

Starke County Park Board Minutes – 051915

Board Attendance: Roger Chaffins, Skyler Ellinger, Debbie Mix, Rosemary Rose.
Absent: Marcia Bedrock

Call to Order at 6:00pm at the County Annex Building

Pledge of Allegiance

The minutes from the March meeting had been sent out and the reading was waived. Mr. Chaffins made a motion to accept the minutes as is and the motion was seconded by Ms. Rose. A vote was taken and the motioned was carried.

Forest: Complaints

Mr. Wakeland came before the board to address a drainage complaint. He had previously met with the County Surveyor, Mr. Estok regarding complaints. To date there have been 3 complaints altogether, although one complaint was done anonymously and that complaint is questionable as to its legitimacy. The biggest question is about the beaver dam at Anderson's ditch. The beavers build at the edge. Mr. Wakeland questions where the blame of flooding lies. A man made culvert was put in and it's the culvert that seems to be the location/cause of the flooding. The distance of the blockage effects up to approximately 1100 feet and he can't see how there's a problem since this has been a low rain season and that distance shouldn't be affecting the neighboring areas. Mr. Wakeland gave a history of the area and the beavers building dams. He has contacted Territorial Engineering and the cost will be \$2400 to determine the level line of the land. The beavers build the dam nightly and it's usually cleaned out daily. Mr. Estok has a copy of the complaint and it would be good to know who's complaining so they can address specific issues. Mr. Wakeland doubts that the beavers are the problem, but if so, he would like to strategize how to resolve the problem before trapping the beavers. Beavers are valuable assets to the environment. Mr. Chaffins stated he would get the complaint to Mr. Wakeland.

Forest: Hikers

Another issue that was addressed was that hikers complain about high water that gets their feet wet. A boardwalk can be built to alleviate that problem. The cost of materials will be about \$1000.

Mr. Wakeland recommends putting in a walkway for the hikers. There may also be a need to fill with sand &/or gravel. He also recommends that we should do some publicity to help the public learn about the forest and its benefits to the entire county.

Ms. Mix made a motion to spend up to \$1000 for Mr. Wakeland to put in a walkway. The motion was 2nd by Roger, a vote was taken and the motion carried.

The board also agreed by consensus to hand over any complaints to Mr. Wakeland and allow him to handle them.

One idea that had been brought up to help publicize the forest is to have an Open House with hot dogs for county residents. If we do something like this we should probably start making some plans to get it organized and a date set.

Forest: Snow-trails

Mr. Lawrence was at the previous meeting with a request to allow snow biking at the forest. Mr. Wakeland addressed the issue. Mr. Wakeland stated that his concern is its compatibility with cross-country skiing. After speaking with Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Wakeland has since read up on snow biking, and everything he's read says that it's not compatible with cross-country skiing. He stated that snow biking is focused on the physical thrill of the recreation rather than the wildlife and beauty of the forest. He's not against new use of the forest, but he doesn't see how it fits with his idea of the forest's use. As the Forest Manager, he has final say on what is done at the forest and it's his decision not to allow snow biking. The board agreed with Mr. Wakeland's decision.

Mr. Wakeland stated chestnuts will be ready for harvesting at the end of September through the first week in October. There are also mushrooms that can be picked and all these are free of charge to forest visitors.

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Bass Lake Beach and Campground:

The Park Board members met at the campground with Mr. Callahan and Mr. Dave Wallsmith on April 23. It was agreed that both the board members and Mr. Callahan will come to this meeting with lists of what each believes needs to be done at the property. Neither Mr. Callahan or Mr. Wallsmith are in attendance tonight it was agreed that we would take the liberty of making our own list and send a letter to them. It's understood that Mr. Callahan may come back with an alternative plan &/or timeframe, but in the meantime we would like to see the following completed with the timetable included.

The plumbing and electrical issues seem to be the priorities since they are safety hazards,

- Faucets in the north side of the beach bathhouse need to be replaced.
- Electrical outlets in all bathrooms must have GFI's. (30 days to complete.)
- Electrical Box with canvas on the north beachside bathhouse where the canvas flaps and there's no protection for the 220 amp electrical service must be corrected. (30 days to complete.)
- North beachside bathhouse wall where termites have destroyed the waterside wall needs to be repaired.
- Picnic tables must be fixed or be removed. There must be a plan implemented that at least 15 picnic tables must be purchased each year.
- The water fountain on north beachside bathhouse must have a concrete pad laid and the plumbing corrected for ADA compliance.
- The garbage area at the campground needs to have fencing around it. (30 days to complete.)
- Campground water fountain must be made ADA compliant.
- Trailer camping spots- 15 electrical services must be upgraded to 50-amp service per year.

It was noted to keep in mind that the hazard issues are priority. Painting, while it may need to be done, is not a priority. The safety hazard items are marked that they need to be completed within 30 days of written notice. All other items must be completed by the end of 2015.

Per the board's decision, most of these items are maintenance items that have not been done in a very long time. These are not the only issues, just the ones that need to be addressed more immediately. Please make a plan to address these issues. The board needs to meet in executive session to determine what work is capital improvement and which are maintenance items.

A motion was made by Ms. Rose to approve the list of improvements and it was seconded by Mr. Chaffins. A vote was taken and the motion carried.

Mr. Ellinger will bring the list to Mr. Lucas, County attorney for the letter to be written. Ms. Mix will get the list to Mr. Ellinger as quickly as possible.

Ms. Rose made a motion for this board to meet monthly now that it's summer, and Mr. Chaffins seconded. After a vote the motion carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Rose and seconded by Mr. Chaffins. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, June 16 at 6 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by D. Mix, secretary.