

GREATER BOCA RATON BEACH & PARK DISTRICT
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
October 20, 2025

The MEETING took place at the Sugar Sand Park Willow Theatre 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

CHANGES TO AGENDA: Public Comments on non-agenda items were added after approval of the minutes.

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 October 6, 2025, at 5:15 p.m.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

MOTION was made by Commissioner Vogelgesang and seconded by Commissioner Engel to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting held on October 7, 2025, at 5:15 p.m.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Carolina Rush – Supported new softball fields as a long-overdue step toward equality and pride for girls' sports.

Mark Menadio – Urged the creation of more softball fields due to overcrowding and a lack of youth practice space.

Carol Havelka – Opposed removing eleven acres of Sugar Sand forest, citing environmental and cost concerns.

Anna Rudinski – Requested halting Sugar Sand development and terminating the agreement until voters weigh in.

Camille Lepre – Cherished Sugar Sand's natural environment and urged preserving its trees and habitat.

Stacy Sipple – Opposed forest removal, emphasizing the many health and environmental benefits of tree canopies.

Taelyn Hennessy – Asked for new softball fields so teams can practice more and improve.

Harper G. – Excited about new fields to host tournaments locally and provide more practice time for girls.

Bree Bishop – Described poor current field conditions and wanted safe, fair facilities for girls' teams.

Jessica Grogan – Highlighted unsafe and unsanitary field conditions; supported dedicated, high-quality girls' fields.

Martha Parker – Urged better city–District cooperation, preserve nature areas, and engage residents in volunteer maintenance.

Brianna Hagquist – Opposed Sugar Sand development due to lack of outreach, traffic, and gopher tortoise habitat loss.

Zaripa – A new player who feels unsafe at current fields; supports safer, dedicated softball facilities.

Victor Chavarria – Valued softball’s community and father–daughter bonding; asked to ensure play continues.

Maya Hoppy – Requested safer, better-quality girls’ fields equal to boys’ baseball facilities.

Lily – Supported new fields to practice and host games in Boca instead of traveling.

Diana Cooper – Called for gender equity in sports while protecting the environment and wildlife.

Richard Warner – Opposed cutting trees at Sugar Sand; said to fix existing fields instead.

Martin Bell – Warned the project ties to downtown development; urged investing in Memorial and Meadows Parks instead.

Judy Morrow – Spoke to protect parks, tennis, and wildlife; criticized neglect of the War Memorial Tennis Center.

Brian Kuncsman – Urged thoughtful planning and redevelopment of existing fields rather than clearing forest.

Honey Chikovsky – Opposed tearing down Sugar Sand Park, which she has loved since childhood.

Stacey Altier– Said girls need safe softball fields and fewer new apartments.

Sunny – Wanted to keep and protect softball fields for all players.

Emily Eccevorria – Said softball builds friendships and growth; more playing areas are needed.

Sean Powers – Praised the District’s stewardship and urged waiting until downtown issues are resolved before any clearing.

David Luna – Supported new fields to meet demand and reduce travel for youth teams.

Patrick English – Advocated for equity and opportunity for girls by building new softball facilities.

Palmer English – Asked for new softball fields and dugouts.

Patricia Spinella – Criticized overdevelopment; asked to leave Sugar Sand’s 11 acres untouched.

Jon Perlman – Opposed the destruction of the Sugar Sand forest; urged improving the current fields and awaiting the public vote.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

1. TCAI- What If Workshop at Sugar Sand Park

Andrea Virgin, Chair and CEO of the Center for Arts and Innovation, joined by Apryl Freeman, Director of Program Development, provided an update on the organization’s shift from physical infrastructure to expanded creative programming. Partnering with IDEO, TCAI refined its mission to cultivate and elevate creativity as a lifelong force for individuals of all ages. Virgin outlined four key program pillars: supporting youth creativity, engaging tweens and teens, fostering

intergenerational creative connections, and helping adults rediscover creativity through professional development and nature-based programs.

She introduced the new “What If?” Workshop, part of TCAI’s Wonder Works initiative, created in partnership with the Beach and Park District. The program invites children to imagine and design their own Center for Creativity, with ideas collected online and through pop-up events, including one at Sugar Sand Park on November 1. The program quickly sold out and will culminate in a gallery exhibition at the Boca Raton Museum of Art featuring participant projects and an awards ceremony. Winners will join TCAI’s Junior Creative Directors Board to provide ongoing feedback on youth programming.

2. North Park RFP Proposal Updates

Boys and Girls Club.

The Boys and Girls Club proposes building a 25,000-square-foot youth facility on the former hotel site (1.8 acres). The new center would feature separate wings for youth and teens, as well as shared spaces such as a gym, teaching kitchen, robotics lab, and arts areas. It would continue serving local schools with affordable after-school and summer programs.

The \$16 million project, funded entirely by the Club with a \$10 million program endowment, reflects strong financial stability. Construction would begin once the construction amount is fully funded, with milestones including contract approval in 2026, site plan approval in 2027, construction in 2029, and opening in 2030. The District would retain ownership and gain shared use of facilities on select weekends.

Next Steps:

- Engage Ford & Associates to conduct a third-party financial feasibility review of all proposals.
- Initiate a traffic impact study for the area, including analysis of access, parking, and potential congestion impacts.
- Coordinate with the City of Boca Raton to confirm updates on the Jeffrey Street extension project and evaluate its impact on traffic circulation.
- Continue public outreach and input as part of the discovery and evaluation process.
- Collaborate with the Boys and Girls Club to define weekend community access parameters for shared gymnasium and meeting room use.
- Maintain coordination to ensure transparency, compatibility, and long-term community benefit throughout the project planning process.

Boca Surf Park

The Boca Surf proposal outlines a publicly accessible surf park on approximately 22–24 acres of the northwest parcel. The project would include a wave garden surf pool, aquatic amenities, retail and dining options, and community programming. The proposal is entirely privately financed and operated, with the developer seeking a long-term concession agreement—proposed as a 49-year term with two 25-year renewals—under which the District would retain land ownership, and all improvements would revert to the District at the end of the term. Boca Surf has \$78 million in private equity commitments and plans no debt financing. Compensation to the District would start at \$600,000 annually, escalating over time, with a percentage of gross revenues dedicated to the District. The developer would assume all design, permitting, construction, and operational

responsibilities, as well as all risk, including bonding and insurance to protect the District from potential project failure.

Boca Surf has pledged to provide community programming for residents, schools, adaptive participants, and veterans, as well as monthly community events and partnerships with local nonprofits. The proposal aligns with the 2022 West Side Recreation Plan, which includes an aquatic feature.

Next Steps:

- Engage Ford & Associates to conduct a third-party financial and operational feasibility review of the proposal.
- Work with City of Boca Raton traffic engineers to evaluate access points, turn lanes, and traffic flow, particularly related to the Jeffrey Street extension.
- Require a comprehensive community outreach plan to address resident concerns regarding safety, noise, lighting, traffic, and residential impacts.
- Ensure the developer provides a comprehensive environmental plan, including measures to mitigate ecological impacts, reduce water and energy use, and explore restoration opportunities on surrounding land.
- Incorporate sound barriers, trail access, public restrooms, and security plans into the site design, ensuring restrooms are secured after hours.
- Establish a 5% gross revenue contribution as a guiding principle for all partnerships to support future District facilities and maintenance.
- Require a full indemnification and hold-harmless agreement to protect the District from liability.
- Verify the developer's comprehensive insurance coverage, including adequate liability and property protection, and confirm bonding capacity sufficient to restore or remove the facility if necessary.

Boca Sports and Entertainment

The Boca Sports and Entertainment proposal for the southwest side of North Park outlines a multi-use indoor/outdoor recreation and entertainment complex that includes a gym, climbing walls, obstacle courses, café, and event space. The facility would be privately financed and operated under a long-term concession agreement (30–40 years), with the District retaining ownership of the land and all improvements reverting to the District at the end of the term.

The project is designed to provide year-round indoor recreation opportunities, particularly during inclement weather, and includes 6,000 square feet for “Sogility,” a technology-based indoor soccer training program. The proposed model is pay-per-use, open to residents daily with no mandatory memberships, and will collaborate with nonprofit and youth sports groups to ensure affordable programming. The estimated \$10 million project cost will be funded through private equity and conventional construction financing. Revenue projections indicate \$3.8–\$4.2 million in the first year, with expected stabilization by year three. The District's annual return is estimated at \$150,000–\$200,000, based on a 5% share of gross receipts. The facility will include four indoor gymnasiums to help meet growing community demand for indoor sports space.

Boca Sports has committed to aligning youth programming with the Palm Beach County School Calendar, offering activities on teacher workdays, holidays, and breaks. They also plan to offer resident discounts, community days, and access to District-sponsored events.

Next Steps:

- Engage Ford & Associates to conduct a third-party financial feasibility review to verify funding sources, equity commitments, and financial stability.
- Request detailed financial documentation identifying investors, partners, and financing structure for verification.
- Confirm coordination with local youth sports organizations, including Boca Hoops, Saber Soccer, and futsal groups, to ensure the facility supports resident-based recreational needs.
- Obtain a detailed fee structure and pricing model, including rates for community use, youth programs, and nonprofit rentals.
- Confirm public access parameters, including how community members can use the facility during non-leased hours and how pricing will remain affordable.
- Request staff qualifications, operational bios, and background screening procedures, ensuring level-two background checks for all employees working with minors.
- Develop a security plan, including building access controls, coordination with other North Park partners, and trail and restroom safety measures.
- Ensure connectivity with trails and open access to maintain a community-friendly environment, rather than a fenced-off facility.
- Establish a 5% gross revenue contribution or equivalent community benefit (such as gymnasium time or discounted youth programming) as a guiding principle for negotiation.
- Review utilization projections to confirm the feasibility of balancing travel league rentals with local recreation programming.

Kemper Sports

The Kemper Sports proposal, which represents the golf component of the North Park Recreation Facilities RFP envisions a short course, family-style golf facility with a putting green, driving range, and a “village hub” social area, designed as an affordable, community-driven, family-friendly golf campus. Kemper initially proposed using the northwest parcel but is now exploring the southwest parcel, near the site of the former maintenance facility, which may continue to serve that purpose due to its environmental oversight suitability.

The proposed project would operate under a long-term concession agreement (50 years with two 25-year renewals), with District ownership of the land retained and all improvements reverting to the District at the end of the term. The proposal includes a 5% gross revenue share and would be 100% privately financed, designed, constructed, and operated by Kemper Sports, with an estimated \$10 million investment (subject to revision pending new design).

Kemper will present a revised site layout and design at the November 3rd meeting, with complete financial data expected by mid-December. The layout revision will determine the final footprint, maintenance facility location, and potential netting or lighting needs.

Next Steps:

GBRB&PD Minutes: October 20, 2025

- Review and evaluate Kemper's revised golf course layout and amenity plan at the November 3 meeting.
- Receive and analyze financial documentation by mid-December, including investment structure and projected revenue/expense models.
- Engage Ford & Associates to perform an independent financial feasibility analysis of the proposal, as part of a broader review of all proposers, at a cost not to exceed \$10,000.
- Confirm public access, resident discounts, pricing, and amenity offerings to ensure affordability and alignment with community expectations.
- Verify compatibility and coordination with the City of Boca Raton's municipal golf course to avoid market competition and ensure complementary programming.
- Assess lighting, netting, and routing design for safety, neighborhood impact, and compliance with airport authority requirements.
- Confirm the location and function of the maintenance facility and cart barn within the new layout.
- Evaluate food and beverage operations, ensuring the proposed "tiki-style" casual restaurant aligns with District expectations and does not conflict with community standards.
- Require interim financial reporting and ongoing transparency from the operator once operational, to monitor performance and protect District interests.
- Ensure Kemper addresses security, walkability, and shared infrastructure with other North Park partners.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Rollins and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to allow an amount not to exceed \$10,000 to engage a financial advisor to perform a financial feasibility analysis on each of the four proposals selected.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

PUBLIC REQUESTS:

Don Huber – Opposes development, arguing that a deed restriction requires the land to remain a golf course and warns of property-value losses, traffic, and potential class action suit.

Nick Dovici – Cites failures/impacts of surf parks elsewhere (noise, water use, traffic, property values) and says this dense residential site is unsuitable.

Adam Beighley – Urges building a field house/more indoor courts due to heavy demand and frequent rainouts across youth sports.

Finely Thorn – Supports a Boca wave park to allow year-round surfing practice when the ocean is flat.

Whitney Thorn – Supports the surf park based on a quiet, positive visit to a similar facility and its appeal to keep teens active and off screens.

Tom Riemann – Supports the surf park as a world-class, family-friendly venue that builds fitness and discipline.

Chad Williams – Lifelong surfer and nearby homeowner who opposes the surf park at this location due to neighborhood and ecological impacts.

GBRB&PD Minutes: October 20, 2025

Pam Chrumholtz – Supports a Wavegarden surf park for jobs, low-key tourism, health, and refreshing Boca's brand.

Donna – Supports a surf park as a safe, controlled, inclusive option for adaptive surfers like her shark-attack survivor grandson.

Karen Pruznick – Opposes the surf park near homes due to noise, massive water/energy use, wildlife/trees, and loss of scarce green space.

Rianna Zebokowski – Opposes the surf park behind her unit, warning of vibrations, flooding, huge water use, noise, and falling property values.

Martha Parker – Thanks the board, supports Boys & Girls Club, and urges careful weighing of P3 tradeoffs versus long-term field house needs.

Kathy Fearnley – Opposes a surf park in a residential zone, citing zoning integrity, cumulative traffic from all amenities, and the need for a complete traffic study.

Rebecca Smith – Questions need for a “world-class” surf facility here and raises affordability, commercialization, noise, and failure-risk concerns.

Joel Lavintman– Opposes converting protected green space to commercial entertainment, citing heavy water use and added noise.

Pedro Delfino – Suggests relocating the surf park to a non-residential/commercial site so benefits are kept without harming neighbors.

Leslie Roth – Opposes the proposed location due to dangerous traffic conditions and neighborhood impacts, favoring earlier passive-use ideas.

Steve Tempski – Supports the surf park if designed responsibly with attention to the environment, noise, parking, and bar use.

MaryAlice Kindred – Supports providing alternative youth activities, such as a surf park, and urges listening to teens and advocating for children.

Dalen Michaels – Supports the surf park as a community investment that benefits kids and future generations, offering to help address concerns.

David Fleishman – Supports a surf park to share surfing safely with families and kids locally.

Paul Africano – Opposes the location near homes and asks for a comprehensive traffic study and a different site.

Regina Eklund – Opposes a surf park in Boca Teeca and urges the District to build and control its own field house, comments on golf options, and property values.

Angela – Thanks for the traffic garden; worries about surf-park traffic/parking and favors affordable, family-accessible options (e.g., YMCA), plus safety/shade.

Carrie Bibicoust – Opposes the location, citing likely extreme attendance or high pricing, traffic, and concern over alcohol in a park facility.

Jon Perlman – Criticizes P3 finances and tax impacts, arguing taxpayers should capture the land's value rather than giving it away.

Harold Chaffee – Opposes P3/surf park, accuses proposers of misleading presentations, and warns of water/energy feasibility.

GBRB&PD Minutes: October 20, 2025

Christina R– Opposes using public land for private projects and warns against Miami-style overdevelopment and congestion.

Robert DuKate – Opposes a surf/amusement park near residences and questions transparency, RFP process, and long-term viability.

Wayne Whitfield – Opposes added amenities for traffic/gridlock reasons, notes golf demand, and questions field house siting.

Ryan – Supports the surf park for safe, accessible surfing that builds community joy across ages/abilities.

Bruce Zalman – Praises the District and civil discourse, expressing general appreciation for Boca's parks.

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 \$916,910.46.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Executive Director:

Patch Reef Park Covered Pickleball Courts Ribbon Cutting

The Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony is on October 22, 2025, at 5:00 PM. All are invited to attend!

City Tree Giveaways (Clarification)

The City runs periodic free tree giveaways, and the District has supported these; residents can sign up for City notices to be alerted to future dates.

Millage Rate (Clarification)

The District's millage rate has not increased since 2023; revenue changes stem from higher property values.

RFP & Master Plan Alignment (Clarification)

Contrary to a public comment, the 2022 Miller Legg conceptual master plan was included as Exhibit A in the RFP and openly discussed by the Board before issuance.

Commissioners:

Commissioner Rollins thanked residents for their active participation and candid feedback, noting that he fully understands the community's concerns. He emphasized that the Board's process remains ongoing and that no final decisions have been made. Reinforcing his personal values of integrity and transparency, he stated that every Board action is guided by honesty, fairness, and the goal of serving the public's best interest.

Commissioner Ehrnst emphasized the need for factual accuracy in public communication, warning against community misinformation. He noted that both the District and developers have major investments and are proceeding carefully. He also suggested delaying major decisions on the proposed softball fields until after the city election and formal plan approvals.

Commissioner Engel praised residents for their engagement, emphasizing that public input is essential to the Board's decisions. He called for continued transparency and thorough verification

