GREATER BOCA RATON BEACH & PARK DISTRICT

MINUTES OF A JOINT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AND CITY OF BOCA RATON CITY COUNCIL

9500 BUILDING AUDITORIUM, 9500 CONGRESS AVENUE, BOCA RATON

October 26, 2026

City Council:
Mayor Andy Thomson
Deputy Mayor Michelle Grau
Council Member Yvette Drucker
Council Member Stacy Sipple
City Manager Mark Sohaney
Deputy City Manager Andy Lukasik
Recreation Services Director Greg Stevens
City Attorney Joshua P. Koehler

Greater Boca Raton Beach & Park District:
Commissioner Robert K. Rollins, Jr, Chair
Commissioner Craig Ehrnst
Commissioner Steve Engel
Commissioner Erin Wright
Commissioner Susan Vogelgesang
Executive Director Briann Harms
District Counsel Samuel Goren

I. Welcome – Mayor Andy Thomson and Chair Robert K. Rollins, Jr.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Mayor Andy Thomson and Chair Robert K. Rollins, Jr. made opening comments and Members introduced themselves.

II. Parks, Recreation & Community Investment - Presentation

City Recreation Services Director Greg Stevens and District Executive Director Briann Harms provided an overview of the agencies' longstanding partnership, including the roles and responsibilities established through various interlocal agreements. Mr. Stevens and Ms. Harms discussed the ongoing review and modernization of these agreements to improve consistency and clarify responsibilities related to operations, funding, maintenance, capital improvements, and revenue. Major projects and improvements throughout the parks and recreation system were highlighted, including North Park development, the Community Accessibility Program Center, improvements at Sugar Sand Park and Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, and projects at Lake Wyman Park and the Gopher Tortoise Preserve. Deputy City Manager Andy Lukasik discussed a proposed Recreation System Assessment and Master Planning process to evaluate community needs, facility capacity, utilization, service gaps, and future priorities to guide long-term investments and continued coordination between the City and District. City Manager Mark Sohaney concluded by noting the City's current priorities.

Mayor Thomson and Chair Rollins agreed to move Public Comment to the next item on the agenda.

IV. Public Comment

1. **Larry Mielke:** Supported restoring public golf at North Park, suggesting a nine-hole option accessible to families and grandparents.
2. **William Beighley:** Advocated for an indoor field house to expand gym space and inclusive sports opportunities for children.
3. **Ana Munoz Gregori:** Speaking with William Beakley on behalf of Athletes Without Limits, supported an indoor field house for adaptive sports and youth tournaments.

4. **Robert DuKate:** Supported an 18-hole public golf course at North Park, citing demand for tee times and earlier community surveys.
5. **Harold Chaffee:** Urged the City and District to make a decision on restoring golf at North Park rather than continue delaying the project.
6. **Kennedy Rask:** Requested affordable places for middle-school-aged children to gather and enjoy activities such as rock climbing and golf.
7. **Joel Rask:** Called for timely development of a field house and additional youth golf opportunities, citing limited practice and recreation space.
8. **Adam Beighley:** Described growing youth basketball participation and a shortage of gymnasium space, supporting construction of a field house.
9. **Michelle Haggerty:** Proposed an inclusive indoor sports field house and offered to explore philanthropic support and a naming-rights partnership through the Power of Sports nonprofit.
10. **Brian Clinton:** Requested prompt action to preserve the Boca Jets youth lacrosse program and its upcoming season.
11. **John Pellegrino:** Raised concerns about traffic and U-turns near Boca Club Boulevard and Congress Avenue and also supported public golf.
12. **Michael Schneider:** Supported an 18-hole golf course and community center at North Park and suggested limits on park operating hours to reduce neighborhood impacts.
13. **Bobby Epstein:** Proposed a nine-hole golf course at North Park with a lighted driving range, clubhouse, and practice facilities.
14. **JP Pilot:** Supported additional public golf at North Park, comparing Boca Raton's limited public golf options with those in Ann Arbor, Michigan.
15. **Earl Starkoff:** Requested a continuing urban forestry capital improvement program, including tree canopy management, planting, invasive species removal, and annual funding.
16. **Greg Galanis:** Described limited golf capacity and demand for an additional public course, citing the potential revenue from golf operations.
17. **Tom Witmer:** Supported an executive golf course to serve beginners, youth, and seniors who may find existing full-length courses too difficult.
18. **Dave Mirantz:** Supported a publicly owned golf course as a lasting community recreation resource for multiple generations.
19. **Linda Morgenstern:** Requested a review of the City's recreational noise ordinance, including setbacks, sound standards, hours, and mitigation for facilities near residences.
20. **Chase Maher:** Supported a family-friendly golf facility at North Park with putting greens and practice areas suitable for children and older adults.
21. **Monica Mosgow:** Raised concerns about recreational noise, neighborhood impacts, and the need for public engagement methods beyond QR-code surveys.

22. **Martin Bell:** Requested preservation and refurbishment of the downtown skate park and additional downtown green space at the former library site.

23. **Fran Nachlas:** Supported public golf at North Park, emphasizing affordable access for players of different ages and abilities and continued City-District collaboration.

24. **Mickey Gomez:** Encouraged regular joint meetings and supported efforts to preserve the Boca Jets youth lacrosse program.

25. **Mark Griffith:** Supported reviving the Boca National golf concept and expressed support for a publicly accessible field house.

26. **Kathy Fearnley:** Supported golf at North Park and suggested an affordable indoor recreation facility, such as a YMCA-style center, if golf does not proceed.

27. **Charles Boyd:** Supported an executive golf course at North Park to replace lost local opportunities and serve families across generations.

28. **Judy Morrow:** Supported golf, additional covered tennis courts, and swimming facilities as lifelong recreational opportunities.

29. **Shannon Otto:** Emphasized protecting parks, natural settings, and outdoor recreation opportunities in Boca Raton.

30. **Briana Hagquist:** Requested e-bike trails, paddleball courts, girls' flag football, and inclusive sports programming for residents of all ages and abilities.

III. City Council and District Board Discussion

Council Members and District Commissioners highlighted efforts to meet recreational needs, including recent park improvements, addition of covered play areas, and ongoing discussions regarding existing facilities and a potential short golf course at North Park. Participants emphasized the need to complete previously planned projects, including the field house and Phase 2 of DeHoernle Park, while acknowledging residents' continued interest in public golf and the need to assess appropriate golf options. Further discussion focused on improving the permitting process, increasing park accessibility and affordability, evaluating resident use of recreational amenities, and advancing improvements to Memorial Park. The possibility of City and District collaboration to help fund a field house was proposed, and additional information regarding non-resident use of the golf course was requested. Several members expressed support for public golf, while recognizing that current funding is allocated to other priority projects. Members and Commissioners expressed their gratitude to all those in attendance for their participation, confirmed their commitment to listening to residents, and noted the desire to meet more frequently in the future.

The meeting was adjourned without objection at approximately 8:22 pm.

Robert K. Rollins, Jr., Chair

Craig F. Ehrnst, Secretary-Treasurer