

Starke County Park Board  
March 11, 2025  
Meeting Minutes

Present: R. Ballard, T. Busch, D. Sinn, & T. Trout

R. Ballard called meeting to order.

T. Busch made the motion to accept the minutes of the February 11, 2025 meeting, with the corrected spelling of a last name of a speaker from the last meeting, seconded by T. Trout. Passed 4-0.

Board considered roof quotes for the Bass Lake Beach and Campground gathered by county maintenance supervisor, Rick Green. Rick has been very helpful with the renovation process. It is the hope to replace all the old shingles with metal roof. Charcoal is the color of choice. The board also needed to consider quotes for gutters on the beach house. Rick was able to secure four quotes for the roofs and two quotes for the gutters. Roof quotes for replacing the roof on the beach house, garage, camp bathhouse, restroom/comfort station on beach side, both guard shacks, well house and "ice" house: Button Construction-\$43,145.00; Amos Schwarz Construction-\$44,900.00; JB West-\$64,924.10; A&M Home Services-\$90,372.76. The board choose Button Construction for the roofs. Gutters on beach house: HB Gutters-\$2050; A&M Home Services-\$2,410.20. The board choose the HB Gutters bid. The next step is to attend a commissioner meeting on 3/17 to ask permission to go before the county council, then attend county council meeting on 3/17 to ask to use the money from the "Cash" section of our budget. D. Sinn made the motion to accept Button Construction bid for the roof and A&M Construction's bid for the gutters, T. Trout seconded the motion. Passed 4-0.

Jacque Ryan from Starke Co. Community Foundation was in to discuss the Starke Co. Veteran's Memorial Maintenance fund. She spoke briefly about how endowment funds work and shared with the board the Starke County Veterans Memorial Maintenance Fund. It was established in 2020 and the purpose of the fund was established to provide support to the Veterans Memorial through the Starke County Park Board, and their sub-committee, the Starke County Veterans Memorial Plaza Fund Committee. As of March 2025: 2025 Distribution (4.25%)-\$1,155; Spendable Balance-\$2,586; Endowment Gift Balance-\$26,806.61; Historic Income/Earnings Balance-\$1,761.62; 2025 Total Fund Balance-\$31,154.23. The endowment fund will continue growing, assuming 8% growth, 4% payout, and 1.5% fee each year; the fund balance would be \$49,973 in 25 years and \$75,899 in 50 years. J. Ryan also discussed the support the SCCF has given to the Starke Co. Parks and Recreation department. Since 2018, SCCF has given \$68,200 in grants and endowments. Jacque briefly talked about how the grant process works and different types of grants that are available to the Parks dept.

D. Sinn discussed the possibility of creating a Park Board Capital Fund. When the Starke County Park Board was established it was stated in the ordinance that the board may be able to create a capital fund, similar to the “cumulative capital” fund the county uses. *“IC 36-10-3-20 Cumulative building fund...Sec. 21. (a) The board may establish a cumulative building fund under IC 6-1.1-41 to provide money for: (1) building, remodeling, and repair of park and recreation facilities; or (2) purchase of land for park and recreation purposes...”* Discussion was then held about how to best go about creating this fund. The question was raised on whether this fund would allow us to spend money in our budget without having to go to the council for approval to spend our funds. It was asked that we find out more about this fund and how it works, then go forward with trying to get it established.

Board discussed the issue of prorated campground leases and refunds on seasonal leases. It was the board’s feeling to leave each case up to the superintendent but that prorated leases would not be offered to returning seasonal campers going forward.

R. Yover brought up some concerns about the “Exhibit B” rules section of the pier contracts. His main concerns are that the boaters are no longer allowed to use bungee cord to secure boats, that tires are no longer able to be used as bumpers between the piers and boats, and “having the same pier spot is not guaranteed. There was discussion between Mr. Yover, Gary Laiter, and Tom Busch who are both harbor masters, about why these new rules have been enacted. There was much discussion about why different rules have been put in place, and how they affect people. The board would like to come out and check the piers this spring to see if they can address some of Mr. Yover’s concerns at that time. A motion was made by D. Sinn to accept the pier lease as it is, T. Busch seconded the motion. Passed 4-0.

#### Superintendent Report:

- Camp leases have been sent out and are due by March 1. Monthly newsletter will be sent out to campers every month.
- Apparel Fundraiser—forms; do we want to order Bass Lake Beach & Campground shirts?
- Ismael DeLara—paid employee now, to cover mileage and time spent over the allotted time for the internship per week.
- Starke Co Forest—I will be meeting Bruce and Ismael at the Forest, and Bruce wanted me to extend the invitation to the board as well. 2/22—1 CT
- Meeting Phil Whoolery at Bass Lake to identify which trees we need to add to the “endangered tree” list for the DNR permit that I need to submit. Also, identifying trees that need to be felled for safety.
- Internet—we have a 60-month contract with Mediacom, would be 9000\$ to cancel early. As of right now, Surf is unavailable anyways...
- Water Softener for campground beach house should be considered in the near future. White tile is being put up and I’d like to look into getting a water softener to control the rust

Last year, it was decided to replace the fence on the north side of the campground. A. Flora was only able to get one quote from a fence company to do that work. Mullet’s Fencing & Supplies quoted \$8,613.96 to do white pine split rail fence on BOTH sides of the campground (rather

than just the north side previously discussed). It was explained that I reached out to more than one company for a quote but was unable to get more quotes. T. Trout made a motion to accept the bid from Mullet's Fencing, T. Busch seconded the motion. Passed 4-0.

Discussion was held about changing the scope of the Bass Lake beach house renovation. Previously, the plan had been to cap the gas lines and add no insulation. It was discussed, and felt by the board, that utilizing the beach house is important for the community. This would allow us to have events all year long and offer the space to the community for small events. Brown and Brown would have to do this work because of liability issues, so no other quotes were obtained for this work. I shared the proposed extra costs for the gas lines and insulation from Brown and Brown and the board voted to go forward with these projects.

Other business:

R. Yover is excited for the improvements being made to Bass Lake Beach and Campground and believes the community will love the finished product.

J. Ryan reminded everyone about the "World Environment Day" event coming up at the Starke Co. Forest on Thursday, June 5. The all-day event is titled "Art in the Forest" and will include plein air painters, an art competition, and more.

R. Ballard made a comment about the park department visit to the Starke County Forest. It is a very beautiful place and that Bruce Wakeland is a god-send to our county for preserving this for us for generations to come. Mr. Ballard invited the whole community to visit the Forest.

K. Hensell reported that everything is good at Kramer's Beach currently.

R. Ballard moved to adjourn the meeting.

---

Richard Ballard-president

---

Tom Busch-vice president

---

\_\_\_\_ABSENT\_\_\_\_

Sam Byer-member

---

David Sinn-member

---

Teresa Trout-member