

GREATER BOCA RATON BEACH & PARK DISTRICT
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
June 1, 2026

The MEETING took place at the Swim & Racquet Center and was live-streamed via Zoom for viewing & listening. Chair Rollins 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

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

PUBLIC REQUESTS:

Cil Ciliberti opposed locating the Boys & Girls Club at the former hotel site in the North Park area, expressing concerns about traffic, the surrounding residential neighborhood, the loss of green space, and whether the decision would be based on emotion rather than on the best long-term location.

Briana Hagquist thanked those involved in moving away from the Sugar Sand Park softball proposal and expressed support for preserving green space. She also opposed locating the Boys & Girls Club in the North Park area, citing concerns about overdevelopment, congestion, nearby residential impacts, and the availability of other potential recreation sites downtown.

Al Travazos, speaking as a member of the Via Verde HOA Board, supported the proposed cell tower and disputed claims that were made regarding endangered habitat, gopher tortoises, and health risks. He emphasized the need for improved cellular service for safety, emergency alerts, and 911 access for nearby residents.

Robert DuKate discussed the potential impacts of proposed state property tax reforms on District revenues and urged caution before proceeding with major new park expenditures, including those for North Park. He also stated that golf did not fail at Ocean Breeze and described the history of the sale and foreclosure of the former golf course.

Mark Griffith encouraged the District and City to revisit golf as a potential revenue-generating use for the former golf course property, citing the uncertain tax environment, the City's planning discussions, and comparable public golf facilities in nearby communities.

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 May 18, 2026, at 5:15 p.m.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

REGULAR BUSINESS:

1. Sugar Sand Park Softball Agreement Termination Discussion

Executive Director Harms advised that the District and City had reached the point of considering termination of the interlocal agreement for the proposed softball complex at Sugar Sand Park.

She explained that since the Agreement was approved, the City announced that Boca Raton Youth Softball will relocate to DeHoernle Park, which has been identified as the preferred long-term location for the league. As a result, staff determined there is no longer sufficient operational need or organizational support to continue pursuing a separate softball complex at Sugar Sand Park. Staff recommended terminating the Agreement pursuant to Section 16.2, which allows termination, and the City confirmed the District will not be charged for prior services or work paid for by the City.

Commissioner Rollins thanked District staff for their work throughout the process and noted that his request to investigate opportunities at Patch Reef Park led to further discussions between the District and the City regarding field availability. Those discussions broadened and ultimately led to consideration of opportunities at Countess de Hoernle Park. He also thanked City staff and Greg Stevens for their collaborative efforts in finding a solution that serves the softball community while being mindful of taxpayers and park resources.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Rollins and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to terminate the interlocal agreement between the Greater Boca Raton Beach and Parks District and the City of Boca Raton related to the development of a softball complex at Sugar Sand Park pursuant to Section 16.2 of the agreement and direct the Executive Director to provide all required notices to the City of Boca Raton and other parties as required under this agreement.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

2. Preliminary Budget Discussion

a. Millage Rate Evaluations FY 2027

Executive Director Harms provided an initial review of the FY 2026/2027 budget process and preliminary taxable values from the Property Appraiser. Historical millage information and scenarios, including the rollback rate and 3%, 5%, and 10% increase options, were presented. She noted that the City's budget requests were expected shortly and would help staff prepare for upcoming budget meetings before the Board sets a tentative millage rate.

Following discussion, direction was given to Ms. Harms to use the rollback rate as the starting point for the current budget review and to have staff continue preparing park-by-park budget information for future consideration.

b. Property Tax Reform Update-District Impacts

Executive Director Harms reviewed proposed state property tax reform initiatives being considered during a Special Session of the Florida Legislature. She explained that the District relies heavily on ad valorem tax revenue to fund park operations, capital improvements, programming, and interlocal obligations, including Red Reef Park, Gumbo Limbo, Countess de Hoernle Park operations and maintenance, and Mizner Park. She reported that approximately 39% of the District's tax base consists of homesteaded properties and that staff's preliminary analysis showed a potential annual revenue loss of approximately \$5.33 million under a \$150,000 homestead exemption and approximately \$8.9 million under a \$250,000 homestead exemption at the current 1.08 millage rate. She compared those amounts to the cost of major park operations, including Sugar Sand Park, Ocean Strand, Don Estridge, Red Reef Park, Gumbo Limbo, and Patch Reef Park. Executive Director Harms emphasized that no final legislation or ballot language had

been approved and that many questions remain regarding trust fund funding, distribution, special district eligibility, long-term impacts, and voter approval.

District General Counsel, Mr. Goren, discussed proposed legislation, including SJR 2-F and SB 4-F, and advised that the proposals could affect counties, municipalities, school districts, and special districts. He explained that the legislation included potential limits on the use of ad valorem tax revenues for core services and noted uncertainty regarding how those provisions would apply to special districts.

Discussion ensued regarding the importance of providing factual public information once final proposals are known, coordinating with the City, completing capital projects for which funds have been set aside, and continuing to monitor fiscal impacts. Mr. Goren advised that public funds may not be used to advocate for or against a referendum, but that the District may provide factual, educational information in accordance with Chapter 106, Florida Statutes.

APPROVAL OF PAYROLL AND INVOICES:

MOTION was made by Commissioner Ehrnst and seconded by Commissioner Engel to approve the payroll and invoices as presented, totaling \$377,502.84.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Executive Director:

Countess de Hoernle Park Phase II Agreement

Executive Director Harms reported that a meeting was scheduled with the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, and Greg Stevens to review the Phase II agreement for Countess de Hoernle Park. She indicated that an agreement may be brought back to the Board at the next meeting.

North Park Bids

Bids for North Park are due Friday, June 5, at 11:00 a.m. A public opening will be held downstairs due to flooring work in the Boardroom. Staff will provide an update after bids are received and begin the review process.

District Office Flooring

The new flooring at the District offices will begin on Wednesday, with staff working remotely during demolition.

Joint Meeting with the City

A joint meeting with the City is scheduled for late October. Executive Director Harms, the City Manager, and the Deputy City Manager have established monthly meetings to discuss agenda items and coordination topics.

District Counsel:

Mr. Goren stated that the District is in a period of significant legislative uncertainty. He reiterated that the pending state legislation could have serious impacts on local governments, including the District.

Commissioners:

GBRB&PD Minutes: June 1, 2026

Commissioner Wright asked for feedback regarding the Patch Reef Park glare mitigation. Staff reported positive feedback following the installation of windscreens, with remaining questions regarding white rocks and whether mitigation may also be needed on the north side.

Commissioner Vogelgesang reported hearing positive public feedback regarding the glare mitigation work at Patch Reef Park and thanked staff for following up.

Commissioner Ehrnst emphasized the need to exercise caution during budget discussions amid rising costs and public interest in tax relief. He encouraged the District to reduce costs or the millage rate where possible and to be especially cautious with capital projects.

Commissioner Engel stated that the Board must keep an eye on the future and plan accordingly once the current state tax reform issues are resolved.

Commissioner Rollins stated that the Board was on the same page about the need to prepare a sound budget despite uncertainty about future revenues and limited information on potential impacts in 2027 or 2028.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION was made by Commissioner Engel and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 p.m.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED



Robert K. Rollins, Jr.

Chair



Craig F. Ehrnst

Secretary-Treasurer