



From the desk of Commissioner Robert S. Weinroth

Tips on Dealing with Iguanas

Though iguanas are not native to South Florida they are thriving in the warm climate and their population is growing.

Iguanas can grow up to six feet long and they are a nuisance. They eat valuable landscape plants, shrubs, trees, as well as orchids and other flowers and even bird eggs.

Their burrows can cause extensive damage to construction and seawalls.

Iguana droppings along decks, docks and pools are not just annoying they are also a source of harmful bacteria such as salmonella.

Though typically not aggressive, Iguanas can and will defend themselves if cornered by pets or people, using their sharp teeth, nails and powerful tails.

As with all wildlife, iguanas are protected by animal cruelty laws, and hurting or killing them inhumanely is punishable by law.

Below are tips on dealing with these giant lizards that are likely here to stay.

Discouraging Iguanas

- Never feed iguanas.
- Protect plants with cages or screen enclosures.
- Use iguana-resistant plants such as citrus, milkweed, pigeon plum, oleanders, coonties, etc., in your landscape.
- Install sheet-metal cylinders approximately 18 inches from the base of trees to prevent iguanas from climbing.
- Create an L-shaped wire barrier along the bottom of seawalls and other fixed objects to prevent iguanas from digging underneath.

Habitat Modification

- Avoid planting iguana favorites such as hibiscus, orchids, impatiens, roses, garden greens and melons
- Remove protective cover such as dense thickets and piles of landscape timber or rocks.
- Fill vacant burrows with rocks.

Humane Discouragement

- Keep a water hose ready and available to spray basking iguanas on pool decks or boats.
- A startling noise will also create an unwelcome atmosphere for a sunning iguana that feels a bit too much at home poolside.
- Hang CDs near seawalls or dangle them like wind chimes from trees or prized plants. Their reflective surfaces often scare away iguanas.

For more information on coexisting with iguanas, visit [Dealing with iguanas in the S. Florida Landscape](#)). If you have an iguana problem, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioner recommends you contact a critter control company licensed to trap these animals.

Playtime and Pickleball

One of Palm Beach County's greatest assets is our award-winning park system. With over 8,000 acres of park land and 110 park properties, there is something for everyone including sports, fitness, environmental, and cultural opportunities.

The park locations range from oceanfront to the western areas of the county bordering the Florida Everglades. The amenities are extensive and include boating, camping, golfing, swimming, snorkeling, water skiing and nature centers, just to name a few.

The county's Parks and Recreation's motto is "your playtime is our business" and they take it very seriously. New facilities accommodate the latest in leisure trends, as well as the always-popular, timeless needs of our growing community.

One example of a growing trend in parks nationwide is pickle ball. It is considered the fastest growing sport in the country. According to the USA Pickleball Association, the sport has had a 650 percent increase in numbers over the last six years. It initially became popular with the 55-plus crowd but is now just as popular with the younger generation.

Pickleball is a mix between tennis, racquetball and ping pong. Players use special paddles and a wiffle ball and nets and court sizes are smaller than their tennis counterparts. It is also affordable and the game is quick, usually about 15 minutes each.

Palm Beach County's Parks and Recreation Department has pickleball courts at no charge on a first come, first-served basis during regular park hours. Currently, pickleball courts are available in Caloosa Park in Boynton Beach, Lake Lytal Park and Okeeheelee Park in West Palm Beach.

For detailed information on the county's park locations, amenities and special events, visit <http://discover.pbcgov.org/parks/Amenities/>.

D.C. Fly-In

On October 16 and 17, 2019, Commissioner Weinroth along with County Mayor Mack Bernard, Commissioner Melissa McKinlay and almost 100 Florida county representatives attended the annual Florida Association of Counties 2019 Federal Fly-In in Washington, D.C.

The county has many legislative priorities that require a partnership with our federal legislative delegation. The 48-hour period was spent on Capitol Hill meeting with U.S. Senators Rubio and Scott and members of the Palm Beach County Congressional delegation including Ted Deutch, Alcee Hastings, Brian Mast and Lois Frankel.

The County has a long list of issues we have asked our representatives to address including, of course, Lake Okeechobee and the Water Resources Development Act; funding for infrastructure (including highways and the public transportation system); and veteran's services, to name just a few.

Nonprofit Spotlight: KidSafe Foundation

KidSafe is a non-profit located in Boca Raton and their mission is to teach personal safety to children and their grown-ups to build strong, resilient families and safer communities. Their vision provides that all children and their families live in a society where children are protected from child sexual abuse and trauma.

KidSafe has been educating children, families and child-serving professionals since 2009. Since then, they have taught over 60,000 children that they have the right to be safe and provided assistance to over 35,000 adults as they are the first line of defense for children.

Some of their programs include an 8 week curriculum designed for children in grades Pre-K4 through second grade, parent and educator training. For more information, please visit their [website](#) or call 855-844-SAFE.

BCC Briefs

Jerome Golden Center – received an update from Ann Berner, Chief Executive of the Southeast Behavioral Network, and partners, on the status of the closing of Jerome Golden Center for Behavioral Health. The Jerome Golden Center was abruptly closed leaving other agencies to care for its many patients. County staff was directed to meet with the Health Care District of Palm Beach County and others in an effort to ensure the continued care of residents receiving treatment from the now closed center.

Beach park – directed staff to execute a letter requesting a 5-year extension for development of the Cam D, Milani Park in Highland Beach. Staff was directed to come back to the board with a plan to include the park in the 5-year Capital Improvements Plan and the inclusion’s effect on other projects countywide.

Convention Center hotel – directed staff to continue with a planned study on the number of hotel rooms required to support the existing Convention Center and future expansion, parking spaces required for the Convention Center, existing hotel and additional rooms to be constructed, and the level of financial assistance required to support development of additional hotel rooms and other related items. The board plans to discuss the topic at a workshop after the study is completed.

PREM – adopted an ordinance repealing and replacing the Real Property Acquisition, Disposition and Leasing Ordinance, commonly known as PREM, to allow for workforce housing units under the guidelines of the Workforce Housing Program to be sold directly to qualified buyers without a competitive process, without an additional appraisal beyond that obtained by the county in connection with acquiring the unit, and without review by the Property Review Committee (PRC). Acquisitions involving eminent domain and/or inverse condemnation will be exempt from PRC review.

Neighborhood grants - approved project agreements to implement various community improvement projects and initiatives through the Office of Community Revitalization’s Neighborhood Engagement and Transformation (NEAT) Grants Program for a total of \$150,000.

Sidewalks – approved the Fiscal Year 2020 sidewalk program. This will allow construction of several proposed projects that have been compiled in response to requests from the Palm Beach County School District, the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office, the Board of County Commissioners, and residents of Palm Beach County. The proposed projects include 14 new construction projects and 11 major maintenance projects.

Artificial reef – approved an agreement transferring funds to reimburse the county for the placement of 645 tons of limestone boulders at the Palm Beach Mid-Depth Artificial Reef Site. The dollars were transferred from the Saltwater Vessel Registration Fee Trust Fund.

Water Utilities – adopted an amendment to the Liens of Assessment section of the Potable Water, Wastewater, and Reclaimed Water Special Assessment Ordinance. The amendment allows for assessing payments beyond the original 20-year term.

MSTU – adopted an amendment to the Priority of Lien, Interest, and Method of Payment of Special Assessments section of the Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU) Special Assessment Ordinance. The amendment allows for assessing payments beyond the original 20-year term.

Airport noise - In an effort to address community concerns with the noise impacts of aircraft overflights, particularly helicopters, the board approved a budget amendment of \$709,056 in the Airport’s Improvement and Development Fund and approved a contract with Harris Miller

Miller & Hanson, Inc. for the preparation of a Noise Compatibility Study at Palm Beach County Park Airport in Lantana.

Bond refinance – adopted a resolution to refinance certain Public Improvement Revenue Refunding Bonds and Taxable Public Improvement Revenue Bonds after the determination that these bonds can be refunded for savings. Based on current market conditions, the estimated savings on the Public Improvement Revenue Refunding Bonds is 10.27% and the estimated savings on the Taxable Public Improvement Bonds is 13.73%.

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