

## Starke County Parks Department September 13, 2022 Minutes

Present: R. Ballard, R. Ritzler, K. Swihart, T. Busch & S. Byer

R. Ballard called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM

R. Ritzler motioned to accept minutes from last meeting, seconded by T. Busch. Passed 5-0.

The superintendent's report was given by A. Giuliani and reported that the signs were put up at Kramer's Beach without incident.

T. Williams will meet with Bruce Wakeland to tour the forest and to begin establishing the new mission statement presented at last month's meeting.

The south pier has been completely removed, North pier 2 had 7 sections removed. We are now in compliance with the exception of the location of the North pier one because the permit shows it closer to the beach house. S. Delay called and sent letter stating that they will not pursue this as they know we are working on submitting new permit requests and new drawings. T. Busch suggested using the same drawings that we used this year in configuring the two North piers for next year, contingent upon actual sections determined by S. Berndt. T. Williams will work with S. Berndt on specific configurations for permitting next year. S. Delay, DNR stressed the importance of beginning the permitting process early as it can take up to 90 days to approve once received.

S. Berndt will begin removing the remaining piers on or around Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>. Grace Hehemann donated 16 sections of piers. T. Busch saw them and felt it was in our best interest to accept the donation. They will need to be picked up by Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>. Consideration given to contacting the sheriff's department to see if inmates may be able to help load and unload them. T. Bowser volunteered his time and equipment to transport them on Saturday.

Discussion was held on how to determine the amount of credits to be issued to those slip holders displaced throughout the season. A. Giuliani committed to having firm numbers by next board meeting.

T. Williams, A. Giuliani and D. Pearman looked at the 4-wheelers offered by the sheriff's department and it was decided they would require too much in repairs to spend the \$1,000.00 on.

The new garage door was purchased for \$1,558.00 and will be installed on Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>.

Unusable pier sections and hardware has been taken to the county for auction.

The department is in the process of getting bids for tree limb removal throughout the park.

R. Boonstra installed reflectors on the campground gates. It will be up to the campers to open and close them during the night hours.

A report was given on the amount of damage done during the Aug. 29<sup>th</sup>. storm. Tree limbs and large branches were downed, four boats were grounded, a shed turned over. A large tree snapped off very near a camper. Aaron's tree service was the only company to respond. Due to the urgency of this situation, T. Williams approved the \$600.00 cost for removal. Many of the campers, boaters, T. Busch and R. Yover volunteered their time to help our staff with the clean-up and to assist boaters that came aground. S Berndt repaired the buckled sections of piers at no charge.

The decision was made to postpone the \$5000.00 approved cost for having the lift station jettied out until the campers have left, allowing time for researching proper upgrading of the system.

R. Boonstra and A. Giuliani gave a detailed report of the latest crisis with the lift station. It was during the Labor Day holiday when the pump stopped working, again. It took a few days, many hours and the help of a contractor that would not give up to get the pump out, clean the towel and debris out of the pump, put it back together and change the circuit breaker. It was discovered that there is a faulty check valve in the pump that needs to be replaced. DS&S had to be called to pump out 1,800 gallons of waste water. T. Jordan explained that due to the age of all of the pipes this is what causes the surge of additional flow during rains like experienced. A. Giuliani did reach out to K. Swihart to get approval for the emergency work to be completed. A. Giuliani reported that, up to this date, the department has spent \$12,666.00 on lift station repairs (band aids) alone, stressing that a permanent solution MUST be found.

One bid for completely rebuilding the lift station, was received in the amount of \$32,000.00. It will be the basis for securing additional quotes. Discussion was had on consideration of purchasing the equipment and hiring a company for installation. R. Ballard requested this information be presented at next month's meeting. T. Williams will be working on having more information at the next meeting.

Based on the 02/12/22 board approval the \$300.00 seasonal storage will be implemented beginning this October. This fee is included in the new lease that will be issued for next season. Campers will still be able to keep their current site for next season if they elect to store their unit somewhere else. It was also discussed that next year's seasonal payments are to be paid in two installments due on or before April 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup>. There will be a 7-day grace period. If payments are not received by those dates a late fee of \$50.00 will be charged.

Mowing of seasonal campsites were brought to the board's attention. There is much controversy regarding whether campers should maintain their own yards or the park mowing. S. Buyer suggested getting bids for outside companies mowing to determine a fair price to charge the campers not wanting to mow their own. Adding we need to run this like a business and cannot continue giving things away. R. Boonstra reported mowing 40 out of 60 sites.

T. Busch reported that we currently have four shore stations parked on the beach with an estimated a potential 22 additional. A fee of \$200.00 per shore station, per season is being required and an agreement is signed by owner. This storage is offered to current pier customers only. The piers will begin coming out on Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>.

T. Busch asked for discussion on grant writing stressing time importance of making it a priority. R. Ritzler offered information on where to go to research what is available. In.gov, KARPC, DNR, IDEM. D. Minx encouraged the department to renew the IPRA, a community foundation. K. Norm presented information on CVC board who distributes innkeeper tax to enhance tourism by providing money to be listed in festivals and magazines. She also explained that they voted to offer a \$30,000.00 grant for installing the kayak launches with the understanding this is a matching grant. Mary Perrin had a study done to get them funded. Limitations on this grant include construction must begin within 18 months. Failure to do this will result in revocation of this grant. K. Norm will check as to when the project must be completed. The launches have already been permitted and do expire. R. Ritzler will sent information to T. Williams to get with Jackie Ryan from the Community Foundation.

K. Norm presented documents to the board regarding the community fund of \$20,000.00, a perpetual fund for upkeep of the Veteran's Monument and a memorandum about Kramer's Beach.

Rita Berger asked if the parks department would be able to visit Kramer Beach to give approval of the beautification project they would like to do. This will be scheduled as soon as T. Williams returns.

J. Buiter questioned the letter he received regarding his seasonal lease not being renewed for next season stating he and his wife have been in ill health. If the decision is reconsidered he would do a better job of maintaining his site. R. Ballard will speak with T. Williams and let him know.

R. Ritzler asked why no claims are ever submitted for approval. It was committed that will begin next meeting.

Discussion was shared regarding the county providing maintenance to the campground roads. Suggestion was made that someone ask commissioners for action. R. Ritzler explained that there are different rules for different departments. Because the campground is not for public use it will not generate any tax revenue. T. Busch suggested research be done for possible grants for the county to provide services.

Regarding the budget, the County Council approves the budget each year, commissioners have their own budget but it is voted on by council. Budget is done by May or June then voted on in September. It was announced that there will be a special budget meeting for the Park Board on Friday, 9/16. The board would like to attend.

D. Minix addressed the board regarding the county owned property that BOA Shores now call BOA Park, being used as a parking lot for trucks and trailers stating it has become an eyesore to the community and that the children aren't able to use it for play. BOA have their meeting there, using electric and signage saying BOA Shores people only. Asks that the board look into how this county property could be used for all the residents. R. Ritzler suggested we look into seeing if there have been any surveys done showing exactly what properties are owned by the county. We will get with Justin to pursue this.

R. Ritzler made a motion, seconded by S. Byer that the meeting adjourn. Passed 5-1. Meeting adjourned at 7:36 PM.