

GREATER BOCA RATON BEACH & PARK DISTRICT
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SUGAR SAND PARK - 300 SOUTH MILITARY TRAIL, BOCA RATON
January 19, 2016

The MEETING was called to order by CHAIRMAN Robert K. Rollins, Jr. at approximately 5:15 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Steven M. Engel
Dennis R. Frisch
Robert K. Rollins, Jr.
Earl L. Starkoff
Susan Vogelgesang

CHANGES TO AGENDA:

At the request of Commissioner Starkoff, and with Board consent, the approval of invoices were addressed after Regular Business, item one.

PUBLIC REQUESTS:

Michele Peel

7391 NE 8th Court Boca Raton

Ms. Peel, Friends of Gumbo Limbo liaison to the District, advised that invitations were sent to the Board of Commissioners and staff members to attend the 7th Annual Sea Toast Coast event on February 6th at the Lakeside Terrace in Boca Raton. In addition, she stated that Jim Miller, President of the Friends, has received the draft of the exhibits and interpretive master plan for the center which is in the 50% stage and is currently being reviewed by City staff and the Friends. A 90% draft is anticipated in mid-February.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS BOARD MEETINGS:

MOTION was made by Commissioner Frisch and seconded by Commissioner Engel to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 4, 2016.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

REGULAR BUSINESS:

1. Consider Capital Improvement Expenditure for ATV

Mr. Arthur C. Koski, Interim Executive Director, advised that the City of Boca Raton has made a request for an additional all-terrain vehicle to be used on the beach at Red Reef Park. This item was omitted from the Fiscal Year 2015/2016 Budget. The cost is approximately \$10,000. He requested approval for the purchase.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Frisch and seconded by Commissioner Engel to approve the purchase of an ATV by the City for use at Red Reef Park.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Up-date on Sugar Sand Park Lighting Improvements

Mr. Rick Zimmer of Zimmer Consultants inquired about the status of the District’s effort to engage an installer. Mr. Koski responded that the District is attempting to utilize an installer currently under contract with the City. If the cost does not exceed the City’s requirement, the District will enlist the aid of the City to engage the installer.

APPROVAL OF INVOICES:

MOTION was made by Commissioner Frisch and seconded by Commissioner Starkoff to approve the invoices as presented totaling \$4,665.92.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

2. Discuss City/District Relationship

The purpose of this item is to discuss the District’s existing relationship with the City and to explore areas where the District can improve the relationship. At the present time, the City/District relationship is strained, or is not as effective as it has been in the past.

Mr. Koski started the conversation by providing historical background information. He stated that the District was formed in 1974 at the impetus of the City of Boca Raton who wished to see an agency created that would have the powers that are enumerated in the District’s Enabling Legislation, and to regionalize the cost and expenses of the acquisition, development and operation of various beach and park properties. A list of facilities/projects with shared responsibilities include:

Red Reef Park

The District has shared responsibility with the City in the acquisition, development and maintenance of Red Reef Park, and the development and operation and maintenance of Gumbo Limbo; including capital items.

Beach Renourishment - The District has been a participant with the City in beach renourishment projects.

Patch Reef Park - owned by the District and Palm Beach County; operated and maintained by the City.

Sugar Sand Park - owned by the District; operated and maintained by the City.

Swim & Racquet Center - owned by the District; operated and maintained by the City.

Ocean Strand -owned by the District; operated and maintained by the City.

FAU - the District is the tenant (through a lease) for use of the facilities; the City schedules activities on behalf of the District.

DeHoernle Park - owned and operated by the City; developed by the District through interlocal agreements.

Mizner Bark - owned by the City. It is discretionary on the part of the District to pay for the cost of the operation of the facility.

Red Reef Golf Course – if the facility operates at a deficit, the District covers the shortfall.

Under its Enabling Legislation, the District has an obligation to act in the best way possible for its constituents. In order to carry out some of the mandates, it is essential that the District has a working relationship with the City of Boca Raton. The Board will attempt to find a way to overcome any differences that exist and to make the relationship as successful in the future as it has been in the past. Discussion ensued.

Chairman Rollins, the longest serving Commissioner on the Board, stated that he has seen the evolution of the strength of the commission and the magnificent recreational amenities in the community that the District has accomplished with the assistance and management of the City. He stated that the District would not be here today if the City had not recognized the need to regionalize the purchase of the Shine Butler tract [Red Reef Park]. From that point on, the District has gone on to accomplish many good things for the community, whether it's purchasing Ocean Strand for future development, or the retro fix of our aging parks. Going forward, the District needs to find the key to making its relationship with the City as successful in the future as it has been in the past.

Commissioner Frisch stated that there seems to be a “our park, their park” mindset, rather than a “group think” mindset. He recognizes that the Commission has become a more demanding owner, with more expectations of what they want accomplished. It appears that there is not always a complete understanding of the function of the District. He believes that the interaction between the City and the District has become marginalized; both entities need to work collectively. He stated that the City Council needs to hear directly from the District to understand how the District functions under its Enabling Legislation. The District is not the sole funding source. In order to move forward for the betterment of the community, the City needs to understand that both entities are on the same team and represent the same constituents. In addition, interaction with Mr. Mickey Gomez and his maintenance staff needs to be improved to maximize the understanding between the District and the City.

Commissioner Rollins commented that the opinions of the District may be different from those of the Recreation Services Department. Instead of trying to negotiate a position, a hardline is taken by both entities which creates a communication issue. “Failure to understand the other party’s side of the equation sometimes leads to an impasse”.

Commissioner Vogelgesang believes that part of the problem of the disconnect is that the City needs to understand that because the District represents a slightly broader constituency, they have to develop a “group think” mindset and that does not happen [i.e., the annexation of the Polo Club].

Council do not appreciate the value of the partnership that exists. If the District and the City Council want to work as a team, they need to understand what the District is tasked with doing and what they are tasked with doing and the two have to dovetail. What matters, is that we have a constituency that we need to serve and we need to do it the right way; we need to give our constituents, whether inside or outside the City, “the biggest bang for the buck”. We are known as the “City within a Park” and we have a reputation to uphold. We have the best parks in the country now, and unless we work together, we won’t have them in the future.

Commissioner Rollins noted that some of the City Council members are new, and may not have a complete understanding of the function of the District. He remarked that Board members are heavy users of the parks, either through youth sports groups or organizations like the Rotary, and they understand the relationship of how important the parks are to the recreation needs of the community and how they benefit the youth of the community. He feels that some of the individuals that are making decisions need to have an understanding of how the District operates and how the parks are used.

Commissioner Frisch felt that too many of our interactions on both sides have become challenging and confrontational rather than questioning and educational.

Commissioner Starkoff stated that the most important thing is for the District to reaffirm its desire to create the relationship going forward with the City as it has been historically in the past. He suggested the following guiding principles:

1. Provide healthy, mind and body recreational experiences for the community.
2. To “build community” those living and working in Boca Raton should also play here in the sports leagues. This action will build the bonds to enable Human Resource Departments to hire good employees and increase the value of the community.
3. The District is the fiscal steward with a \$20 Million budget.

Commissioner Starkoff felt that a good first step to improve the relationship is to ask the City Council to place a Commissioner on the agenda to say ... “this is our position, this is what we want to do, this is how we want to work together to go forward”. Not only verbally, but with our actions as well. When City staff and the City Council talk about anything that has to do with parks and recreation, or develop any policy, they have to understand that there is another stakeholder in the game.

At the request of the Board, Mr. Koski will arrange for Chairman Rollins to address the Boca Raton City Council at a Workshop regarding the relationship between the two bodies.

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Executive Director

Beach Restoration

Mr. Koski advised that he met with Boca Raton Assistant Manager Mike Woika to initiate discussions on beach restoration. By mutual consent, it was deemed appropriate to schedule a

joint meeting at such time that each entity was in a position to bring back a recommendation prior to receiving input from each Board [the later part of February is envisioned].

Sugar Sand Park Playground

Bids were received on January 15th for Phase I of the Sugar Sand Park Playground. The low bidder is NuJak Construction of South Florida for the sum of \$487,744.75. Due diligence on the contractor is underway. The award of the contract will be placed on the February 1st agenda. Once the contract has been formalized, a ground-breaking event will be scheduled.

District Counsel - None

Commissioners

Sea Turtle Rehab Facility

Commissioner Vogelgesang stated that she received an e-mail from Mr. Jim Miller, President of the Friends of Gumbo regarding the Friends' approval of a sea turtle rehab facility for inclusion in the master site plan. If appropriate, the Friends would be prepared to work with the District and the City on the project.

Field Closure

Commissioner Starkoff advised that he received several phone calls over the weekend regarding decisions made by City staff to close fields on "blue sky days". The closures resulted in over 700 children not being able to play over a two day period. He felt that it places a disappointment on the children as well as a burden on the volunteers in the scheduling and rescheduling with the City. Everyone has to recognize that it is not only a staff driven decision, but a user driven decision as well. He is hopeful that an improved relationship will result in better communication to resolve issues.

Swim & Racquet Center

Commissioner Frisch inquired about the status of the project renovations. Mr. Koski responded that the building permit was signed by the Chairman on January 4th for CJM Construction to shore up the roof, perform the mold remediation and take care of the temporary fix to the building. Within ten days, Mr. Mummaw [the architect of record] will go to the City with plans for the combined maintenance building on the south end of the building and on the east side of the community center. Mr. Mummaw will update the Board on the status of the project in about two to three weeks.

Gumbo Limbo Boardwalk

Commissioner Rollins inquired about the status of the boardwalk project. Mr. Koski responded that a bid opening date will be set; a pre-construction meeting will be held on February 12. In addition, ATM has advised that a contractor has been engaged to fix the pump and piping issues.

Sugar Sand Park – Baseball Program Update

Commissioner Rollins asked Ms. Harms about the status of the removal of the thick vegetation between fields 5 & 6. Ms. Harms responded that a maintenance report has been issued; however, her personal observation revealed that removal of the vegetation is underway. The other items referenced in the January 4th minutes relating to the baseball program have been forwarded to Mr. Greg Stevens, City of Boca Raton Parks and Recreation Superintendent for a response.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEM

February 1 Discuss Beach Renourishment Funding
 Sugar Sand Park Second Field House Presentations
 Discuss Available Beach Front Property

ADJOURNMENT:

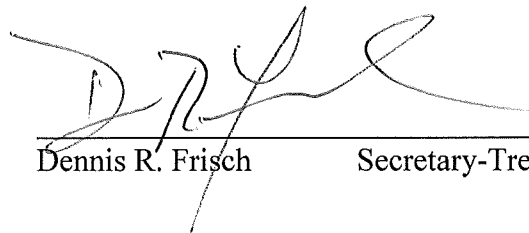
MOTION was made by Commissioner Frisch and seconded by Commissioner Engel to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED



Robert K. Rollins, Jr.

Chairman



Dennis R. Frisch

Secretary-Treasurer