

**MINUTES from the Regular Meeting
Harris Township Board
Wednesday, August 12, 2009 at 7:30pm**

The Regular Meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, August 12, 2009. The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm, at the Harris Town Hall, with the following officers present: Supervisors Gary Rosato, Larry Key and Dennis Kortekaas, Treasurer John Jokela, and Clerk Michele Smith. Absent: none.

Also in attendance: Julie Kennedy, Township Engineer

1. **Pledge to the flag**, followed by the reading of the township mission statement
2. **Approve minutes** of the Regular Meeting on July 8, and the P&D Meeting on July 22, 2009.

A motion was made by Supervisor Kortekaas, seconded by Supervisor Rosato, to approve the minutes as presented. Upon roll call, motion passed.

3. Roads

- Discuss how the “spray injection patching” worked on Mishawaka pot holes

All supervisors commented that the patch that was spray injected into the pot holes on Mishawaka Road by Commercial Asphalt Repair looks great. They were impressed with how it worked, and hope it holds up. Julie took pictures of the road after it was fixed, to see how it holds up with heaving due to the high water table. The Board would like a “per lineal foot” or “cost per mile” amount from Commercial Asphalt, in order to help with budgeting to use them for crack repair.

- Julie Kennedy – updates on various items

- Abandonment of Underwood Road: They are still working on some concerns by Doug Gunderson regarding the easement at the end of the Underwood Road before proceeding with the already board approved abandonment of a portion of this road. Julie will have more information on the options to fix the Underwood Road at the next board meeting.
- Gravel Road projects: All but two of the roads of the gravel project passed punch list test. Root Road had a low/settled area over a culvert, and Norway Road near the turnaround seemed low. Julie asked that more gravel be put on both areas and packed down. It was noted that in order to meet Harris township standards, Casper mixed the gravel with bituminous (originally, it was too sandy). This provides a good binder. Julie recommended the approval of Casper’s pay request for \$39,989 which was for the originally bid roads, and the add-on of Sunny Beach Addition. (This will be acted on during the “Approval of the Bills” portion of the meeting.)
- Badger Road: Julie drafted a name change request resolution for Badger Road (formerly Casper Landing). The resolution was reviewed by the Board, with no concerns. Per the post master, there are no residential addresses on this road. Supervisor Key asked who pays for the road name sign. Julie suggested it could be negotiated at the County Board Meeting, as the township had a Casper Landing sign there previously, which was taken down by the County and replaced with Badger Road (with no notice to the Township).

Motion by Supervisor Kortekaas to approve the draft resolution as presented by Julie Kennedy for the Badger Road name change (to Casper Landing). The motion was seconded by Supervisor Rosato, and upon roll call, passed by a unanimous vote.

Clerk Smith will assign a township resolution number of 2009-006 to this resolution, get Chairman Key’s signature, and bring to Julie. She will then present it to the county board with all the other required information, for their consideration.

4. Treasurer's Reports

- The August Treasurer's report for July 1 – 31, 2009 financials

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to approve the August Treasurers' report of July 2009 financials. Supervisor Kortekaas seconded the motion, and upon roll call, motion passed.

5. Business from the Floor

None

6. Recreation

- Discuss recent vandalism at Crystal Park

On August 8, Supervisor Key received a call from the Fire Chief regarding the portable bathroom that had been burned to the ground at Crystal Park the night before, around 12:30am. The bathroom was totally destroyed by the fire, and the fence near the structure was also damaged. Supervisor Key said he believes it was caused by a container filled with gas, which was ignited. 2 weeks previously, something similar happened on the Crystal park basketball court. Because there is no power at the new warming shack yet, there were no security cameras on.

Mike Hendricks is getting an estimate to repair the fence. Also, we received a bill from Northland Portables for \$2,676.46 to cover the cost of the destroyed bathroom. Because it was on our property, the township is liable for the replacement cost.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to approve payment of the Northland Portables bill for \$2,676.46 to cover the cost of the destroyed portable bathroom (handicapped accessible style), and submit the claim to our insurance company. Supervisor Kortekaas seconded the motion, and upon roll call, motion passed.

Treasurer Jokela will submit the police report and a claim to our insurance company.

Another portable bathroom was brought in to replace the burned one at Crystal Park, but it is outside the fence and is believed to be a regular size one, as a handicapped one was not thought to be available until after the fair. Supervisor Kortekaas will verify.

- Public Access near Robinson Road:

A resident of Robinson Road called, regarding a public access that is used, but has not been improved by the township. The resident suggested that if the township provided the gravel, he'd use an ASV to improve the landing. However, due to the liability involved, the Board agreed they did not want the resident to do that.

Supervisor Key got a quote from Casper, to bring landing up to code. It would include 6" of class V and 10 yards of crushed rock, which would extend out into the water. There are no concrete planks currently. The quote was for \$2,000 with an extra \$400 if reclaim used instead of class V. The Board agreed they did not want to use bituminous with petroleum in it, due to environmental concerns.

The Board verified with Treasurer Jokela that there was enough money in the Recreation Fund to cover this expense.

Supervisor Kortekaas made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Rosato, to approve the bid of \$2,000 from Casper Construction to reconstruct the landing at Robinson Road access. Upon roll call, motion carried unanimously.

Supervisor Key will contact Casper to start the process.

7. Correspondence

Board Action items:

- None

Noteworthy items:

- LTAP training information for Snow and Ice Material Application – September 22, 2009 in Grand Rapids
Larry recommended approval for the township maintenance guys to attend this.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to offer the Snow and Ice Material Application training opportunity to our maintenance crew, with course costs be covered by the Township. Supervisor Kortekaas seconded the motion, and upon roll call, carried unanimously.

Supervisor Key also commented that the maintenance guys need first aid and CPR training. Key thought there were ongoing classes at YMCA. Supervisor Rosato agreed to check into this.

Copy of letter by Andy Shaw regarding no reply from Paul Bunyan / file closed.

Clerk Smith advised the board that she had recently been contacted by a person from Paul Bunyan in Bemidji, regarding a variance to install a utility type box on a parcel near the Drift Skipper's property. The person stated it was needed to service the south side of Pokegama Lake. Smith had not yet received any paperwork from the County on the variance, but advised the Paul Bunyan representative that he should plan to attend the August P&D meeting to discuss the variance, and service questions by the Board since serving the south side of Pokegama has always been a sticking point regarding a franchise agreement (PB would not agree to serve that area).

- Certificate of Liability received for Hammerlund Construction – gravel road project (2 million noted as max on aggregate)
No comments.

8. Consent Agenda

1. Consider approval of cemetery deed for Randall and Debbie Junker: Sec 3, Block 5, Lot 4, sites 1-4
2. Consider approval of cemetery deed for Robert Black: Sec 3, Block 24, Lot 2, Sites 1 & 2

Supervisor Rosato made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to approve both items on the consent agenda. Upon roll call, motion carried.

9. Old Business

- Discuss status of Ernie Jacobson's request to vacate a ROW at the end of Islevievw (to allow the building of a home)

Supervisor Rosato talked to Mr. Jacobson, and to Itasca County Zoning about his request to vacate a ROW at the end of Islevievw Road. The one concern about possibly land locking a piece of property has been taken care of via an easement from Jacobson, lot 22, to the affected land owner of lot 21. Zoning commented that this ROW was not a good area for a public access, so that is no longer a concern of the Board.

The next step is for Jacobson make a formal petition request to the Town Board, asking to vacate this road ROW. Clerk Smith will get Rosato the township's policy and sample petition to submit to Jacobson. When he presents the petition, the board will then set a public hearing date to consider the vacation.

- Consider approval of the "Waiver of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement" for removal of firewood at the Service Center and discuss running an ad in the Herald Review, advertising the opportunity and process.

Supervisor Key commented at a previous meeting that there is a lot of dead wood in the new cemetery area of the Service Center. Two people have asked about the wood, and if they could go in a cut it for firewood. The Board agreed previously that they would like to offer this opportunity, but needed a "Waiver" form, so that the township could not be held liable in the case of an accident. The Board reviewed the waiver form drafted by Julie Kennedy with no concerns.

The board discussed if they should run an ad about the wood:

- Run ad 1 time, as soon as possible
- Advise people to contact Larry Key at his cell number, to fill out a waiver form

- Only dead trees, standing or downed, are to be taken – in an area to be designated by Key. Julie will check to see if there are pins for the property – and perhaps they could mark with ribbon to run along the north/south boundaries so that cutting doesn't go beyond the township' property. It was also suggested that dead trees could be marked with spray paint.
- Wood was to be used for personal use only, and is free of charge. Julie suggested that we may want to add an agreement section to the waiver form, stating that the person agrees to use wood for personal use only, and will not to sell for profit.

Clerk Smith will put an ad in the Grand Rapids Herald Review paper accordingly.

- Consider approval of the draft revisions to the Harris Cemetery fee schedule for cremain disinterments

Smith shared a draft revision to the Cemetery Fee Schedule, where she distinguished disinterments between burials and cremains. There was no change to the burial disinterment policy of "double the opening cost", but she changed the cost for cremain disinterment to "Add \$50 to opening costs". Previously it too was 'double the opening costs", which was found to be unreasonable on a weekend.

Supervisor Kortekaas made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Rosato, to approve the cremain disinterment price change from "double the opening cost", to "Add \$50 to opening cost" as listed in the revised Harris Cemetery Fee Schedule. Upon roll call, motion carried unanimously.

Smith will update the schedule and send to Libby's, Rowe's, and Peterson's Funeral Chapel.

- Discuss recommendations from Treasurer Jokela regarding our property insurance amounts and deductibles

Treasurer Jokela shared with the Board that if they fully insure the township properties for replacement cost as recommended by MN Assoc. of Township Insurance Trust, based on their inspection, the annual premium would increase from \$856/year to \$1,784 – an increase of by \$928. The four buildings with notable increases are as follows:

- Town Hall – current limit of \$125,000 increases to \$289,720 replacement cost
- Service Center house – current limit of \$120,000 increases to \$166,109 replacement cost
- 3 stall garage at the SC – current limit of \$30,000 increases to \$79,189 replacement cost
- Cemetery garage – current limit of \$20,000 increases to \$79,919 replacement cost

Our current deductible is \$250; the next lowest deductible is \$1,000. A change in the deductible would apply to all property claims, including vandalism. It was determined that the small savings in premium would not out weigh the extra cost for the deductible in case of a claim. Therefore, Jokela recommended staying at \$250 deductible and accepting the new replacement costs of the four properties named. If accepted, the Board would need to prepare a resolution to formally make the changes, and forward to MATIT.

Clerk Smith agreed to prepare resolution for review at the August 26, 2009 P&D Meeting

- Consider approval of the Right-of-Way Easement for Lake Country Power, on Wendigo Park Road

Per Supervisor Key, a tentative agreement was reached between the township and Lake County Power (LCP), regarding their easement request for replacing underground power lines along the Service Center property on Wendigo Park Road. LCP needed 5' beyond the road ROW for their power-line installation. The easement was presented for board review and official approval.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to approve the Lake Country Power easement along Wendigo Park Road as presented, for new power lines. Upon roll call, motion carried unanimously.

- Ford Pickup

Supervisor Key stated that the doors on the Ford pick up ¾ ton are rusting out. Do we want to fix them? According to our equipment plan, the 2005 Ford is not scheduled for replacement until 2018 (12 year rotation).

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to maintain our vehicle, and fix the doors fixed. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas and upon roll call, passed.

Key will get quotes to fix the doors and bring them to the August P&D meeting.

- New cemetery addition – seed or continue to till?

The board discussed whether to seed the new cemetery addition, or continue to till it. If seeded, it would prevent weeds, but then we'd have to mow it. And seeding is expensive. Our other option is to keep disking it, and tilling the weeds under, as a way of maintaining it. We did buy a new tiller for this purpose, and used it for such this year as well. On the other hand, mowing could be done by our student worker, where tilling needs to be done by a maintenance worker. However, it only needs to be tilled once or twice a year. In addition, it may be good for the soil to be tilled for 5 years (we've been working on it about 3 years).

It was suggested that we should seek advice of the Township Park Advisor – Mike Hendricks. Supervisor Key will check with him. Also noted was that a layout design of the cemetery, and service center property, is needed before we decide to seed. Knowing where roads will go is key.

It was decided that for now, the property will continue to be tilled.

10. New Business

- Consider approval of Resolution 2009-005 A Resolution Adopting the Levy Collectible in 2010

After reviewing the resolution, and discussing that no additional levies were needed for 2010, the following action was taken:

Supervisor Kortekaas made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Rosato, to approve Resolution #2009-005 to adopt the levy collectible in 2010 of \$849,328; upon roll call, motion carried.

- Treasurer Jokela went to the MN Assoc. of Township short course for the first time, and reported being very impressed. It was held at Black Bear in Carlton.

11. Approve payment of bills

Supervisor Kortekaas made a motion to approve the attached list, titled “August 2009 Bill Listing to Board”, in the amount of \$87,904.92. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Rosato and upon roll call, passed unanimously.

12. Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Clerk