



# Broward County

## Legislation Text

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File #: 21-1857, Version: 1

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### **Broward County Commission Regular Meeting**

**Director's Name:** Bertha Henry

**Department:** County Administration

**Division:** Parks & Recreation

### **Information**

#### **Requested Action**

**MOTION TO AUTHORIZE** County Administrator to enter into a License Agreement with the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, to utilize a portion of Deerfield Island Park for a marine sciences and environmental education program mainly geared for school children, to include capital improvements on the island and signage acknowledging donations and funding, subject to review for legal sufficiency by the Office of the County Attorney; and authorize the County Administrator to take all necessary administrative and budgetary actions to implement the Agreement. **(Commission District 4)**

#### **Why Action is Necessary**

License Agreements require approval by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners.

#### **What Action Accomplishes**

Motion will allow County's collaboration with the Foundation to develop plans to use a portion of Deerfield Island for a marine sciences and environmental education program, and will authorize the County Administrator to enter into a License Agreement with the Foundation.

#### **Is this Action Goal Related**

Yes

#### **Previous Action Taken**

None.

#### **Summary Explanation/Background**

PARKS AND RECREATION DIVISION RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF THE ABOVE MOTION.

This item supports the Board's value of encouraging investments in renewable energy, sustainable practices and environmental protection, and the associated goal to educate the public about the fragile South Florida ecosystems, impacts of severe weather, sea level rise, and climate change. This item also supports the Board's value of cultivating community culture, arts, recreation and life-long learning, and the associated goals to provide diverse artistic, cultural, educational, and historical amenities and programs that contribute to a vibrant, multi-cultural and economically viable community and, in coordination with our community partners, market and deliver world-class recreational opportunities.

By partnering with the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation (the "Foundation") to develop a marine

sciences and environmental education program at Deerfield Island Park, school children and park visitors will have opportunities to learn about fragile South Florida ecosystems and the marine environment, sea level rise, and climate change through programs and services that will engage and educate. With the expertise and renown of Guy Harvey, PhD, creation of specialized programming will serve to deliver unique, world-class recreational opportunities. Exhibit 1 illustrates the educational enhancements and describes the type of activities that are anticipated as a result of this collaboration.

The Foundation conducts scientific research and hosts educational programs aimed at conserving the marine environment, helping to ensure future generations can enjoy and benefit from a naturally balanced ocean ecosystem. While the Foundation's plans to create marine education and capital improvement opportunities at Deerfield Island are still in the early stages, a number of area organizations have expressed support for the project, including the Florida Department of Education, the School Board of Broward County, the City of Deerfield Beach, the City of Pompano Beach, Mission Resolve Foundation, Bergeron Everglades Foundation, Celebration of the Sea Foundation, Advanced Roofing, MarineLab, Gallo Herbert Architects, Wahoo Bay, Ocean First Education and Shipwreck Park, Inc.

Deerfield Island is a 53.3-acre, nature-oriented park offering outdoor recreational opportunities and environmental education. Accessible only by boat, this park is bordered by the Intracoastal Waterway and the Hillsboro and Royal Palm canals. The island is home to three distinct plant communities: mangrove swamp, maritime hammock, and disturbed areas dominated by non-native plants. The island is a County-designated Urban Wilderness Area and a State-designated Critical Wildlife Area for gopher tortoises (*Gopherus polyphemus*). The island is a refuge for coastal birds and its mangrove swamp serves as a nursery for many juvenile fish species. The island opened to the public as a park in 1980. Current site improvements include boat docks, picnic areas and a picnic shelter, a restroom, nature trails, and a recently restored boardwalk through the mangrove swamp.

The Broward County-managed portion of the island is owned by the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND). In 1966, Deerfield Island was the subject of a Dedication Agreement between FIND (Grantor) and Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund of the State of Florida (TIIF) for the use and benefit of the Outdoor Recreational Development Council of the State of Florida (Grantee). On December 7, 1970, TIIF leased Deerfield Island to Broward County for a period of 95 years with the condition that it be used as a park in compliance with the 1966 Dedication Agreement.

This proposal is compatible with the County Charter and Declaration of Restrictive Covenants, protecting the land at Deerfield Island Park to be used only for park purposes.

#### **Source of Additional Information**

Dan West, Director, Parks and Recreation Division, 954-357-8106

#### **Fiscal Impact**

##### **Fiscal Impact/Cost Summary**

There is no fiscal impact.