

GREATER BOCA RATON BEACH & PARK DISTRICT
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
November 3, 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

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 20, 2025, at 5:15 p.m.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

REGULAR BUSINESS:

1. North Park RFP Proposal Discussion

Executive Director Harms reported that Kemper Sports has requested a deferral of any amendments to its proposal pending the outcome of the surf park discussion. She further noted that she met with Jerry Ford and his team, who are preparing an engagement letter for a financial feasibility study. The letter is anticipated later this week to initiate due diligence on the District's ongoing projects.

2. Boca Surf Update

Representatives from Boca Surf Park presented an updated proposal for the North Park site, emphasizing its use of Wavegarden technology and Boca Raton's strong surf community. The revised design shifts the lagoon and hub building farther from nearby homes, adds green space and landscaping buffers, and includes six volleyball courts. The team described the project as environmentally sustainable, using advanced UV and ozone filtration to minimize chemical use and water consumption.

They addressed their response to concerns about noise, lighting, traffic, and safety, noting in their opinion that noise levels will be lower than those of nearby highways, lighting will be downward-facing LED, and traffic will be staggered through timed surf sessions. The park will feature 24/7 security, CCTV monitoring, and lifeguards. The group also highlighted wellness and community benefits, including youth and veteran programs and discounted access for District residents.

Discussion:

District General Counsel, Mr. Goren, clarified that the RFP is in an evaluation stage and in a process with no contracts; wherein the Board retains broad discretion in the best interest of the District to request more information, reject any/all proposals, or cancel and re-advertise under the RFP provisions under 'Cancellation of the Solicitation' and 'Award of Contract'

Commissioner Rollins then moved to reject the Boca Surf Park proposal under the RFP—and any similar project at the North Park location—citing community compatibility and traffic impacts.

Commissioner Engel seconded after expressing similar concerns.

Commissioner Vogelgesang acknowledged the proposal's quality but noted resident opposition, concerns about property values, and affordability questions.

Commissioner Ehrnst opposed the motion, urging continued exploration and warning against foreclosing options.

Commissioner Wright was reluctant to end the process early and favored completing due diligence.

The General Counsel reiterated that the motion would be a final action of the District Board affecting all surf/aquatics proposals and that public comments must be heard, if any, under the Florida Sunshine Law, Ch. 286, FS, before a vote proceeds to a final public decision.

PUBLIC REQUESTS:

Don Huber – Opposed the surf park, claiming the land carries a deed restriction for golf use. He warned of potential lawsuits and stated that an investor is ready to fund a \$50 million golf course.

Nick Davichan – Supported Commissioner Rollins' motion, stating that while the surf park is a good concept, it is proposed in the wrong location. He cited 3,200 nearby homes that would be negatively affected by noise and decreased property values.

Whitney Thorn – Supported the surf park, arguing that opponents represent a small, older demographic resistant to change, and urged the Board to consider the needs of younger generations.

Russell Thorn – Supported the surf park, noting that the land is currently underused and that the project would benefit future generations with minimal noise or environmental impact.

Cory Kusmich – Supported the surf park, stating that the project would provide local youth with recreation and a connection to surfing that is currently unavailable in the area.

Tommy Regenski – Opposed the surf park, stating that residents pay high taxes and expect peace and quiet. He said the project breaks promises of a golf course and violates community trust.

Karen Pruznick – Opposed the surf park, citing concerns about noise, crowds, traffic, and long operating hours that would disrupt nearby homes. She described the project as unrealistic and intrusive.

Carolyn Neckin – Opposed the surf park, expressing worries about flooding, traffic congestion on narrow roads, and the loss of neighborhood tranquility.

Rianna Zevitkowski – Opposed the surf park, calling it an environmental and aesthetic threat. She described it as a commercial intrusion incompatible with the surrounding residential area.

MaryAlice Kindred – Supported the surf park, urging compassion and unity. She said the project benefits children and the city's future, and she criticized opposition based on age.

Niles Smith – Supported the surf park as a lifelong surfer, saying it fills a local recreational gap, benefits youth, and promotes healthy activity.

David Fleishman – Supported the surf park, saying it revitalizes unused land and fulfills the property's recreational purpose despite neighborhood resistance.

Amy Desorneaux – Supported the surf park, arguing that golf courses are environmentally harmful, while the surf park proposal is greener and more community-focused.

Anthony Arnone – Opposed the surf park, citing flood risks, wildlife disruption, and construction noise. He said the project would benefit outsiders rather than local residents.

Chris– Opposed the surf park, stating that although he likes the idea, he does not want it near his home, as he moved to Boca for peace and quiet.

Vivian Leshner – Opposed the surf park, saying it is too commercial for the area. She supports the concept but believes it should be located elsewhere.

Ana – Supported the surf park, noting that surfers are environmentally conscious and that traffic and noise concerns are overstated. She said the facility would serve all ages.

Chris– Supported the surf park, saying surfing benefits all ages and suggesting it could include water aerobics for residents, promoting health and inclusion.

Jason Barber – Opposed the surf park, describing it as energy-intensive, expensive, and unaffordable for local families, serving elite surfers rather than residents.

Jordan Ross – Supported the surf park, calling it a forward-thinking project that is environmentally preferable to golf and beneficial for families and future generations.

Jackie Glissman – Opposed the surf park, raising safety and privacy concerns regarding open streets, trespassing, and impacts on local wildlife.

Matthew Berrelson – Supported the surf park, arguing that fears about noise are exaggerated. He said modern wave pools are quiet, well-managed, and offer affordable recreation that promotes joy and inclusion.

Brendan McCarthy – Supported the surf park, citing surfing’s mental health benefits and its value for children and individuals with disabilities.

Angela Mazzei – Opposed the surf park, questioning its affordability, heating costs, and location choice. She urged that residents have voting input on the project.

Robert DuKate – Opposed the surf park, citing past community surveys that prioritized golf and trails rather than surf parks. He urged a return to those established plans.

Roman Strohmenger – Supported the surf park, saying it would provide a safe, positive community space that connects youth and families.

Harold Chaffe – Opposed the surf park, stating that it does not fit the character of the area, undervalues the land, and relies on unrealistic economic assumptions.

Barbara Simmons – Opposed the surf park, emphasizing her desire to preserve the area’s peace, greenery, and birdlife, and expressing fear of overdevelopment and traffic congestion.

Brian Stenberg – Supported the surf park, noting that property value impacts are uncertain and that tax revenue from a private partner could benefit the community. He encouraged continued dialogue.

Sean Stanton – Supported the surf park, framing opposition as fear of change and saying the project brings positive growth and psychological benefits.

Christopher Warren – Supported the surf park as an older beginner surfer, stating that it would serve all ages and urging consistency with the RFP process.

Tim W. – Supported the surf park, emphasizing its benefits for youth mental health, opportunities for special needs children, and open dialogue between developers and residents.

Wayne Whitfield – Opposed the surf park, stating that it violates prior survey priorities, misrepresents noise impacts, and should be located in a larger, nonresidential park.

Bruce Smith – Opposed the surf park as a long-time resident, noting that prior surveys prioritized golf and trails, not commercial attractions.

Chris Payne – Supported the surf park, citing scientific studies proving its safety and sustainability, and characterizing opposition as emotional rather than fact-based.

Greg Galanis – Opposed the surf park, commending the concept but arguing that golf and green space are higher community priorities, referencing unmet public demand for golf facilities.

Taelyn Hennessy – Spoke as a young softball player, asking the District to build better softball fields, explaining that current fields are uneven, muddy, and too limited for practices and games.

Lauren Hennessy – Spoke as a parent, highlighting inequality between boys’ and girls’ sports facilities and urging investment in a new complex to ensure safe, modern, and fair opportunities for girls.

Bree Bishop – Spoke as a nine-year-old softball player, saying girls need safer fields with batting cages. She described poor conditions and emphasized fairness.

Morgan Caverly – Spoke as a young softball player, requesting more fields so all girls can play, noting that many are turned away due to space limitations.

Lily Cooper – Spoke as a young softball player, describing unsafe, outdated fields and stating that girls deserve the same quality and safety as boys.

Diana Cooper – Supported the new softball complex as a parent, saying it would transform underused land into something meaningful for families and promote gender equity in youth sports.

Harper Grogan – Spoke as a young softball player, saying change can be positive and that new fields would provide a safe, happy place for girls to play and grow.

Maddie Broker – Spoke as a young softball player, describing current fields as unsafe and overcrowded, and requesting new fields so girls can play and dream locally.

Christina Broker – Supported the Sugar Sand softball complex, saying it promotes fairness, safety, and opportunity for girls while aligning with the District’s mission.

Jeff Cooper – Spoke as a grandparent, comparing high-quality boys’ baseball facilities to inadequate girls’ softball fields and calling for equitable investment.

Phil Wishna – Spoke as a longtime resident and supporter of baseball and softball, saying it is unfair that girls’ facilities lag behind boys,’ and emphasizing teamwork and equality.

Patrick Grogan – Spoke as a parent, stating that girls struggle to find lighted practice space and that growing participation requires upgraded facilities for fairness and community pride.

Gavin Hennessy – Spoke as a young boy, saying girls do not receive equal treatment or field quality compared to boys, and that this should change.

Mark Menadio – Spoke as a travel softball program director, explaining field shortages and scheduling challenges, and emphasizing the need for dedicated, modern softball fields.

Stacey Mulcahy – Spoke as a league representative, clarifying misinformation about player numbers and reaffirming that the league truly needs four new fields.

Andrew Strange – Spoke on behalf of Boca Surf Park, stating that North Park will inevitably be developed and urging balance, collaboration, and compromise rather than outright rejection of the surf proposal.

Commission Discussion ensued.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Rollins and seconded by Commissioner Engel to reject the Boca Surf Park proposal and any similar projects at this location due to community compatibility issues and traffic impacts.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Ehrnst

No

Commissioner Engel Yes
Commissioner Rollins Yes
Commissioner Vogelgesang Yes
Commissioner Wright No

MOTION PASSED 3-0

3. Softball Field Discussion

Executive Director Harms provided an overview of the proposed softball complex at Sugar Sand Park. The presentation addressed current field conditions and deficiencies at Memorial Park, Meadows Park, and DeHoernle Park, highlighting undersized fields, limited amenities, drainage issues, and inadequate capacity to meet demand for youth and adult softball. Briann explained that a new complex at Sugar Sand Park would create regulation-size fields with appropriate buffers, batting cages, and maintenance access, ensuring equity with existing baseball facilities. She also reviewed environmental and permitting requirements applicable to all District projects, including environmental assessments, wildlife surveys, and tree preservation standards. Alternative sites, such as North Park and DeHoernle Park, were evaluated, but each presented significant challenges due to proximity to residential areas, infrastructure constraints, or conflicting recreational needs.

The City of Boca Raton requested an amendment to the existing Interlocal Agreement (ILA) to extend the timeline for completing environmental assessments and public engagement before presenting a conceptual plan for the project.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Ehrnst and seconded by Commissioner Rollins to approve and to authorize an amendment to the Softball Field Complex Interlocal Agreement with the City of Boca Raton, extending the deadline for submission of the conceptual plan to May 30, 2026.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

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 \$228,666.58.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Executive Director:

P3 Proposal Updates

Director Harms reported that additional time is needed to gather information on ongoing proposals before presenting updates to the Board.

Next Meeting – November 17, 2025

The next meeting will be held in the Board Room on the second floor of the Swim & Racquet Center. It will include discussion of a bridge inspection work order, additional lighting at the Racquet Center, and preparation of the District's Annual Report.

Jeffrey Street Extension

Director Harms advised that she has requested updated information and traffic studies from the City regarding the Jeffrey Street extension application and will share the details with the Board once they are received.

Commissioners:

Commissioner Wright read a prepared statement to address misinformation circulating online regarding the 2022 City Council workshop on the Ocean Breeze/North Park conceptual plan. She clarified that no promises or approvals were made at that meeting to build a golf course. Commissioner Wright cited specific excerpts from the transcript confirming that the discussion pertained only to a *conceptual plan* and the potential solicitation of a public-private partnership (P3), not to construction approval. She emphasized that the golf concept was presented solely as a placeholder pending City approval and a viable P3 proposal, neither of which occurred. Commissioner Wright reaffirmed that no commitment or authorization for golf exists in the public record. She concluded by noting the success of the Patch Reef Park Pickleball ribbon cutting, praising staff, and inviting the public to enjoy the new facility.

Commissioner Engel sought clarification from legal counsel regarding deed restrictions associated with North Park. District Counsel, Mr. Goren, confirmed that, under a Florida Supreme Court ruling (the *Manalapan* case), deed covenants become unenforceable once a government entity acquires property for public use or public purpose.

Commissioner Vogelgesang expressed appreciation to staff for their excellent work on the new pickleball facility, commending their efforts and the quality of the completed project.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION was made by Commissioner Engel and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED



Erin Wright _____ Chair



Craig F. Ehrnst _____ Secretary-Treasurer