

Jennings County Parks and Recreation Board

Meeting Minutes

Date: July 28th, 2026

Time: 5:30 PM

Location: Conference Room – Jennings County Government Center

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Bill Ertel.

Roll Call

Present Board Members:

- Elizabeth Eaken (EE)
- Emily Thompson (ET)
- Bill Ertel (BE)
- Johnathan Garrett (JG)

Present Staff:

- Seth Jones (SJ)

Absent:

- Kristin Wiley
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Approval of Previous Minutes

A motion was made by JG to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2026, meeting. BE seconded the motion.

JG, BE, and EE were in favor and signed the approval form.

Old Business

Master Plan Update:

Online survey remained open through July 17th. Economic Development Corporation's (EDC) social media campaign helped to increase the number of survey responses from 36 to 111.

The next steering committee meeting is scheduled for August 10th at 5:30 pm at the Muscatatuck Park Dining Hall.

New Business

Eco Lake Park Dump Station Repair Approval:

On July 13, 2026, SJ requested Board approval via email to use \$1,410.00 in non-reverting funds for repairs to the Eco Lake Park dump station. The repairs were needed to address deteriorated support hardware and uninsulated conduit, which affected operation of the station and resulted in the failure of one pump. Board members KW, BE, JG, and EE approved the request via email to allow the repairs to proceed without waiting until the next scheduled Board meeting.

A copy of the written request and the contractor's quote were provided to the Board for the record.

Director's Report

Personnel:

- No personnel updates
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Office and Administrative:

Master Plan:

- See Old Business.

2027 Budget:

- The proposed 2027 budget was submitted to the County Council on June 18.
- The budget was approved by the Board at the June meeting.

Highway 7 Project:

- A meeting with American StructurePoint regarding the Highway 7 Project was held on June 18.
- The meeting agenda was provided.
- Public comments will be submitted to SJ for review and approval.
- The finalized letter will be signed by the Board.
- Construction is anticipated to begin in 2027.
- Traffic is expected to remain open during construction.
- Flower beds and the park sign at Eco Lake Park will be relocated.

Campground Inspections:

- Both Eco Lake Park and Muscatatuck Park campgrounds were inspected by the Indiana Department of Health.
- Both inspection reports, dated June 6, stated that the campgrounds were "in reasonable compliance with 410 IAC 6-7.1."
- Copies of the inspection reports were included with the Director's Report.

Phone and Internet:

- The park will transition from Frontier to Metronet.
 - Installation is scheduled for October 20.
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Grounds – Muscatatuck Park

Walnut Grove School:

- Gutter replacement has been completed. First Choice Construction has been paid in full.

Hazard Tree Removal:

- Otero Tree Service removed the hazard trees on July 7 and 8.
- The contractor has been paid \$4,900 from the non-reverting fund, as approved by the Board in June.

Splash Pad:

- The splash pad failed two consecutive water quality tests on June 29 and July 6 and was shut down during the weekend of July 11. The closure had minimal impact due to the racing event held in the park that weekend.
- The splash pad reopened on July 14.
- Water quality testing again failed during the week of July 21. A sample was submitted on July 28, and results are expected on July 30. If the sample fails, the splash pad will be closed.
- Staff continue to observe visitors not following splash pad rules, including not

showering before use, wearing street clothes, and bringing food and drinks into the splash pad area.

Grounds – Eco Lake

Campground Bathhouses:

- Hot water issues were resolved before the Fourth of July weekend.
- Repairs totaling \$2,080 were paid from the Buildings and Grounds Fund.

Hazard Tree Removal:

- Two large hazard trees in the campground are scheduled for removal by Otero Tree Service on July 30.
- The cost of **\$1,150** will be paid from the Buildings and Grounds Fund.

Dump Station:

- The Board approved the use of \$1,410 in non-reverting funds via email to repair the dump station floats and support brackets (see New Business). The repairs have been completed, and the invoice is pending.
 - One of the two pumps has failed. SJ is awaiting a quote from Covalen to rebuild or replace the pump. A replacement pump is estimated to cost approximately \$6,000. After reviewing the quotes, SJ may request Board approval to use non-reverting funds for the repair.
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Equipment

- Two weed eaters and one backpack leaf blower were repaired by D&J Mower Sales. An invoice is pending.
 - The Blue Dodge Ram is scheduled for fuel sensor repair at Russ Hubler on July 30.
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Financial Report

- Non-Reverting Fund: \$248,955.38 (as of July 14, 2026)
- Non-Reverting Fund Net Change for July: \$9,848.92 (as of July 27, 2026)
- 2026 Outlook: Projected income of \$58,000.00 and a projected year-end balance of \$286,155.38.
- Year-over- year income and monthly transactions were reviewed.

Events

- INDOT Company Picnic – September 23 (new event; approximately 300–400 attendees expected)
 - Hoosier Beemers – September 24–27
 - JCMS Cross Country – August 20; September 10, 14, and 28
 - JCHS Cross Country – TBD
 - NICA – October 2–4
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Comments from Guests

No comments were recorded.

Board Discussion

- Campground usage has begun to taper as the summer season winds down. Shelter house usage remains near peak levels.
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Next Meeting

August 25, 2026

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by BE and seconded by ET.
The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 PM.

Minutes Approval – July 28, 2026

Bill Ertel _____

Kristin Wiley ***Absent*** _____

Emily Thompson _____

Elizabeth Eaken _____

Johnathan Garrett _____