

City of Delray Beach

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



Minutes - Final

Thursday, July 17, 2025

09:00 AM

SOC Conference Room

Green Implementation Advancement Board

1. Call to Order

Evan Orellana called the meeting to order at 9:03 am

2. Roll Call

- Evan Orellana calls the meeting to order and asks Chris Chitester to conduct the roll call.
- Chris Chitester requests everyone to introduce themselves.
- Evan Orellana introduces himself as the current chair of the green board, mentioning his tenure of about three years.
- Vinnie Ardillo introduces himself as a community advocate for native plants, mentioning his second term.
- Adam Jones introduces himself as a board member, mentioning his work in marine construction and green infrastructure.
- Chris Chitester introduces himself as the interim sustainability officer, detailing his background in building science and construction quality.
- William Bennett introduces himself as the Assistant City Attorney, providing legal advice to the board.
- Evan Orellana introduces himself again, mentioning his career in marine biology and his current role as a regional manager for a national environmental nonprofit.
- Catherine Toms introduces herself, mentioning her move to Delray in 2020 and her background in physician education and public health.
- Catherine Toms discusses her nonprofit, Green Cars for Kids, which provides free transportation for pregnant women and children using electric vehicles.
- Evan Orellana mentions his role as the Florida Puerto Rico manager for the Surfrider Foundation.
- Catherine Toms and Evan Orellana discuss the Surfrider Foundation's presence in Brazil and Chile.
- Evan Orellana mentions the agenda for the meeting, including updates on the climate action plan and Florida climate week.

Present 3 - Evan Orellana, Vinnie Ardillo, and Adam Jones

Absent 1 - Max Zengage

3. Approval of Agenda

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

Yes: 3 - Orellana, Ardillo, and Jones

Absent: 1 - Zengage

4. Approval of Minutes

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

Yes: 3 - Orellana, Ardillo, and Jones

Absent: 1 - Zengage

Attachments: [GIAB Meeting Minutes - 2025-02-20-draft KE](#)

5. Public Comments on Agenda & Non-Agenda Items

No public present

6. Old Business

6.a. Climate Action Plan

- Chris Chitester provides an update on the climate action plan, mentioning the need for alignment with existing major plans like the adaptation plan and comprehensive plan.
- Chris Chitester discusses the importance of collaboration with other city departments and the challenges faced in scheduling meetings.
- William Bennett advises the board on the legal requirements of public meetings and the limitations of private communications.
- The board discusses the use of the SharePoint site for collaboration and the importance of maintaining public transparency.
- Chris Chitester mentions the goal of aligning the climate action plan with existing policies and identifying gaps for improvement.

6.b. Educational Initiatives

- Evan Orellana and Chris Chitester discuss the status of education initiatives, mentioning the success of Earth Month and the need for new initiatives.
- The board considers the idea of focusing on Florida climate week instead of organizing separate events.
- Evan Orellana suggests having a climate and conversations event during Florida climate week, inviting local environmental groups to participate.
- Catherine Toms suggests using grocery stores and other community partners for advertising the event.
- The board discusses the logistics of organizing the event, including the importance of timing and venue availability.

6.c. Legislative Issues

- Evan Orellana and Chris Chitester discuss the status of legislative issues, mentioning the success of the state parks bill and the failure of the preemption bill.

7. New Business

7.a. City Arborist Memo

- Chris Chitester provides an update on the tree planting program, mentioning the challenges of funding and the importance of community involvement.
- The board discusses the role of the city arborist and the need for a memo to encourage the commission to support the hiring of a certified arborist.
- Chris Chitester mentions the importance of using the city arborist for tree planting and the need for a clear policy on tree preservation during development.
- The board considers the idea of involving the city arborist in the tree

preservation process and the importance of educating the public on the value of trees.

8. Board Comments

No board comments

9. Staff Comments

Habitat Restoration and Reef Institute

- Chris Chitester provides an update on habitat restoration at Leon Weeks Environmental Preserve, mentioning the collaboration with IRC and the need for a comprehensive plan.
- The board discusses the importance of long-term planning for habitat restoration projects to ensure sustainability.
- Chris Chitester mentions the funding agreement with the Reef Institute for the growth of corals for Delray Beach.
- The board discusses the logistics of the funding agreement and the importance of timely completion to ensure the success of the project.
- Chris Chitester provides an update on the progress of the Reef Institute's move to a new facility and the growth of corals for Delray Beach.

Coral Outplanting and Funding Agreement

- Chris Chitester discusses the separate project of growing 100 corals for Delray Beach, which will be outplanted 1500 feet offshore.
 - There is no set plan or permits yet, but the funding guarantees education and a report 270 days after the agreement is signed.
 - Chris mentions the need for FDEP approval for outplantings and the complexity of saving the reef.
 - The funding agreement includes a report on the progress of the corals and other projects, but no immediate plans to drop substrate.
- ### All American City Competition and Sustainability Efforts
- Chris Chitester talks about the All American City competition, where Delray Beach did not win second place but was invited to Denver, highlighting the achievement of being in the top 20 out of over 500 applicants.
 - The competition focused on sustainability, and Delray Beach had sand away the Children's Garden as part of their efforts.
 - Chris describes the event in Denver, noting the large delegations from other cities and the competitive nature of the event.
 - He mentions the excessive use of plastic and the lack of an internship opportunity for Delray Beach.

Attachments: [GIAB Staff Report - 2025-07-17.pdf](#)

10. Adjournment

Evan adjourns the meeting at 10:24am