

# MEEKER COUNTY PARK BOARD COMMISSION MINUTES

Wednesday, January 15, 2025

9:00 a.m.

**Present:** Braden Piram, Lorlane 'Butch' Schmeling, Donald Konietzko, Paul Fank, Roger Ekert, and Bob Pederson

**Guests:** Bob Hermann, Richard Dollerschell, Dave Knutson

**Absent:** Kim Ertl

Butch Schmeling called the meeting to order at 8:56 a.m.

A motion was made by Don Konietzko to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2024 meeting, seconded by Bob Pederson. Motion carried.

An adjustment was made to the agenda, moving the Forest City Stockade Committee to the beginning of the meeting.

## 1. Forest City Stockade Committee Update

- a. Bob Hermann, Richard Dollerschell and Dave Knutson - members of the Forest City Stockade leadership committee - shared updates regarding the Forest City Stockade and events.
  - i. At the August Rendezvous, they had more than 1000 people in attendance, help from about 150 volunteers, and admission revenue of around \$10,000 with an additional \$17,250.00 from wooden nickles.
  - ii. At the December Pioneer Christmas event, there were around 2,100 people, help from about 100 volunteers, and admission revenue of around \$20,000. Additional wooden nickel revenue was not noted.
    1. In years with snow, they offer horse wagon rides which cost \$550 per horse team and wagon.
  - iii. Annually, several expenses are incurred to maintain the property and put events on.
    1. Approximately \$2,700 for portable toilet rentals
    2. Special insurance for black powder gun use for events
    3. Food and additional supplies
  - iv. Upcoming projects
    1. Shingling needs to be done to maintain several of the buildings and covered porches. The shingles cost about \$750 for a 10x10 area.
    2. Residing of the token booth.
  - v. They have had issues with people running off the road on the curve and hitting the fence causing damage.
  - vi. The board holds an annual meeting, inviting all volunteers to attend as well. The board also includes a secretary and treasurer. The current treasurer is Pat Braun.
  - vii. The Forest City Stockade property is owned by Meeker County and is a non-profit organization.
  - viii. In addition to the two main annual events, they also have many school, community and tour groups that visit to the Stockade.

- ix. 2026 will mark the 50th year of the Forest City Stockade. The committee is currently making plans to celebrate - one way will be featuring their antique freight wagon with a 4-horse team in the Watercade parade.
- x. The park board will look at having a meeting at the Stockade this year to see the additions that have been made in the past few years.

**2. Selection of Board Chair & Vice Chair**

- a. A motion was made by Roger Ekert for Butch Schmeling to remain chair and Roger Ekert to remain vice chair, seconded by Paul Fank. Motion carried.

**3. Joint Powers Board Member Selection**

- a. A motion was made by Bob Pederson for Butch Schmeling to remain chair and Roger Ekert to remain vice chair, seconded by Don Konietzko. Motion carried.

**4. Term Limits**

- a. The Meeker County Commissioners voted to remove committee term limits. Terms are still 3-year appointments.

**5. Joint Powers Committee Update**

- a. Campground revenue was \$78,739.89 in 2024 with an additional \$3,594.57 in wood revenue.
- b. RV rates were discussed. A motion was made by Roger Ekert to increase the rate for RVs from \$35/night to \$40/night, seconded by Don Konietzko. Motion carried.
- c. The process is in progress working towards creating a new master plan.
- d. Lost of tree work being done in the park.
- e. There are plans to add gravel to the campground road in the spring with help from the Highway Department.

**6. Koronis Boat Landing**

- a. The layout planning process is about 90% complete with final changes being made to the plan.
- b. The estimated cost is now expected to be just over 1 million dollars.
- c. The landing will include a single landing, ADA parking, asphalt surface, and an AIS station.
- d. They are asking the county to provide a portable toilet unit and mowing/general maintenance of the landing area.
- e. Brady is still waiting on a sample agreement.

**7. AED Update**

- a. The AED unit was installed at the Koronis campground on the shower facility and cost about \$7,700.
- b. The unit will be hard-wired this spring.
- c. There will be a donor sign located by the unit.
- d. Signage will be used to direct people to the unit.
- e. The unit has a camera to help monitor security.
- f. The company has a maintenance option for \$600/year which Stearns County noted was well worth it.

**8. 2025 Capital Improvement Plan Items**

- a. The West Ripley shelter will have steel put on the roof and siding - \$40,000.00
- b. Gator for Koronis - \$12,000.00
- c. Gravel road/lot repairs at Koronis - \$8,000.00

**9. Park Updates**

- a. Tree cutting and wood splitting
- b. The roadside rest is complete. The new tables there will now require maintenance and there are fewer trash receptacles.
- c. Trailer work
- d. Shelter reservations are now open and working on plans for the campground to open.

**10. New Commissioners**

- a. Cheryl VanOrt and Darren Sombke are the two new commissioners.
- b. Brady had the opportunity to share about the parks system at an overview meeting.

**11. Dog Park Request**

- a. Brady received a request to convert an area of West Ripley Park to a dog park. This topic has already been discussed and rejected by the board at previous meetings. Brady suggested that the group inquiring look at the Lions or Youngstrom parks owned by the City of Litchfield.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 a.m. by Roger Ekert, seconded by Don Konietzko.  
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Braden Piram, Meeker County Parks Manager