

**STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES
THURSDAY, MAY 18, 2023**

Pursuant to adjournment comes now the Starke County Council at 5:00 PM in the Annex Building Meeting Room, Knox, Indiana, with Dave Pearman, Anthony Black, Kay Gudeman, Howard Bailey, Cassandra Hine, Todd Leinbach via zoom, and Norman (Bruce) Bennett present, and the following proceedings were held to wit:

The meeting was called to order by Council President, Dave Pearman at 6:00 PM for the Starke County Council Special Session.

Councilwomen Gudeman made a motion to approve the minutes from April 17th, 2023. Councilman Black seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

Councilman Pearman advised he would like to try and go back to Monday's at 4:30 PM for the Council Meeting. It was also decided to schedule the Budget Workshop on July 3rd at 9:00 AM.

RECORDER – PERPETUATION FUND

Councilman Bennett made a motion to approve the Ordinance Establishing the Use of Recorder's Records Perpetuation Fund and Mileage During Calendar Year 2024 for Starke County, Indiana. Councilwoman Hine seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

SYSCO SETTLEMENT ORDINANCE

Councilman Bailey made a motion to approve the Ordinance Establishing a Fund for the Receipt of Litigation Settlement Moneys for Starke County, Indiana. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

PARK BOARD FUNDING REQUEST

Councilman Pearman advised that one of the things that we can agree on is that the Bass Lake Beach is a county asset and it behooves us to take care of it. It is also an asset that everyone in the county can use. He stated that they may not get this grant so what they would like to do if they do not receive the grant is still complete some renovations on the beach house. Councilman Pearman advised the grant is for \$1 million. Mike (via zoom) from the Troyer Group stated they increased the grant to \$1.4 million so the matching dollars would be \$700,000. Superintendent Williams handed out the Bass Lake Beach & Campground Improvement Project Preliminary Estimates chart. The total cost of the requested project would be \$1,350,000. Councilman Pearman advised that over the last few years there has been a lot of work completed that the beach and campground and it looks so much better than it used to. Councilman Bennett asked if the campground and beach revenue goes right back to the park board fund. Councilman Pearman advised that at this time it does. Councilman Bailey asked when they will find out if they get the grant. Mike advised the application is due June 1st and then they would find out in August if they get the grant. The construction would then start in the Summer of 2024.

Mike also advised that they have to have a match approved for the grant application. So, whatever the amount is they can design the project to that amount. Councilman Pearman advised that Superintendent Williams is working on getting donations to put towards this project as well. Mike explained that this is a reimbursement grant so the county would have to have the funds to fully pay for the entire project and then the county would be reimbursed 50% from the DNR. He advised the expenses would be spread out over 2023, 2024, and 2025. After further discussion regarding potential future projects and renovations that could be done to the beach house. Councilman Bailey asked what the beach and campground gross in revenue. Superintendent Williams advised it was \$226,000. Councilman Bailey asked what the likelihood is getting the grant. Mike advised he believes they have a pretty good chance. He did this for North Judson last year for their town park and going through the scoring criteria they had a very similar score compared to this project. He feels like we have a good shot unless there is an overwhelming number of applicants this year.

Councilman Bennett asked how many more projects is the park board considering in the next couple years. Superintendent Williams advised that the Koontz Lake Beach has already been redone. They put

in new picnic tables, took the guardrails down, cut some trees down, and it just looks very different than what is has in the past. Councilman Bailey asked how this would be paid over the next three years? Councilman Pearman advised they could use Sysco money or CEDIT. You would not be able to use ARPA money. Councilwoman Hine asked if the project is going into phases and if so then what order would it go in. Councilman Pearman advised that if we took away the \$200,000 for campground upgrades then the difference in getting the full project complete would be \$150,000, they could split that and go for a grant match of \$575,000. Councilman Bailey asked what would the commitment be for this project if the grant did not go through. Councilman Pearman stated if they did not get this grant they would have to come back to the Council and get a separate approval in a different motion for a separate project. Councilman Bennett made a motion to approve a total of \$575,000 as a matching grant toward the Bass Lake Beach and Campground Project. Councilwoman Hine seconded the motion. The motion was approved with 6 ayes and 1 nay.

OTHER DISCUSSION

Councilman Pearman advised that the Commissioners have been reluctant to use ARPA funds for the entire 10% raise across the board. He advised instead of doing the entire 10% out of ARPA they will be doing 5% from ARPA and 5% out of county general. The back up will still be ARPA because they had already agreed on that.

Councilman Pearman advised that Jim Hernandez contacted him and they have a big donation of laptops so if the county needs laptops they are willing to give us some.

Councilwoman Hine gave a board report regarding the solar farms. She advised people are angry over not being adequately informed when these solar farms are being put in. She advised they have another meeting on May 31st, 2023 at Grand Central Park at 6:00 PM. Further discussion was held regarding the concerns and questions the public has expressed at the solar meeting.

BOARD REPORTS

Councilwoman Hine advised she will be having her first meeting with KIRPC next week.

Councilman Bennett advised that SCILL does not have the appetite to do anything with the CDL program. They are also not interested in the EMT training program anymore. They also don’t want to educate the adults. Councilman Pearman asked to have Jim Hernandez added to their next agenda.

Councilman Bailey advised the Planning Commission is working well with their new attorney. They are aggressively going after some better teeth into ways they can find people who are letting their properties go.

Councilwoman Gudeman stated she went to the groundbreaking of the Machine Shop. They have a meeting on Monday and they met with NIPSCO.

Councilman Pearman advised there will be an executive session on May 26th at 9:00 AM. The contingency date would be May 25th at 9:00 AM.

With no other business or public comment to come before the Starke County Council, Councilman Black made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:34 PM. Councilwoman Gudeman seconded the motion and the motion was approved with all ayes.

**MAY 18, 2023
STARKE COUNTY COUNCIL**

Dave Pearman, President

Kay Gudeman, Vice-President

Todd Leinbach

Norman (Bruce) Bennett

Howard Bailey

Anthony Black

Cassandra Hine

Rachel Oesterreich, Starke County Auditor