

City of Delray Beach

*100 N.W. 1st Avenue
Delray Beach, FL 33444*



Minutes - Draft

Thursday, May 21, 2026

09:00 AM

SOC Lobby Conference Room

Green Implementation Advancement Board

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

A motion to appoint Kent Edwards as temporary Chairperson for this meeting in the absence of the current chair and vice chair was made.

Yes: 3 - Ardillo, Toms, and Wieland

Yes: 3 - Ardillo, Toms, and Wieland

Absent: 1 - Orellana

Absent: 1 - Orellana

Recused: 1 - Edwards

Recused: 1 - Edwards

3. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Ardillo, seconded by Wieland, that this be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Edwards, Ardillo, Toms, and Wieland

Absent: 1 - Orellana

4. Approval of Minutes

As amended

Yes: 4 - Edwards, Ardillo, Toms, and Wieland

Absent: 1 - Orellana

Attachments: [GIAB Meeting Minutes - 2026-04-16-draft.pdf](#)

5. Public Comments on Agenda & Non-Agenda Items

No members of the public were present for public comment at the beginning of the meeting.

Later in the meeting, Stephanie Leroux identified herself as a member of the public and an informed resident with professional experience in sustainability work with municipalities and corporations. She provided comments during the discussion of the Sustainability and Resilience Master Plan, including observations regarding sustainability planning frameworks, municipal benchmarking, ISO-related continuous improvement, and the City's progress compared with other municipalities.

At the end of the meeting, the temporary chair asked whether there was any additional public comment. No additional public comment was offered.

6.a. Old Business

6.a.i. Sustainability and Resilience Master Plan

Chris Chitester reported that he had received a second proposal related to the Sustainability and Resilience Master Plan. He explained that three firms had originally been invited to bid, but one firm declined to bid on cost alone. Of the two proposals received, one was approximately \$98,000 and the other was approximately \$188,000. He stated that the higher proposal was more consistent with the type of final, implementable plan he believed the City needed, but that the amount was higher than what City leadership had anticipated or was prepared to fund.

The Board discussed whether the City should continue pursuing a consultant-led plan, revisit prior planning work, or consider a hybrid approach. Catherine Toms asked whether comparable municipalities had adopted sustainability plans, what those plans cost, and whether other sustainability directors were satisfied with them. Chris Chitester responded that many existing plans have been affected by recent state legislation, particularly where they rely on carbon-emissions-reduction language or implementation mechanisms that may now be restricted.

Kent Edwards referred to an earlier draft plan and stated that it had been developed over a period of years with public outreach, presentations to the Commission, and input from City departments. He noted that the prior draft addressed topics beyond energy, including transportation, water conservation, and habitat. He requested that the Board review that document at the next meeting. Chris Chitester stated that he had reviewed the prior document extensively and had worked to align its concepts with existing Comprehensive Plan and adaptation-plan policies, but he expressed concern that the earlier draft was not yet an actionable or implementable plan in the City's current structure.

The Board discussed the purpose of the Sustainability and Resilience Master Plan as a tool to integrate the City's various plans, including the Comprehensive Plan, adaptation planning, bicycle and pedestrian planning, stormwater planning, curbside management, parking, mobility, and other departmental initiatives. Chris Chitester stated that his goal was to create a plan that could be incorporated into or closely aligned with the Comprehensive Plan so that future projects could be tied directly to adopted City policy and justified before the City Commission.

Catherine Toms asked what evidence would be needed to persuade the City Commission that funding a plan at the higher proposal amount would be worthwhile. Chris Chitester discussed the need to show financial value and cited the City's tree-related work as an example of sustainability investment that can produce measurable community value over time, including stormwater, air-quality, heat-reduction, energy, and tax-base benefits.

The Board discussed budget constraints and the City's broader fiscal context. Kent Edwards noted that the sustainability budget included limited project funding and that municipalities may face future pressure to reduce budgets. Several members discussed whether a locally developed plan could reduce costs while still supporting an implementable planning framework.

William Bennett cautioned that the procurement process was still active and that the Board should avoid discussing active solicitation details or bidders before the process is complete. Catherine Toms asked whether the Board could review examples of prior work by the bidders, and William Bennett recommended keeping the process clean until the solicitation reaches the appropriate public stage. Vinnie Ardillo asked whether the Board would have input into the selection process. William Bennett explained generally that advisory boards are not typically part of solicitation-award committees and that selection committees are usually composed of staff or subject-matter experts based on the nature of the procurement.

The Board reached general agreement that both the earlier draft sustainability document and the current working material should be distributed to Board members for review before the next meeting, to allow for a more informed discussion. The Board also discussed the importance of identifying next steps, including whether to support funding for a consultant-prepared plan, rely on existing work, or use existing work as a foundation for a revised approach.

6.a.ii. Green Building Ordinance

The Board discussed the Green Building Ordinance and its implementation status. Kent Edwards stated that he had requested the draft checklist and permit-stage checklist associated with projects subject to the ordinance. He expressed interest in confirming whether the ordinance is being implemented as passed and whether the required reevaluation period has been reached or is approaching.

Chris Chitester explained that the ordinance applies to buildings of 15,000 square feet or more and stated that there had been two permitted projects, with one believed to be under construction. The Board discussed uncertainty regarding the timing of the ordinance's required reevaluation. Kent Edwards and Chris Chitester reviewed language regarding whether reevaluation was required after two, three, or four years, and the Board agreed that the official codified version should be checked before the next discussion.

Kent Edwards suggested that the Board may wish to discuss a recommendation memorandum regarding possible revisions to the Green Building Ordinance. Potential topics included the applicability threshold, implementation checklists, incentives, and ways to strengthen the ordinance while remaining consistent with state law.

William Bennett stated that he would need to review the relevant state law before advising whether any proposed approach would be permissible. He cautioned that if state law prohibits a particular requirement, the prohibition generally applies regardless of how the City attempts to structure the requirement.

Chris Chitester discussed the relationship between the Green Building Ordinance and LEED for Cities. He stated that the City's ordinance currently may not qualify for certain LEED for Cities points because it lacks the number of defined incentives required. He explained that expedited permitting and permit-fee reductions may not be realistic because of existing state review timelines and departmental funding constraints. He identified other possible incentives for future discussion, including bond reductions and density-related incentives. He stated that higher-performing buildings may have financial benefits, including

potentially higher value and tax-base implications.

The Board agreed to keep the Green Building Ordinance on the next agenda. Items to be reviewed include the applicable checklists, the ordinance reevaluation timeline, implementation status, and possible recommendation topics.

6.a.iii. GIAB meeting time

Kent Edwards introduced discussion of changing the Board's regular meeting time. He explained that moving the meeting to 5:00 p.m. could allow more members of the public to attend and could also make Board service more accessible to residents with regular daytime work schedules.

The Board discussed whether a 5:00 p.m. meeting time would create attendance issues for current members. No member present objected to the proposed time. Catherine Toms stated that an evening meeting could support transparency and broader participation. Vinnie Ardillo stated that she supported keeping the meeting at 5:00 p.m. if possible.

William Bennett stated that the Board's meeting date and time appear in the Board bylaws and that a change would likely require amendment of the bylaws and approval through the appropriate City process, potentially including City Commission approval. Chris Chitester and William Bennett indicated that the next step would be to confirm the required procedure.

The Board reached consensus to request that staff approach the City Manager regarding moving the Board's regular meeting time to 5:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month. Kent Edwards requested that if the request is denied or cannot proceed, the decision be communicated back to the Board.

6.b. Education Topics

Chris Chitester discussed a recent educational event connected to the Historic Society and stated that it had been well attended and well received. He noted that the event benefited significantly from the Historic Society's outreach list and stated that future events could potentially accommodate greater attendance with a longer registration period. Board members commented positively on the event and its reception.

The Board then discussed future education and outreach topics. Kent Edwards proposed that the Board discuss energy usage and energy benchmarking at a future meeting, particularly in light of state preemption issues and the financial relevance of energy costs to residents. He discussed the importance of helping residents understand kilowatt-hours, energy bills, insulation, solar, and practical efficiency decisions.

Catherine Toms suggested that public-facing education could emphasize financial benefits and could potentially be included in utility-bill communications. John Wieland noted that he maintains a large database through his business and stated that energy-related public outreach could be useful and efficient.

Chris Chitester stated that one of the greatest needs for the Office of Sustainability is outreach and engagement capacity. He explained that the Board

could help serve as a conduit between the public and the Office of Sustainability by learning from community events, sharing information, and bringing public ideas and concerns back to Board meetings.

William Bennett and Chris Chitester discussed Sunshine Law considerations. William Bennett clarified that Board members may attend the same outside events, but they may not discuss Board business with one another outside of a noticed public meeting. He stated that when multiple members attend certain public events, the City Clerk may be able to notice the attendance to reduce concerns. Chris Chitester advised members that if they hear something at an outside event that may be relevant to Board business, they should save the topic and raise it at a Board meeting rather than discussing it among themselves at the event.

The Board agreed to include an energy-topic discussion under New Business at the next meeting.

6.c. Legislative Topics

The Board briefly discussed legislative topics. Kent Edwards noted that a special session had occurred and asked whether there were updates. Chris Chitester stated that he did not have legislative updates ready for the meeting. No formal action was taken.

7. New Business

No separate new business items were introduced beyond the discussion of adding an energy-topic discussion to the next agenda.

8. Board Comments

Board comments were addressed throughout the discussion of agenda items. Members expressed interest in reviewing the prior sustainability planning documents, continuing discussion of the Green Building Ordinance, improving public engagement, and making energy education a future topic.

9. Staff Comments

Chris Chitester provided several staff updates.

He reported that the City's tree planting program had concluded for the year. He stated that a recent presentation regarding the program was well received and that it addressed several recurring misconceptions, including the idea that larger trees should be used instead of smaller trees. He explained that smaller trees are less susceptible to transplant shock and are easier for volunteers, including high school students, to handle and plant.

Chris Chitester also discussed LEED for Cities data work. He stated that staff is gathering data for credits related to energy and other performance metrics, including parcel-level and building-related information. He explained that certain data, such as building square footage, has been difficult to obtain in a format that can be merged with other City datasets.

The Board discussed energy data, waste-related metrics, economic data, and possible regional-credit issues under LEED for Cities. Chris Chitester stated that he is also working to quantify the energy use of the City's water and wastewater

systems. He explained that the new water treatment plant may ultimately affect the City's energy-performance baseline and future certification opportunities, though the plant would need to be operational before certain credits could be pursued.

Chris Chitester also reported that there were no updates regarding charger monetization or Leon Weekes Environmental Preserve funding requests. He stated that the charger monetization request involved approximately \$200,000 over five years, and that the Leon Weekes project had some support from Parks and Recreation. He also discussed issues related to prior GIS work, stating that certain outputs were not built in a usable location and that GIS staff had recommended hiring a consultant.

Attachments: [GIAB Staff Report - 2026-05-21.pdf](#)

10. Adjournment

Kent Edwards asked whether there was any additional public comment. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:00 a.m.