

Starke County Park Board  
July 9, 2024  
Meeting Minutes

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

S. Byer made the motion to accept the minutes of the June 11, 2024 meeting, seconded by K. Swihart and passed 5-0

President Ballard opened the bids for English Lake Kayak Launch project. Hill Excavating base bid came in at \$52,493.52, alternate #1 \$11,551.00 and alternate #2 with temper stone came in at \$12,366.73. Stanger Group base bid was \$62,600, alternate #1 \$18,430.00 and alternate #2 \$7,336.00 with timber stone walkway.

The engineer estimated this job at \$35,000.00.

B. Aloï from Territorial Engineering ran both bids. The lowest option is to do all timber walkway in stone with Stanger at \$47,986. Next lowest combination using flex mat and timber walk way from Hill at \$52,493.52. All flex mat would be \$55,357.34. K. Norem stated there isn't enough money to cover this and suggested taking these bids under advisement and go back to contractors to ask for a different bid. Suggested looking at combining the other launch projects for a better price. B. Aloï stated the Stanger group is doing the 23-launch project and they may put all 3 together. The board has 30 days to award the bid. K. Norem will try to find other funding and made the motion to take the bids under advisement, seconded by S. Byer and passed 5-0

The revised 2025 budget was reviewed. K. Swihart had some concerns over funds taken from different departments that should have been repair and maintenance. K. Norem explained it was under the council's instructions that they money come from somewhere else in the Park budget. K. Swihart suggested that there be a scheduled maintenance and fixed inventory on all equipment. The 2025 budget was passed 5-0 with the motion made by T. Busch and a second by K. Norem. It was further expressed that a board member needs to attend the budget workshop for July 15h. T. Busch said he would attend.

As requested in last month's meeting, a list was provided to the board so they can assign themselves to be the point person for the staff of the department. K. Norem will oversee the financials and special projects, R. Ballard contracts, T. Busch the beach and piers, K. Swihart grants, policies and the Veteran's Memorial while S. Byer will oversee the campground, reservations and the forest.

It was requested at the last meeting that there be a policy developed for when and how compensation can be given in exchange for services/goods such as pier slip and campground sites. Justin created the policy and provision for this. The Harbor Master job description was used as an example showing the formula of taking the value of what they receive divided by the current county pay wage to determine how many hours will be required to cover the compensation. If said person becomes a part-time employee and work more than the agreement requires there will be a cap on the number of hours they can be monetarily compensated for. K. Norem made the motion to accept and approve the policy, K. Swihart seconded and it passed 5-0. It was also agreed to put Gary Laiter on as a part-time county worker.

G. Laiter gave a brief overview of the work he has been doing to repair the current dock boards and presented some prices for completely redoing all the wooden piers, stressing this is not a project that can be done in one season and suggested the inmates might be able to do this at their wood working shop. He also explained that most of the wood on the piers are over 17 years old and were put down with NON-treated lumber where we are replacing them with treated.

Lengthy discussion was had regarding the handling of the money coming in from the beach and campground. Questions were raised why the commissioners got involved without coming the board by asking the treasurer to acquire a bank bag for the money to be deposited nightly. It was further understood that the bank cannot keep money they do not process making this solution unacceptable. The board decided to allow the current handling process continue until another solution is found. D. Binkley phoned in stating he was acting on the request of the council and will require the treasurer to continue picking up the money daily and placing it in the county vault until the deposit is made on Monday mornings.

K. Norem reported that, due to bad weather, the English Lake Kayak Launch groundbreaking has been cancelled. A ribbon cutting will take place upon completion of the project.

A report on the picnic table project was given with A. Giuliani reporting a total of 77 tables have been donated, 32 of them completed. Jack Rosa's team at the jail will take receipt of the materials and his wood crafting department will complete the rest.

K. Norem made the motion to accept the financial report, seconded by K. Swihart and passed 5-0.

K. Norem talked about the Indiana Code summary we can work with council to create. It is a non-reverting fund that the department can make deposits into at the end of they year and use those funds for pre-specified projects the following year. Whoever goes to the budget workshop can ask council on how to move forward with this.

R. Ballard announced the resignation of the Superintendent and that the job has been posted with hopes of finding another candidate soon

Other business was R. Yover stating his dissatisfaction in the handling comments he and his wife made on the Parks Facebook page. It was explained by A. Giuliani that there were other posts on that page that would be more appropriate than a Job Posting had been place.

Meeting adjourned at 7:22 PM