

The monthly meeting of the Washington County Park Authority was held Monday, April 20, 2026, at 6:33 pm at the Washington County Gov't Center.

Present: Rick Call, Steven Statzer (Chairman), Ben Casteel, Lisa Wilson, Claude Worrell, Rusty Belcher

Absent: Jennifer Blankenship, Michael Wright

Park Authority Meeting Agenda – April 20, 2026
6:30 PM, Washington County Government Center

1. **Public Comment:** Bryan Cook, 24272 Teal Dr. Abingdon, VA 24211—came last year to discuss concerns about decisions made last season. Would like to encourage the board to abandon the gate project. Just purchased annual pass, yet no cards available. 5-car backup to get in park took 15-20 minutes to enter park. Suggests going back to booth system. Also encouraged to return to waitlist instead of lottery and asked on behalf of campers within the park to consider giving some. Also shared that there is a broken window in Men's bathhouse. Also gave clarity on the issues of ingress and egress with the current gate situation when pulling a boat.

Anne Newman 198 Valley View Dr, Abingdon 24210 – would like to know if you can sell the camper with the spot to go with it. Steven explained that under current rules, this is not permissible. The park is not like it used to be, and therefore she would like to sell. Suggested price increases have increased outrageously, especially the winter retention fee. Feels that the campers are being gouged. Suggested that they are on a fixed income and cannot afford prices to continue going up.

Sandy Tignor 14587 Brad St. Abingdon, Va 24210 – been at the park for 25 years. Most they've had to pay but have nothing scheduled. Feels that if they are paying more, they should have more. Has not seen a deputy since staying out there. Does not feel like they have security.

David Werth via Steven Statzer: Also not happy with gate.

2. **Washington County Park Authority Manager Report:**
 - a. Kat has been working the booth. Received manuals from vendors. Starting to get staff. Interviewing for floater position and waiting for 2 other hires. Planning to wait until May 15 to see if the gate can be fixed. Planning to open primary lane for card only and secondary lane for cash. The cost to get a Ventech technician is approximately \$5000 and Kat doesn't believe that it is worth the cost considering that it is a separate company that runs the gate arms. Weighing options to remove gate.

- i. Ben Casteel made a motion to remove the gate as soon as possible and return the booth to the park entrance. Rick seconded, discussion ensued: Steven asked if it could be removed within a month. Kat said she believed it could be. Rusty added that in conversation with the county attorney that the Authority has no legal recourse with the companies that provided the gate and payment system. Motion carries unanimously (6,0,0). Kat will work to complete this.
 - b. Discussion began around the off-season power and access to the park. Rick Call made the motion to table conversation and decisions about the winter retention fee until September of this year. Rusty seconded, all in favor, motion to revisit carries unanimously (6,0,0)
 - c. Kat brought the following questions to the board on behalf of campers and herself:
 - i. Several campers expressed interest in applying to the Park Authority. and Kat would like to know the process. Steven ran through the process that the Washington County Board of Supervisors nominates members for each district plus one at large member. Officers are elected every July and serve 1-yr terms with a 2-term limit.
 - ii. Why does the Board of Supervisors have so much power over the park authority if the Park Authority is an independent entity? Steven answered that since members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors like other county authorities, members serve at the pleasure of the Board of Supervisors.
 - iii. Why does Washington County Park not receive money from the county? At times the Park does receive funds with requests. Traditionally the Park has been self-funding.
 - iv. Can Leo Sholes receive sponsorships? While this was a topic of discussion at some point, there is no clear answer.
 - d. Rusty asked Kat to see if she could find out what an accurate cost to install a splashpad turnkey would be.
3. Recreation Department Report: (none, position vacant)
4. Submitting and approval of the March Minutes (attached): Rick made a motion to approve the minutes, Claude seconded. All in favor, motion carries (6-0-0)
5. Approval to pay the March Bills and Approval of the March Financial Report: Ben made a motion to approve paying the March bills and approve the financial report. Rick seconded. All in favor, motion carries (6-0-0)

6. Old Business:

a. **Firefly System Approval**

- i. Board approval to move forward with the Firefly reservation system and payment processor
 1. Finance and booth worker have been introduced to the platform and approve of the change.
 2. The platform is much more user-friendly and customizable
- ii. Approval to sign the contract with Basys (payment processor) (*contract attached*) (*SSN and DOB is randomized by processor*)
 1. This payment processor works with Firefly. It can also allow automated payment.
 2. Ben Casteel made a motion to approve the move to the Firefly reservation system with Basys as the payment processor. Rick Call seconded, all in favor, motion carries unanimously.

b. **Payment & Reservation Fee Decisions**

- i. Board decision on whether to pass payment processing fees 2.9%+.25 on to customers (*RMS vs. Firefly comparison attached*)
- ii. Board decision on whether to pass \$3.50 reservation fee on to customers for transient sites, not for seasonal campers (*RMS vs. Firefly comparison attached*).
- iii. Ben Casteel made a motion for the Authority to absorb the payment processing fees of 2.9% +.25, but to pass the \$3.50 reservation fee to new customers for transient sites and include a \$10 discount for ACH (automated withdraw from bank account). Rick Call seconded. All in favor, motion carries unanimously.

c. **Policy & Agreement Approvals**

- i. Board approval of Rules & Regulations, Seasonal Camper User Agreements, and Boat Lot User Agreements
 1. Steven suggested adding a reference to TVA regulations for reasoning of rule 53.
- ii. Rusty Belcher made a motion to approve all above policy and agreement approvals. Claude Worrell seconded, all in favor, motion carries unanimously (6-0-0)

7. New Business:

a. **Drawing / Raffle Process Update**

- i. Proposal to move away from the raffle system and transition to a waitlist model (*current draft attached*)
- ii. Waitlist model is based on TVA guidelines.
- iii. Ben Casteel made a motion to approve the proposal to move away from the raffle system and transition to a waitlist model as presented with slight modifications. Rick Call seconded, All in Favor (6-0-0)

b. Maintenance Team Pay Increase

- i. Team has been reduced from 6 to 3, with one additional hire needed (August Taylor will be leaving for school)
- ii. Reference salary data:
 1. Lead Maintenance: currently \$18.00 increase to \$21.00/hour
 2. Maintenance: currently \$17.00 increase to \$19.00/hour
 3. Supporting data from:
 - a. https://www.indeed.com/career/lead-maintenance/salaries/Abingdon--VA?from=top_sb
 - b. <https://www.ziprecruiter.com/Salaries/Maintenance-Technician-Salary--in-Virginia>
 - c. https://www.glassdoor.com/Salaries/virginia-maintenance-worker-salary-SRCH_IL.0,8_IS323_KO9,27.htm
 - d. <https://www.skillcatapp.com/salary/maintenance/maintenance-technician-pay-rate/virginia/--->
 4. Rusty Belcher made a motion to increase pay as presented, Lisa Wilson seconded, all in favor, motion carries unanimously (6-0-0)
- iii. **Rate changes** – Rick Call made a motion to table any discussion for rate changes until September. Lisa Wilson seconded. All in favor, motion carries unanimously.

8. Board Member Action Items:

- A. Ben Casteel – Work on flower tree;
- B. Rick Call -
- C. Jennifer Blankenship –
- D. Steven Statzer –
- E. Claude Worrell-
- F. Lisa Wilson-
- G. Rusty Belcher-

Next meeting will be held May 2 at Washington County Park at 11:00 AM as part of the open house.

Claude made a motion to adjourn at 9:01 PM, Rusty seconded, all in favor (6-0-0)

Sincerely,

Steven Statzer, Chairman
BIC