

Jory Berkwits is hereby nominated as a candidate for the 2022 University Park Recreation District Board of Supervisors election.

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I seek a position on the Board of Supervisors in order to play an active part in the future direction of the University Park Country Club, and I am confident that my knowledge, skills, and experience will enable me to do so successfully. My professional background was focused on financial services, where I retired after forty years as a Senior Vice President at Merrill Lynch. Yet I have always made it a priority to become involved in my community---from coaching a kids' basketball team to being Board Chair of the May Institute, a \$100 million Boston-based nonprofit; and here in Sarasota, for the past six years I have been active in SCORE® as a certified mentor, providing coaching and guidance to small business owners.

Formerly a snowbird, I made UPCC my full-time residence in 2015. Shortly thereafter, I was witness to the purchase of the club from Neal/Pasold, the difficulties that accompanied that transaction, and the contentious behavior of some residents prior to the closing. Hopefully we have learned from that experience and will not repeat it.

As you know, several years ago the UPRD floated a \$24 million bond issue, the majority of which was used to finance the purchase of the club from Neal/Pasold. Some discretionary funds were nevertheless still available to pay for golf course improvements, outdoor dining, pickleball courts, and some other amenities.

We are now looking at Phase 2 of our Master Plan, and the decisions we make during the next few years will have an enormous impact on all residents—current

and future. These decisions will influence our collective quality of life and overall financial well-being.

What will Phase 2 encompass? That's subject to negotiation and a homeowner vote. Items on the wish list include a major kitchen renovation, golf course irrigation, an expanded fitness center, a new event room, meeting rooms, office space expansion, and more. The approximate proposed cost of Phase 2--- \$15 million.

How to proceed? There is no easy answer. I recognize there is a difference between wants and needs, but if we limit ourselves only to what we need (the bare necessities), our club will atrophy and ultimately fail. By the same token, if we go all in, borrow excessively, and go on a shopping spree, we would similarly be putting ourselves at long term risk, especially during difficult economic times.

I applaud the Board's decision to hit the pause button on voting for approval of Phase 2 and the issuance of another bond. We've got to get it right. If we don't, we will end up with nothing.

I promise to have an open mind, to listen and learn, to compromise when possible and hopefully build consensus among residents. I intend move deliberately and to treat the money we ultimately spend on Phase 2 as if it were my own. Because it is.

