



Bass Lake Conservancy District Management Costs and Expenditures

The Bass Lake Conservancy District (BLCD) functions under the jurisdiction of the Starke County Circuit Court. The Board of Directors oversees the financial operations of the District. Operational funds are required to maintain property, equipment, and buildings as well as provide for employee and contract services expenditures.

There are 16 Lift Stations and 22 miles of sewer lines that are necessary for the transport of sewage to the District's lagoons and retention ponds. These are checked regularly and sometimes require maintenance, repairs, and new parts. The sewer lines are 24 years old and many may have to be replaced in the coming years. The District's Board of Directors has developed a Five-Year Plan to assist the Board in preparing for future needs of the district to allot appropriate financial and other resources.

District personnel work out of two buildings, which must be maintained. One building contains the office that manages the day-to-day activities of the District (correspondence, billing, mailings, managing telephones and assisting walk-in visitors, etc.). In addition, this building also contains lab equipment where samples are tested from the sewage retention ponds. The other building is the garage where the BLCD truck, backup lift station generator, mower and other equipment are stored.

The District also maintains a farm parcel (future lagoon expansion) and is responsible for maintaining the assets on the property (e.g. pivot well, security fencing, ditches and irrigation system).

Insurance is needed to protect the District's assets (buildings, truck, tractor, generators, etc.), and is factored into the yearly budget.

The District is responsible for the salaries for the two employees:

- The Plant Manager is a full-time position. He is also on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week as needed to maintain or service the District's equipment. Responsibilities include weekly testing of the lift stations and sewage infrastructure, locating sewer lines for contactors and utility companies, as well as maintenance of the Bass Lake Pump. In addition, he is responsible for testing the lagoons for items such as PH levels, ammonia, suspended solids, BOD (oxygen demands), etc. In the summer months, he also collects water samples from Bass Lake for e-coli bacteria that is tested by the Starke County Health Department, and mows around the lagoons/retention ponds, and building grounds. In bad weather, he is sometimes called out in the middle of the night and/or off-hours to check the Lift Stations when problems occur or are reported.
- The District Office Coordinator is a part time position. Duties include but are not limited to: processing monthly sewer bills, liens, helps with website, depositing payments, registering property owners, paying bills for the district, visits to county building, works with DNR with the weeds, conferring with homeowners, performing general office work, preparing for monthly meetings, and taking minutes at the monthly meetings.

The Directors receive a stipend for their attendance at monthly meetings. They also perform other unpaid duties for the BLCD. For example, one Director is in charge of weed control in and around Bass Lake and interfaces with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) representing the District and homeowner's concerns. One Director maintains the BLCD website and takes care of other computer issues. Another Director with a financial background, deals with the budget, the Five Year Plan, and other banking/financial needs. In addition, Directors act as members of various ad hoc committees and represent the District in public.

Several outside contractors are utilized that are essential to the District:

- A law firm takes care of legal matters and attends all District meetings
- A contract engineer advises on sewer problems and works with the Plant Manager as needed
- A local financial institution maintains the billing and payment process, the District's Deposit accounts, and other various services.
- An accounting firm services the financial needs of the District not handled internally or by the financial institution. This firm maintains all the financial reporting with the State Board of Accounts required by state law.

Like any business, there are expenses for utilities, testing supplies, office supplies, vehicle maintenance expenses, computers, and various other operational needs to run the District.

To pay for the sewer system, Bonds were issued and sold in the name of the Bass Lake Conservancy District. The interest and principal of these Bonds was paid off in full in July 2017. The District's Board of Directors has established a perpetual Five Year Plan that is designed to determine and address the financial resources needed to support a solvent Conservancy District into the future.

It must be noted that monthly fees for homeowners remained at \$58.65 since the BLCD was established in 1998. Then in August 2017 the District lowered the monthly rate to \$34.10. Very few conservancy districts can make this claim as most raise their rates every few years. In comparison to neighboring districts, the monthly fees incurred by BLCD members is considered the most favorable in our area or part of the state.

This summary is provided to detail the uses of the monthly user fees collected for the Bass Lake Conservancy District. It is our hope that this summary will provide insight as to the many ways your investment in the District is utilized. If you should have any questions regarding this summary or regarding any other issues pertaining to the District, please feel free to call the BLCD office at 574-772-2974 or email us at info@blcd-ind.org. You are also invited to attend the monthly meetings of the BLCD, which are held on the second Monday of each month at the BLPOA building at 6:00 pm CST.

*The Board of Directors
Bass Lake Conservancy District*