

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
February 6, 2017

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

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Craig F. Ehrnst
Steven M. Engel
Robert K. Rollins, Jr.
Susan Vogelgesang
Erin A. Wright

CHANGES TO AGENDA: None

PUBLIC REQUESTS:

Robert DuKate
5351 NW 3rd Terrace, Boca Raton

Mr. DuKate referenced the land value of the Ocean Breeze property relative to other land acquisitions made in the past by the District and the City. He reported that the City paid \$150,000 per acre for DeHoernle Park. Based upon the same evaluation, the land value of the 200+ acre Ocean Breeze property would be over \$30 million, noting that appraisals for golf course properties would be less. With the District's expertise in operating parks, he felt that the golf course would generate revenue.

For comparison purposes, Mr. Koski, Executive Director, advised that the District purchased the 132 acre Sugar Sand Park property in 1988 for \$18 million. In 1994, the District purchased the Ocean Strand property, approximately 14-15 acres [ocean front and west of A-1-A] for a little over \$15 million.

Steve Finvar
787 Havana Drive, Boca Raton

Mr. Finvar, President of Boca Jets/Lacrosse, took issue with some of the comments made by former Commissioner Earl Starkoff at the January 18th Board meeting regarding the use of artificial turf at Patch Reef Park. He felt that many of the facts presented by Mr. Starkoff were inaccurate. Boca Raton is in need of artificial turf and Patch Reef Park is the perfect location. The new artificial turf technology used at Boca High is a superior product that drains well, is cooler, and better for the knees and back. East Boca Tackle, Pop Warner Tackle, Rugby and Lacrosse would play on artificial turf. The only individuals who would not play on artificial turf is Mr. Starkoff's group and SABR Soccer; they can play at DeHoernle Park. Boca Raton is a model city; it should have model fields. It's time to put in artificial turf fields – "let's do it – let's get it done!"

Mr. Larry Portnoy
15758 Menton Bay Court, Delray Beach

Mr. Portnoy, representing GL Homes, referenced the Ocean Breeze property and the two appraisals that were done by GL Homes and presented to the Boca Raton City Council. The two appraisals were done under the rules of eminent domain. Both appraisers used a comparable golf facility [Binks Forest in Wellington, FL] which was similar in size and closed down with no ability to build; it sold in March 2015 for \$2.1 million. He asked the Board 1) if the appraisal by Callaway & Price requested by the District was completed and, if so, if it is public record; and 2) whether the Board needed to take action on the Callaway & Price appraisal prior to submitting it to the City. GL Homes is focused on the issue of its competitor, Lennar Homes and 1) how it is that the valuation the City was selling Boca Municipal got turned into an Ocean Breeze issue, instead of just selling the property, and 2) the credit Lennar Homes will receive relative to the appraised value in lieu of putting up more dollars.

Mr. Koski advised that the Ocean Breeze property will be discussed under Regular Business, Items No. 3 – District Project Priorities.

Harold Chaffee

6200 NW 2nd Avenue, Boca Raton

Mr. Chaffee thanked the Board for all of its efforts to acquire the Ocean Breeze property. He realizes it is a difficult decision to make, and no matter what the District does, it will always be criticized. He feels that the only entity capable of operating a 27-hole golf course is the District. Golf should be in the City and it can become very profitable. “It’s a once in a lifetime deal”.

Jim Miller

480 East Boca Raton Road, Boca Raton

Mr. Miller, a Board member of the Friends of Gumbo Limbo advised that the Friends has made a proposal for a potential \$100,000 grant under a program with the Community Foundation called “Impact 100”. The “Multi-Faceted Aquarium Enhancement Program” is to enhance the educational value of the aquarium exhibits with new exhibits, and includes volunteer docent tools and training. The final decision on the grant is expected in April. He remarked that he was pleased to see the Lake Wyman Project being discussed.

Don Clinton

3350 NW 24th Terrace, Boca Raton

Mr. Clinton stated that he represents all rectangular field users. He noted the following: There is no space available in Boca Raton to build fields for future use. There is no way to increase field capacity except for using artificial turf. City recreation staff (the pros) have recommended the use of artificial turf throughout the years, to no avail. Dr. Busey, an agronomist, was engaged by the District to address the problem, and his recommendation was to either to increase the number of fields, or install artificial turf. DeHoernle Park was supposed to last 20-25 years before more fields were needed; in one year it reached full capacity. Former Commissioner Earl Starkoff is of the opinion that there are a sufficient number of fields and better utilization could be obtained by scrutinizing schedules. Many FIFA and MLS practice and stadium facilities are artificial turf with more being added every year. Two-thirds of all NFL stadiums are artificial turf; thousands of colleges have chosen to play on turf. We need to meet demand – emotion should not drive the decision to use artificial turf; the decision should be based on scientific information. “Do what is good for the community to meet their needs”.

Commissioner Wright advised that she met with Mr. Mickey Gomez, City of Boca Raton Recreation Director as she was concerned about the loss of City maintenance jobs with the use of artificial turf. Mr. Gomez guaranteed that no maintenance jobs would be lost if the District installed artificial turf on the fields at Patch Reef Park.

Commissioner Ehrst stated that he was contacted by Coach Castillo, the soccer coach at Boca Raton High School, and he spoke about the benefits of artificial turf at the school. Coach Castillo is an advocate of having some turf within the City.

Brian Clinton

99 SW 10th Drive, Boca Raton

Mr. Clinton stated that the issue of grass vs. artificial turf has been on-going for many years with no resolution. Patch Reef Park is a great facility for artificial turf due to the way the fields are laid out. He noted that the company "Field Turf" has 79 division soccer programs using its product. MLS and FIFA play on artificial turf. Sand Pine Park has two artificial fields; there is zero playability increase if the fields are re-surfaced with artificial turf. The actual playability of field turf can be used 24/7. During a recent rain storm, the only fields that could be used were at Sand Pine. He felt that former Commissioner Earl Starkoff's comments made at the Jan. 18th meeting are the emotional opinions of someone who wants to keep other sports off of the fields at Patch Reef Park because he wants to use them for soccer. If City staff (the experts who have the degrees), say they need more fields for playability, and the only way to get them is to install artificial turf, the District should believe them. We should work together to get more fields and more playability. Putting in three artificial fields is like putting in four, as there is no down time; you don't have to resurface it. He touched on the fact that soccer goalies are getting cancer; however, most of the goalies played the majority of their sport on grass and a limited amount on turf. There is no single scientific study that states that artificial turf causes cancer. "All of our kids want to play in the District, and we should figure out a way to make it happen".

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS BOARD MEETINGS:

MOTION was made by Commissioner Engel and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to approve the minutes of the regular meetings held on January 9 and January 18, 2017.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

REGULAR BUSINESS:

1. Lake Wyman – Jennifer Bistyga, City of Boca Raton Coastal Program Manager

Ms. Bistyga gave a brief history of the Rutherford Park and Lake Wyman Project noting that the City initially worked on the plan in 2011. The original project did not proceed beyond the design phase as there were some concerns about the southern end of the F.I.N.D. [Florida Inland Navigation District] property. The components of the 2011 Project and the proposed 2016-2017 Project include: removal of invasive and non-invasive material; the creation of a mangrove habitat to restore the wetland resources; restoration of the canoe trail; creation of a one mile walking path; creation of a coastal hammock along the F.I.N.D. property; two double boat ramps with docks; two separate kayak launch sites and thirty-eight additional parking spaces.

Commissioner Engel inquired about safety issues regarding the condition of the boardwalk. Ms. Bistyga responded that certain areas of the boardwalk are blocked off, however, the boardwalk that is open is safe.

Commissioner Wright asked about the environmental impact on the mangroves with the installation of the boat ramp and whether the canoe trails would always be accessible. Ms. Bistyga advised that sea grasses as well as mangroves will have to be replanted and that the canoe trails would be accessible at both high and low tide.

Commissioner Vogelgesang asked if the neighboring residents expressed any concerns about the proposed project. Ms. Bistyga stated that the Golden Harbour residents participated in a recent presentation and at their Homeowners meeting, and they are pleased that the docks have been moved further away.

Commissioner Rollins asked about the boat launch area and if there might be issues with regard to dredging the channel to the IntraCoastal. Ms. Bistyga responded that based on the preliminary design, they do not anticipate any problems.

Cost:

Ms. Bistyga stated that F.I.N.D. provides funding on a yearly basis for projects associated with the IntraCoastal. They will provide cost sharing for two separate phases:

Phase I is associated with design, engineering and permitting, and is estimated to cost \$250,000.

Phase II – Construction - includes the boat ramps/bridge/parking, road improvements, canoe trails, boardwalk rehabilitation and F.I.N.D. park development. Phase II is estimated to cost \$6,500,000.

If the City elects to move the project forward now, it has an opportunity to obtain F.I.N.D. funding for Phases I and II, or some component of both. Applications for funding need to be submitted by the end of March 2017. F.I.N.D. will fund up to 50% of all eligible costs provided the project commences after October 1, 2017. Funding is based on the number of requests received, and could be less than 50%. The current schedule plans for construction to commence at the end of 2019. If F.I.N.D. funding is accepted for Phase I or Phase II, the City would be required to make Lake Wyman and its amenities accessible and open on an equal basis (no fee differential) to all residents within the 12 counties along the Atlantic Ocean.

Ms. Bistyga stated that the City is interested in knowing if the District would like to be a funding source for some of the components, or all of the components for the local cost share of the Lake Wyman Project.

Commissioner Ehrnst remarked that the project went from a manatee park in 2011 to a boat ramp. Personally, he has some hesitation about mixing boats and canoes and endangering manatees; however, he does support the canoe trails and the natural enhancements.

Commissioner Wright expressed concern about traffic congestion in the area especially if the facility is open to 12 counties. She feels that a boat ramp would destroy the natural habitat.

Commissioner Rollins stated that the District has a list of project priorities [Ocean Breeze, Patch Reef Park, Swim & Racquet Center] and that he would not want to take funding away from these projects to become a major contributor to the Lake Wyman Project.

Mr. Koski suggested expanding the project timeline by one or two years.

Commissioner Engel stated that by expanding the project timeline the District might consider doing a portion of the project such as restoring the boardwalk. He felt that a boat ramp would bring traffic and disturb the habitat.

Ms. Bistyga will bring the concerns of the District to the City and that going forward the District may consider funding some of the environmental components after it determines its financial position over the course of the next two to three years.

Update on City's Comprehensive Waterfront Plan

Ms. Bistyga advised that the City hired a consultant, EDSA. They were issued Work Order No. 1, which includes the following tasks: A review of all City parcels [including Ocean Strand which is owned by the District]; develop ideas for passive parks such as non-motorized boating; and enhancing components of Red Reef Park East. A Public Outreach meeting will be held in March 2017 to share with the public the ideas developed by EDSA and what options the City may have to go forward. EDSA will gather community input and develop conceptual plans for some of the key properties within the City. The Wildflower property is being looked at as a separate entity, as a passive park combined with Silver Palm Park.

Commissioner Engel commented that the City embarked on the study, but at no point in the process has any member of staff or the City Council approached the District for its input.

Before the March Outreach Meeting, Ms. Bistyga will provide the District with the information that EDSA will be presenting.

2. Solar Tree Concept Presentation – Anju Chokshi [Florida Power & Light]

Mr. Chokshi and Ms. Sofia Eccleston of Florida Power & Light/Project Development gave a presentation on the “SolarNow” program. The program promotes the use of solar energy in the community; it does not lower electricity costs. There is no cost to the District for installation or maintenance. The unit generates enough energy to recharge a phone [the design incorporates a charging station]; it is not a source of light. The Board was asked to consider installing a solar tree(s) in Sugar Sand Park.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Ehrnst and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to evaluate the installation of a solar tree(s) at Sugar Sand Park.

Discussion:

Commissioner Ehrst felt that if the unit works well at Sugar Sand Park, other District facilities should be considered.

Assistant Director Briann Harms will follow-up with Florida Power & Light representatives to move the project forward.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

3. District Project Priorities

Mr. Koski, Executive Director, provided a prioritized list of District capital projects. He reviewed the current status of each project and the estimated date of completion.

Sugar Sand Park Science Playground

Estimated completion date – March 17, 2017

Swim & Racquet Center

Ready for bid the latter part of May or June. Approximately 15 months to complete.

DeHoernle Park Phase II

Awaiting consent from the City to commence construction drawings.

Commissioner Engel requested a clarification of the City's position on DeHoernle Park Phase II.

Sugar Sand Park Second Field House

Planning is currently underway. A local planner will be engaged to assist the architect on some of the modifications that may be required to the existing site plan as well as changes to the plat. Schematic design is approximately 50% complete. Total completion of plans is anticipated sometime in June 2017. The construction period will take 18 months.

Patch Reef Park

The design for artificial turf will take about 60 days. Construction is estimated to take 90 days. Mr. Koski recommends engaging the District's consultant to prepare the plans for three artificial fields.

MOTION was made by Commissioner Rollins and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to proceed with the design plans for three artificial surface fields at Patch Reef Park.

Discussion:

Commissioner Rollins stated that whether DeHoernle Park Phase II develops or not, there is a field shortage crisis. Two fields at FAU could be lost. 20,000 New residents in the community need to recreate. The community will benefit from the use of artificial turf.

Commissioner Wright inquired about the long-term cost savings of using artificial turf. Commissioner Rollins responded that the savings is in the maintenance costs and that 10 years is the break-even point. The product is expected to last 10 to 12 years and a warranty is provided which will vary by manufacturer and product.

Commissioner Wright felt that resident and non-resident fees warrant further discussion.

Commissioner Rollins offered that non-residents are not driving the need for more fields; the issue is the "definition" of a non-resident. This item will be addressed as a priority item at a joint City/District meeting.

Mr. Koski noted that Patch Reef Park can be used by all residents of Palm Beach County.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Ocean Breeze Golf Course

Mr. Koski advised that negotiations are continuing for the acquisition of the property. A Purchase and Sale Agreement to acquire the property will be presented to the District by Lennar Homes and Wells Fargo without any conditions. The agreement will not be a part of the sale of the Municipal Golf Course swap. The agreement will include the existing hotel and restaurant and maintenance structures. Awaiting

information from attorneys on eminent domain. The cost of the facility will be contained in the Purchase and Sale Agreement. Still in the process of obtaining an independent analysis on the valuation of the property considering all factors. Discussions will continue with representatives of the Greg Norman Group. In discussions with the City Manager, he was advised that the City would be in a position to finance the District for the acquisition of the property. The City may also be in a position to enter into interlocal agreements for possibly providing funds for the redevelopment of the golf course. The City Manager has advised that if the Municipal Golf Course is sold, City personnel would be used to maintain the Ocean Breeze Golf Course.

The Board scheduled a Special Meeting for Monday, February 13, 2017 at 5:15 p.m. to discuss the acquisition of the Ocean Breeze Golf Course property.

Commissioner Ehrnst inquired if eminent domain would eliminate restrictions. Mr. Koski stated that eminent domain does not eliminate restrictions.

Noting that previous owners of the property were unsuccessful in operating the facility, Commissioner Ehrnst questioned if the District should be negotiating with the Boca Teeca residents for other workable site alternatives to allow for more flexibility.

Mr. Koski responded that if the District acquires the Ocean Breeze property, it is assumed that it is for a 27-hole golf course. If the deed restrictions are valid, it will not be a park, but a golf course. In his opinion, the District is acquiring three things: 1) a 27-hole golf course; 2) 200+ acres of open space property [the last remaining large tract in Boca Raton]; and 3) providing a first-class recreation amenity. It will be up to the Board to decide to take an action for the betterment of the community.

APPROVAL OF INVOICES:

MOTION was made by Commissioner Vogelgesang and seconded by Commissioner Engel to approve the invoices as presented totaling \$1,710,889.90.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Executive Director - None
District Counsel - None

Commissioners

Commissioner Ehrnst thanked Mr. Koski for spending time with him to help him better understand District relationships and projects.

For continuity of District leadership, Commissioner Ehrnst suggested consideration be given to succession planning.

Commissioner Ehrnst stated that there is a need for lights and a bathroom at the Mizner Dog Park. He was advised by Mr. Koski that the Dog Park is a City facility and that the design of DeHoernle Park Phase II included those items.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEM

February 21 - Ocean Breeze
Succession Planning

ADJOURNMENT:

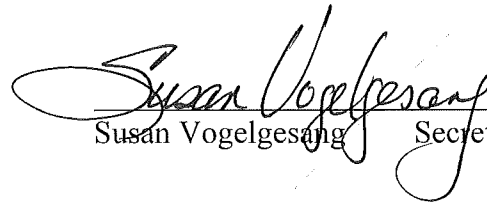
MOTION was made by Commissioner Engel and seconded by Commissioner Vogelgesang to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED



Robert K. Rollins, Jr.

Chairman



Susan Vogelgesang

Secretary-Treasurer