the need for public golf facilities in Boca Raton, highlighting the lack of access for children and families.

*Pedro Delfino* expressed support for the Surf Park in Boca Raton, emphasizing its value as a safe, sustainable space where seniors and all community members can learn to surf, while also enriching the city's reputation and quality of life.

*Joel Rask* read a letter from *Angelo Sands*, who advocated for an affordable golf facility to preserve green space and provide opportunities for juniors, beginners, seniors, and those with disabilities.

*Joel Rask* emphasized that the RFP process for the last major piece of recreation land should prioritize community impact over revenue, focusing on affordability and programs that benefit kids, promote healthy lifestyles, and provide meaningful activities for residents.

*Ken Folsom* expressed a desire for a reasonable, well-maintained public course with modest facilities.

*Al Travasos*, speaking as a Via Verde HOA board member, urged the board to revisit the cell tower proposal, citing ongoing homeowner concerns about poor service and requesting further direction and consideration on the matter.

*David DiPierro* supported the Boca Surf Park, saying the surfing community would heavily use it and praised the addition of multiple beach volleyball courts to meet growing demand and expand youth and school programs.

*Cil Ciliberti* opposed moving forward with skate or surf park plans without enforceable noise mitigation, stressing that Florida law and constitutional rights protect homeowners' quiet enjoyment. He warned that without effective sound controls, residents are prepared to pursue formal complaints and legal action to protect their property rights.

*Chris Payne* voiced strong support for the Surf Park, saying the sounds from such facilities are those of joy and community. He praised Boca's innovation and urged the city to embrace the project as a unique opportunity that other cities will soon want to replicate.

*Mark Toor*, a resident of the Boca Raton Golf and Racquet Club, praised the public course and supported expanding golf opportunities but urged the city to address longstanding infrastructure

issues, particularly the lack of functioning restrooms, which he said have gone unfixed for four years despite repeated promises.

*Jane Antal* opposed plans for the surf and skate park, citing the tranquility and peace of mind it would disrupt for retired residents.

*Robert DuKate* urged the board to follow the Ocean Breeze master plan, which prioritized trails, golf, and open spaces—not surf or skate parks. He highlighted declining skate park use and said such single-use facilities are incompatible with residential areas.

*Joshua Volel* expressed support for the Surf Park, saying it offers a safe, controlled environment for people of all ages to learn surfing, build connections, and enjoy the sport without the risks of the ocean.

Jaclyn Mugica expressed strong support for the project, noting that combining golf, surf, and skate facilities in one location would create safe, vibrant spaces for families. She emphasized that such a development would give children opportunities to pursue their passions, connect with peers, and grow together in a thriving community.

*Peter Nathan*, a golf professional, spoke in favor of preserving a golf course at Ocean Breeze, stressing that it provides tranquility, green space, and lifelong values such as honor, respect, and courage. He highlighted the benefits of golf for youth development, including scholarships and safe recreation, and urged the board to honor residents' expectations of having a course in perpetuity.

*Hani Saad* voiced support for the Surf Park, saying it would offer a healthy, unifying activity for both youth and older generations while encouraging kids to get off screens and outdoors. She acknowledged noise concerns but argued that the sounds from a surf park would be minimal compared to industrial sources like data centers, praising the project's sustainability focus and community benefits.

*David Fleischmann* supported the Surf Park, noting the high demand for surfing opportunities in Florida, where waves are limited. He described wave sounds as peaceful rather than disruptive and said the project would be a positive addition welcomed by both surfers and non-surfers alike.

*Harold Chaffee*, president of Keep Golf in Boca, urged the Board to prioritize golf at North Park, citing surveys that consistently showed strong community support for it.

*Bryson*, in favor of the golf project, noted that junior golf participation has risen sharply and that a course or practice area would give families a healthy, safe place to spend time together. He emphasized golf's life lessons, accessibility for all ages and abilities, and potential economic benefits, saying the project would strengthen both community and city.

*Kenzie* supported the Boca Surf Park, saying it would give kids a safe, controlled place to learn surfing without the risks of the ocean, making it easier for those whose parents are hesitant about ocean conditions.

*Guillermo M.* shared his support for the Surf Park, recalling how living in a community with both a surf park and golf course gave his young son the chance to surf and eventually become a golf champion. He urged Boca to embrace diversity and opportunity, noting the surf park would take

up space equal to only a few golf holes while still offering major benefits for families and the community.

*Andrew Dixon* expressed support for the Surf Park and skate park, recalling how he learned to skate at Boca's original facility. While appreciative that the land was preserved instead of being used for housing, he cautioned that any golf course built should be high-quality to attract players and not be compromised by poorly allocating land.

**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 August 4, 2025, 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. North Park Soil Mitigation**

At the North Park site, Boca Paddle has begun construction and identified a need to address contaminated soil located in areas referred to as "the snake" and "phase one." In coordination with the District, Boca Paddle has offered to take all of the impacted soil and place it beneath their building foundation, a method preferred by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection as it ensures safe containment and avoids the higher costs associated with offsite removal. Because the Butters Group, acting as Boca Paddle's agent, is already mobilized on-site, the District is considering Resolution 2025-04 to engage them directly for this soil remediation work. The resolution provides for a waiver of competitive procurement requirements under Chapter 287 of the Florida Statutes, finding that this approach is in the District's best interest by achieving cost savings, regulatory compliance, and project efficiency. Approval of this resolution would authorize the Butters Group to complete the remediation and allow construction to continue without unnecessary delays. Mr. Horowitz, District General Counsel, read Resolution 2025-04 to the Board for consideration.

**MOTION** was made by Commissioner Engel and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to adopt Resolution 2025-04, engaging the Butter's Group to conduct soil remediation at North Park.

**Roll Call Vote:**

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

Commissioner Wright      Yes  
**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

## **2. Patch Reef Park Community Center-ADA Restroom Evaluation & Design**

The Board discussed the need to evaluate and update the restrooms at the Patch Reef Park Community Center to ensure ADA compliance in connection with the upcoming Community Accessibility Program (CAP). While an initial work order from WZA was presented to evaluate the restrooms, Commissioner Ehrnst noted that the entire facility is significantly outdated and in need of more than minor repairs, suggesting a more comprehensive renovation should be considered before programming begins. Executive Director Harms confirmed that the current millage rate provides the financial capacity to expand the scope of work without requiring a site plan and recommended directing WZA to provide a broader evaluation of the building. The Board expressed support for pursuing a complete assessment, with restrooms as a priority, while ensuring that any construction work would be coordinated with CAP program scheduling.

The consensus was to defer approval of the initial restroom-only proposal and instead request a more detailed, expanded scope and add a line item to the budget to address the full renovation needs of the facility.

## **3. Budget Discussion**

The Board reviewed the proposed millage rate, with Executive Director Harms recommending that it remain at 1.08. She explained that maintaining the current rate would provide the financial flexibility needed to incorporate the Patch Reef Park Community Center renovation project into the budget, as well as to cover potential cost increases with upcoming projects such as North Park. Commissioners agreed that keeping the rate at 1.08 would ensure that the District can fund necessary improvements. The Board reached consensus to proceed with this approach, and staff will return at the September 3 public hearing with a specific budget line item for the community center project.

## **APPROVAL OF PAYROLL AND INVOICES:**

**MOTION** was made by Commissioner Ehrnst and seconded by Commissioner Rollins to approve the payroll and invoices as presented, totaling \$ 2,941,581.89.

### **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:**

*North Park East Side RFO Responses*

GBRB&PD Minutes: August 18, 2025

Nine contractors responded to the RFQ for building out the east side of North Park. Staff is evaluating the submissions and will return at the next meeting with recommendations on which firms should move forward in the bidding process.

#### Traffic Garden

The traffic garden is ready for a soft opening, with fencing and restrooms to be installed next week. The shade cover is delayed until late September due to manufacturing issues. Dates for the ribbon-cutting ceremony were discussed, with the final date to be determined.

#### Sugar Sand Park Roof & Facilities

Roof replacement at Sugar Sand Park is ongoing. The Field House roof is currently being worked on, and its generator replacement has been completed. Bids for the multi-sport rink cover are due back on September 5 and will be brought forward later in September.

#### Needs Assessment Clarification

The needs assessment referenced during public comment was completed in 2019, before the city received the new golf course. It did not account for that addition.

#### Trails at North Park

The east side of North Park will include over five miles of walking and shared-use trails.

#### Skate Park Hours

For transparency, it was noted that the city's skate park is only open 31 hours per week, mostly during mid-day hours and weekends, making it less accessible than typical skate parks that allow all-day entry.

#### **District Counsel:**

#### **Commissioners:**

*Commissioner Engel* thanked the community for attending and commended the respectful way opinions were shared. He encouraged residents to keep engaging and assured them he reads their emails, even if he does not always respond.

*Commissioner Ehrnst* asked about the timeline for reviewing the issued RFPs, noting that proposals are due back on September 17. He requested clarification on when the board would first have the opportunity to rank the submissions and hear presentations.

*Executive Director Harms* confirmed that the first opportunity to review RFP submissions will be at the October 6 meeting, with the option to hold presentations that evening, likely in the Willow Theater. Commissioners discussed the need to schedule time for presentations at both October meetings, allowing flexibility depending on the number of proposals received. They agreed that presentations should follow the past format of about 10 minutes each with a Q&A period.

*Commissioner Rollins* asked for an update on the proposed cell tower at Sugar Sand Park, noting ongoing concerns about poor service and emergency access. Executive Director Harms suggested preparing a new RFP, which the Board agreed to revisit at a future meeting.

*Commissioner Rollins* also raised the topic of cost-of-living adjustments and salary evaluations for District staff to ensure competitiveness. Executive Director Harms confirmed



that cost-of-living increases were included in the budget, and she also supported merit increases.

Commissioners expressed strong appreciation for Director Harms' leadership and effectiveness in managing projects and the budget process, with consensus that a merit increase for her should be considered. Director Harms will prepare the necessary evaluation materials and follow the established procedure.

*Commissioner Vogelgesang* shared an email from Mr. Greg Galanis, president of the men's golf league at the Boca Raton Golf and Racquet Club, representing about 150 resident members. The league is advocating for a short, flexible course designed to be senior- and kid-friendly, along with a lighted driving range, putting course, and Teaching and Learning Center. She also acknowledged league members/residents who wrote in support of these ideas, including Neil Mannhaeimer, Peter Samson, Jody Wiener, Joe Seta, Rick Catinella, Michael Costello, Gary Neal, Roy Garman, Steven C. Leskowitz, and Wally Elfeld. Commissioner Vogelgesang thanked them for sharing their input and emphasized their collective interest in creating an adjunct course to the Golf and Racquet Club.

*Commissioner Wright* noted that some lights at the Patch Reef Park pickleball courts may be out and asked staff to check on the issue. She also shared her excitement about seeing families already using the new traffic garden, highlighting it as a valuable and safe space for children to ride bikes.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION** was made by Commissioner Engel and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to adjourn the meeting at 6:22 p.m.

**Roll Call Vote:**

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

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**

  
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Erin Wright Chair

  
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Craig F. Ehrnst Secretary-Treasurer