

## Starke County Park Board Minutes – August 2022

Board members present were R. Ballard, R. Ritzer, T. Busch and S. Byer.

R. Ballard called the meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

R. Ritzler made the motion to accept financial report, seconded by T. Busch and passed 4-0.

R. Ballard was pleased to announce Tracy Williams as the park's superintendent with R. Ritzler making the motion to appoint her, seconded by S. Byer and passed unanimously 4-0. Tracy will begin her first day on August 10<sup>th</sup>.

A. Giuliani reported that the signs for Kramer Beach are ready and will be picked up and installed this week. R. Ballard suggested the attorney be contacted to see about the road access to the beach, in case of an emergency.

Much discussion was had regarding the letter from the DNR stating our non-compliance with our existing permits. Specifically, we are not permitted for the new pier that went in and not compliant with the current layout of the other 2 piers. Additionally, the swim ropes for the swimming area are not allowed because they give the appearance of designating it a private verses public beach. T. Busch requests that we have legal council review that letter. S. Berndt has agreed to removing the new pier and rearranging the two others to become compliant. His charge for removing the new pier will be \$500.00 and will fix the others at no charge. He can take the piers out around the existing boats. There are a couple who are illegally tied to the piers who will be notified they will have to get them augured or removed before S. Berndt takes them out. R. Ritzler expressed his confidence in Tracy working closely with the DNR in applying for the correct permits so that next season we will not have any of these issues. Someone asked about the redwood section of the new pier. T. Busch confident that there are plenty of other sections that we will not be using those redwood sections next season. It was asked if the new pier would be aluminum based on previous mention that it was being considered. T. Busch says the fingers will be wood sections. R. Ritzler believes there is enough money in the next 2 years to consider another aluminum pier section. A. Giuliani reported that the swim ropes had already been taken

down. Tracy will continue to do research regarding the rules governing the ropes for safety for next season.

Discussion was had regarding contacting slip holders about being displaced and how the credit would be issued. It was decided that the same formula will be used based on the number of weeks slip holders were unable to use their slip.

It was discussed that the beach parking lot will be used to store shore stations for our existing customers only and agreed that the campground area will not be used to store any this year so that other projects on that side may continue. It was also decided that the shore stations will be stored in the area that will not be visible to the property owners' homes across the street. T. Busch wants to ensure the boaters know the Parks Dept. is not responsible for any costs in getting these to and from the shore. He estimates 23 possible shore stations but could be more since the marina is no longer an option as it had been in the past.

S. Byer made the motion to accept the \$500.00 fee to S. Berndt for removing and reconfiguring the piers. R. Ritzler seconded and it passed 4-0.

One bid has come in for rebuilding the sewer lift station. Now that there is a better idea of what type of bid we are looking for we can begin to request similar bids from other companies. Hill Excavating will be coming within the next two weeks to jet out the lines from the manhole to the lift stations. Last week, during festival weekend, it stopped pumping and began backing up. It required an electrician coming out to put new breakers in at a cost of \$1,255.00. Making the need for a rebuilt system a high priority. Putting band aids on this is proving to be too costly.

Discussion was had regarding changing the current charge for pavilion rental from \$45.00 plus gate charges to \$100.00 and not charging their guests for entry. It was noted that, in the past, the charge was \$150.00. Additionally, seasonal campers will be allowed one pavilion rental per season at no charge. T. Busch made the motion to approve this, R. Ritzler seconded and it passed 4-0.

Three companies were called to provide quotes for a new garage door at the campground. Only DC Garage services our area. They will put in an insulated door without a power opener. R. Ritzler says that because it falls under the amount required for board approval it is okay to have it installed.

B. Wakeland led a conversation regarding the adoption of a mission statement for the department. He shared this quote: **“In the end we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we are taught”** Baba Dioum, 1968. And stated this quote was one of the reasons he donated the forest and would like to have it properly done to make this the mission statement and included on our website and in our logos. R. Ritzler suggested having Tracy work with our legal council and B. Wakeland to make this happen. R. Ballard agrees this would be great for our entire parks.

Rita from Kramer’s beach said she has a number of volunteers ready to assist in getting the old metal benches off of the beach and to begin making improvements. Ted Bearly has equipment but needs someone to agree on the changes. R. Ballard would like to be part of this. Questions were asked regarding sand. R. Ritzler explained that writing grants for this is a long process and that Tracy will be responsible for working on that.

Concerns were raised regarding dogs being on the beach. This is an on-going issue that is addressed as it arises. However, without adequate staffing it isn’t always possible to confront the dog owners. There was an issue with a camper parked on the beach. A. Giuliani reported that she put a note on their door asking them to move it to the parking area across the street but they were not compliant. R. Ritzler suggested Tracy meet with the sheriff regarding handling of these situations.

R. Yover complimented the staff and volunteers on how the beach had never looked better than it did during festival weekend.

T. Busch reported that there are a number of augers that are not usable but we are unable to sell them because county property has to be auctioned off. The county has storage for these items. R. Boonstra suggested not doing anything until the piers are completely out and we know what may or may not be usable for next year.

T. Bowser complimented our IT department on doing a great job with the internet and explaining to him how it works. Additionally, he asked if he may provide a quote for the necessary lift station repairs and replacement. He asked about the 5-year plan for getting stone and trimming the trees. R. Ballard wants to get quotes for doing the entire campground and that it will probably be next year. R. Ritzler further explained that the reason we can not have any of the

gravel at the county garage is because their department operates solely on revenues from the gas taxes and registration of vehicles and that has to go only for county roads.

The department will begin getting quotes to have the trees trimmed throughout the park.

T. Bowser asked how much money the department had left from last year. He was instructed to contact the Auditor for this public information. We can only spend what we take in. The council did not approve any appropriations for next year's budget. A. Giuliani corrected the electric bill from July was \$5,700.00 **NOT** \$570.00.

The question of security in park was discussed saying there had been theft of 4 chairs and other items. Tracy will look into getting security lights put in throughout the park.

R. Ballard reported there is enough to get through the end of the year with R. Ritzler saying we can go to the council to ask for additional funding if absolutely necessary.

Campers asked that the gates to the entrance be closed throughout the night. It will be up to each camper to open and close it when entering and leaving.

R. Ritzer made the motion to adjourn, seconded by S. Byer and meeting adjourned at 7:12 PM