

Starke County Park Board
December 2, 2024
“Special” Meeting Minutes

R. Ballard called the meeting to order, with the explanation that this special meeting was called to get some details straightened out and questions answered before the board officially votes at the December regular meeting who to award the bid contract to for the Bass Lake renovation project. He explained that there were two different bids, one from Gariup and one from Brown and Brown, and that since the two bid totals were quite different, we invited Christa Hurley-King from Troyer Group to explain why the bids were so different, how much money we have to spend, which alternates we will choose to go forward with on the renovation and which to leave out, and what we can do with any leftover money from the grant.

C. Hurley-King explained there were two bids ******(insert base bids by Gariup and Brown and Brown), a difference of \$202,500 we have a \$1,150,000 total contract amount for the renovation project, less \$125,000 design fees, leaving us a \$1,025,000 construction budget. Gariup was \$77,400 over Brown and Brown on alternate 1 (Beach Restroom building), Gariup was \$75,000 over on alternate 2 (Campground bathhouse), \$39,100 over on alternate 3 (Gatehouse upgrades), and \$88,800 over on alternate 4 (Campground playground). We can infer that since Gariup is such a large company, they don't have as much wiggle room on what they can bid out on jobs, also it is farther away than Brown and Brown. Brown and Brown is a smaller, more local company. Brown and Brown wanted this project for winter so they can avoid layoffs for their crew, and were highly motivated to win this job. Christa explained a possible effect of taking alternates out of the renovation plan would be to make us less eligible for funding based on a scoring process, and the federal government could award the grant to another county that would then have more points after we revisited our scope of work. She emphasized that this would **not** happen to us in this circumstance because the year we won the grant, no one who applied was denied because the federal government had enough money to give grants to every applicant who applied; but that we should be aware of this practice for the future. Some discussion was held about which alternates to eliminate, focusing on a discussion of the beach-side bathrooms being less of a priority since the Beachhouse bathrooms would be renovated, even though the beach-side bathrooms lack a few components to make them ADA compliant (large stall with handlebars are currently in those restrooms, not sure about the height of sinks and urinals, etc)

There was a discussion about what to do with the contingent \$30,400 left over if we eliminate alternates 1 and 4. It might be possible to use the extra money toward a new roof or insulation for the beach house IF there is money left over.

It was asked if Brown and Brown had good references, and both Christa said Troyer Group had worked with them on a few projects, including the North Judson town park and Karl had worked with them on a park project in Warsaw; both said they were very happy with Brown and Brown's work.

The sewer lines were discussed. Christa stated that they were able to scope from the Beachhouse out 10 feet beyond where the pipes go beyond the beachhouse walls. Also, some of the pipes "bellied out" and some were crushed, so the crew had to make an assumption to where it connects. The assumption is that the north-side beach bathrooms and the Beach house bathrooms connect together and then go across the street to our lift station in the campground. So the sewer lines for this project should be fine, but will have to be looked at in the future by the Park dept and the county.

Some discussion of taking the existing campground side playground down if we don't go with alternate 4. IF we don't keep this part of project, we aren't legally obligated to remove the equipment, but would still be a good idea for liability reasons. There are also ways to add playground equipment after the project is complete at a lower cost using wholesale suppliers, etc.

In conclusion, R. Ballard stated our course of action would be to state our intent to accept Brown and Brown as the winning bid at the Tuesday, December 10 meeting, and that were going to eliminate alternates 1 and 4. Christa said she would be in attendance at that meeting and will bring a letter that provides the board with Troyer Group's recommendation to allow the board to act upon that letter. If there is work to be done while the project is ongoing, like the roof or insulation, there can be a "change of work" order, and it can be completed by Brown and Brown. Mary Topelian asked if there were any restrictions on the \$30,000 contingency leftover, and Christa answered that the money had to spent on the renovation project in some way, and that is the only restriction; but that the money did have to be spent, or we would lose it.

T. Busch made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and K. Swihart seconded the motion.