

Starke County Park Board Minutes 08/16/16

The meeting was Called to Order by President, Roger Chaffins at 6:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call- Roger Chaffins, Butch Gerstandt, Deb Mix, Rosie Rose, and Chris Lawrence. The County Attorney, Mr. Martin Lucas was also in attendance.

Minutes -Ms. Rose made a motion to accept the July minutes as written with Mr. Gerstandt seconding it. The motion carried.

Beach and Campground: President Chaffins noted that, starting this meeting, the community will need to wait until the end of the meeting rather than speaking during the meeting.

Mr. Jerry Broadstreet had been invited to attend tonight's meeting but is not in attendance. His conversations with President Chaffins noted that a native weed had been treated twice and it should not be returning, based on the evaluation of the weed spraying company.

The Diving platform still needs to be removed. Attorney Wallsmith agreed Callahan, LLC will waive any complaint that may come sometime in the future regarding the removal of the diving platform.

Roger noted that he will call Detective Chuck Lovins about removing the old lifeguard chair that's still in the water and poses a danger.

Mr. Larry Clarich was asked to come up in lieu of Mr. Callahan, who was not present, and he reported on any updates on the building. He noted the well had been taken care of, and a defective tank has already been paid for in the amount of \$2,316.50. He reported that he determined that the pavilion should be repaired, not demolished. He has volunteers to help remove it. The question came up as to whether the volunteers would be covered under their insurance or under Bill Montgomery's policy. There is no written contract with any outside group. It was asked if there is any Workers Compensation insurance. Attorney Todd Wallsmith stated that Worker's Compensation is not necessary. He noted that micro-managing by the Park Board means there is more liability to the County. He noted that is true especially the more exposure the Park Board has with the running of the BLB&C. Mr. Clarich noted that the campers are selling raffles to help pay for the pavilion. The tickets will be sold until Sept 10. It was asked if a Gaming Board license has been submitted, of which they do not. It was explained that everyone involved in selling tickets, it must have approved by the Gaming Commission. The Park Board is not approving the sale of raffle tickets without the proper permits.

Ms. Kathy Carrier of the Bass Lake area, had provided a picture book of photos of the Silver Beach area, trying to show what she hopes to have Bass Lake look like. The book was passed around for the board members to view. She had provided this photo album to the Commissioners. She would like to help with the 5 year plan to help realize her dream of Bass Lake Beach becoming a 1st Class Beach and Campground.

It was agreed that the 5 year plan will be slower than expected. Based on the grant for which we were applying, the required survey is too expensive and isn't cost effective. Also, this park board isn't qualified based on the 2010 US Census data for the help to be cost free.

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It was pointed out that the duty of the Park Board is to be equal to all areas within the County, not just the Bass Lake and Beach or Campground. Looking at other Park Board's mission statements and 5 Year Plans may be helpful. It was agreed the board members can share information via emails. The 5 year plan needs to include all of the county properties that have been identified, not just the Bass Lake Beach & Campground.

Audience comments: Mr. Rick Anderson presented a handout from the Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources website that included instructions and suggestions for Park Boards to develop 5 yr plans. He also stated that the State gave the State Park to the County with the expectations of a concession that provided merchandise, a campground area and a beach. The beach area has been neglected, and there's no food service, although there's a marina/pier area that's used for profits, although they aren't noted in the lease. He was upset that, with this being the 100th anniversary of the Indiana Park Service, there are many opportunities for donations and grants. He noted that he believes the Beach and Campground is an embarrassment to the County and suggested that perhaps the County should give the land back to the State, as it reads in their lease to the county.

Mr. Larry Clarich also noted that there is a lack of signs, and emergency vehicle access is limited. He requested Na parking signs and Mr. Lucas agreed we may need "No Parking" signs. Mr. Rik Ritzler provided a cost sheet for repairs and other services to the board in case the Park Board would like to have this work approved. Mr. Ritzler suggested that 4 – 6 signs would be sufficient at a cost of \$40 installed.

Ms. Tabitha Dillner also spoke out and asked why the Park Board is waiting to break the lease with Mr. Callahan.

An email note from Kathy Lucas was sent to a large group of people and it asked why the bathrooms were closed. The response was that the toilet that was trying to be accessed is not usable since they aren't connected. The Park Board agreed that a sign should be posted stating those restrooms weren't available to the public.

Ms. Kathy Carrier stated that, in her opinion, whoever is managing the beach is not doing a good job. She also asked when the inspection reports will be available to the public. She was advised to go to the Auditor's office for a copy.

Attorney Lucas faced the audience and explained that even if we aren't happy with how things are being done, we are a country of laws. As issues are brought to the lessee, they have time to address them, which means the place doesn't get shut down. We are working within parameters of the law.

Mr. Rik Ritzler stated that this will take a few years, but there's a steady improvement being seen.

Others spoke up and agreed that with many issues on the table, the Park Board needs to prioritize the issues.

With no further discussion or questions, the meeting was adjourned by a motion from Ms. Rose and seconded by Mr. Gerstandt at 7:00pm. Next meeting is September 20, 6pm at the annex.

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Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Mix
Secretary