

**MINUTES from the  
P&D Meeting and Annual Road Review Meeting  
Harris Township Board  
Wednesday, April 28, 2010 at 7:30pm**

The P&D Meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, April 28, 2010. The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm, at the Harris Town Hall, with the following officers present: Supervisors Gary Rosato, Dennis Kortekaas, and Larry Key, Treasurer John Jokela and Clerk Michele Smith. Absent: None.

Also at tonight's meeting: Julie Kennedy – township road engineer from SEH, Ben Otto and Rashid Dewberry – ICC engineering student interns, Mike Hendricks – township recreational advisor, Ron Nelson & Bob Troumbly – developers, and 5 residents.

**1. Pledge to the flag**

**2. Recreation**

- Mike Hendricks – consider approval of Creative Services Associates proposal for professional services (contract renewal for 2010)

Mike summarized that the hourly rate for his services remains the same in this contract as they have been for the last four years (\$50/hour). His services include providing consultation to the board, acting as a facilitator and coordinator of the development and maintenance of Crystal and Wendigo parks, and any other township owned properties as directed by the board.

***Supervisor Key made a motion to approve Mike Hendricks/Creative Services Associates contract for the year 2010. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Rosato and upon roll call, carried.***

Mike commented that every project scheduled for 2009 was completed, and all came in under budget. Projects to consider for 2010, after reviewing the Recreation budget over the next months:

- Fall turf treatment
- Emergency exit at Wendigo tennis court
- Changing the “hard service” area at Wendigo
- Paving the parking lots of one or both parks (A copy of the paving bid will be shared with Mike, and he and Julie will discuss.)

These projects will be reviewed again at the May P&D meeting,

**3. Service Center Concept Plan – Update by ICC Engineering student interns (Ben Otto and Rashid Dewberry)**

Ideas for the service center property were discussed, and included:

- Entrances – The interns suggested putting the community center entrance off Harris Town Road, and the maintenance facility entrance off of Wendigo Park Road – with trail access to the community center.
- Trails were also discussed, around the various service center properties. However, the Board preferred service roads with gates, rather than “paths” for the public.
- Ideas for saving energy were offered, such as solar energy, and geothermal energy. However, the board had some concerns with solar, due to potential vandalism. Fencing around the unit was a suggested option. The board also wondered about maintenance costs for both solar and geothermal.
- Town hall – The students suggested skylights for appeal and lighting, and a tree barrier to reduce noise from traffic. They asked the board about the desired size for the community center and the number of rooms. For size, the board said something a little bigger than Trout Lake Town Hall, which is 100 x 60. For rooms, they would like a main meeting area with the capacity of at least 100, a smaller meeting/conference room, separate offices for the clerk and treasurer, a storage area (but no basement), and an entrance/foyer for people to enter into without walking directly into a meeting. A

chapel/space was also discussed, but clarified that it would be the same as the meeting room – not a separate room. Types of events that would be held at the town hall/community center were wedding receptions/dances, graduations, funerals, voting, meetings. With regards to a play area, the interns suggested a pavilion and park area, but wondered what size the board would like, and what they'd want in the play area with regards to equipment (slide/swings/jungle gym etc.). The board suggested that the interns meet with Mike Hendricks for ideas on that.

- Cemetery – The interns asked what the current population rate is of the cemetery. Clerk Smith agreed to check into that.
- Garage – The interns asked about the board's needs for the maintenance garage(s). Julie Kennedy will provide them with requests previously received from the maintenance crew, based on all the current equipment, and what they'd need, and desire of drive through style doors.
- Sewer and Septic – The board shared that there needs to be enough room for two separate systems, one for the town hall / community center area, and one for the maintenance garage area.

The interns said they will start drafting concepts in the next few weeks, and will give an update at the May Regular meeting.

Julie Kennedy commented that she has a meeting on Monday with the county to discuss the property on the corner of Harris Town Road and Wendigo Park Road being changed from farm residential to public. They will also discuss zoning for a maintenance facility in that area, not usually allowed on property zoned for "public" use.

#### 4. Roads

##### a.) Annual Road meeting: 8:00pm

The annual road meeting was called to order at 8:00pm, as posted and published. Chairman Kortekaas turned the facilitation over to Julie Kennedy, Harris Township's road engineer from SEH.

Julie explained that this was the third year using the "road prioritization process" whereby the township supervisors go out and inspect the roads, which are split up amongst the supervisors. The supervisors evaluate and rate their roads using a priority index (1-5) for traffic volume, and road condition. These two factors create a "priority index rating" or ranking. Drainage is also noted on the evaluation form. "Signage" was removed from the evaluation form, as a separate sign replacement plan is now in place due to new reflectivity standards.

- Gravel roads:

The gravel road prioritization chart was given to the board for their review. Starting last year, the township started doing a five year rotation of maintenance on gravel township roads, where a set of roads is done each year. This not only helps with budgeting, but it also helps people know when their road will be done. The board tried to create roads sets in a geographical order that made sense, to save the contractor travel time/mileage. The budget for gravel road maintenance is apx \$20,000/year, but there is a little catch up that will be occurring in 2010.

Roads on the chart in red were scheduled for maintenance in 2010: Carol Street, Hauser Road, Pine Crest Road, Sunset Drive, Root Road, Sunset Lane, Breezy Lane and Nancy Lane. The mileage of road groupings is noted on the chart and some years are more than others.

After reviewing the chart, the board made a decision to add Wagon Wheel for 2010, rather than waiting until 2011 as noted on the chart.

Julie commented that "dust control" is noted in a column on the chart, but it is not correct. The Board agreed that they would like to do the same major roads (5-6), as have been done in the past.

- Paved roads:

Harris Township has 25 miles of paved roads; some are very busy/high traffic roads, while some are low use/low traffic roads. The top 4 roads on the priority rating sheet were: Sunny Beach, Southwood, Underwood, and Mishawaka roads (Julie did not have these sheets yet to share with

the board.) These are all long roads. We've been setting aside money in road capital improvement fund for these size roads.

For the low volume roads, the worst were: Keyview, Romans, and Stony Point, Mike Hendricks, of Stony Point, said it's bad; it's washing away. The board added that it's a road they don't want to open it up, due to high water table under the road.

Julie's recommendations:

- *Mishawka* – Repair/reconstruct in 2011, when the City of Grand Rapids does their portion of the road to obtain the most cost savings by having two projects appear as one when it's bid. The scope of this project is undetermined, and will be based on proposed costs. Julie suggested starting this fall with design for costs, and length of road to do. She would also recommend an onsite work session to review the proposed project area.
- *Underwood* – Complete the cul de sac (only) in 2010
- For the low volume roads, Julie will need to go out and drive *Keyview/Romans/Stony Point* before she can make her recommendations.

The board then opened up the Annual Road Meeting to any residents who had concerns about their roads:

*Mishawka Shores*: 3 of the 29 residents of Mishawka Shores were in attendance to discuss the end-of-the-road question. Supervisor Key stated that a turn around is needed on this road for snow removal, but that he's pretty sure the township's jurisdiction does not extend all the way to the current turn around area by the mail boxes. This cul de sac was initially blacktopped by the township, but later realized that our jurisdiction ended before the cul de sac. Julie commented that a surveyor at SEH is looking into this issue. The residents said they would be happy to bring a recommendation to their association board to recommend giving the township an easement for the turn around. They did ask that the surveyor mark the area where a ROW would be requested so that all residents of the area could visualize what they'd be giving to the township.

It was noted that if given the ROW easement, the township would maintain the turn around. However, if we don't get an easement, the township would have to build a new turnaround at the end of their current jurisdiction.

***With no other concerns being voiced from the audience, Supervisor Rosato made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Key, to close the Annual Road Review Meeting at 8:38pm. Motion passed.***

The Regular meeting then resumed:

#### **(4. Roads – continued)**

b.) Ron Nelson – Road for minor subdivision off of Bay View Place / Minor subdiv "Wendigo Shores"

Both Ron Nelson and Bob Troumbly were in attendance, and asked about the Town Board's plan to realign Bayview Place.

Julie Kennedy explained that for Bayview Place, the township only has a 'prescriptive easement', which is from road edge to road edge (the current driving surface), rather than a traditional 66 ft ROW. In order for this road to support the additional traffic of nine homes of a subdivision, the township would need more right of way to improve Bayview Place. But in order to create more ROW, Bayview would need to be realigned. However, without the plat, there would be no reason for township to move the road. So, it becomes the burden of developer to pursue this issue.

It was recommended that first, the preliminary plat needs to be approved. Then, Nelson and Troumbly should come to the board, and ask that the town board work with them on improving Bay View. The town board needs to know exactly what the developers are proposing before they can make a recommendation.

Nelson and Troumbly will work with their surveyor to put something together.

The board added that according to the township's comprehensive plan, a managed waste water septic system is preferred on condensed lake view lots.

c.) Consider 2 Lake Country Power Applications for Utility Permit on a Township ROW

1. Work order #11424 – Bear Creek Road
2. Work order #11425 – Bear Creek Road

***After reviewing the diagrams as provided by Lake Country Power, Supervisor Rosato made a motion to approve work order #11424, noting that the approval was for all work on Harris Township property (the private property was not in the township's jurisdiction). The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key, and upon roll call, passed.***

***Supervisor Rosato then made a motion to approve work order #11425, again noting that the motion does not authorize any work on private proerpty. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key and upon roll call, passed.***

- d.) Chuck Becker called Supervisor Rosato, as he was not happy about someone putting rocks at the end of his driveway. There was some confusion as to where Becker was talking about; he said Stoney Point Road, yet he lives at 20714 Crystal Springs Loop – which is a county road. Supervisor Key explained that there was some crushed rock placed on the first part Stony Point for the culvert that was washing away but this would not have been at the end of a driveway. Supervisor Key will have the maintenance crew go look at it – thought to be near Seagrens.
- e.) The dead end sign for Underwood Road needs to be put back up; it's laying along the side of the road per Supervisor Kortekaas. Key will have the maintenance crew do this.

## 5. Business from the Floor

None

## 6. Variance – Brian & Hazel Blenkush – 30253 Sunny Beach Road, Grand Rapids

Applicant to construct a proposed 4' paver walkway which will connect to a 16' diameter paver patio with 5' fire pit inside, located 15' from Pokegama Lake. Plans are also to remove existing keystone wall and replace with boulders and install a new 45' boulder wall, and 4' bolder steps. The site is the best suitable area due to the septic system, making it impossible to have the patio/fire pit set into the hill any further. No vegetation will need to be removed. Existing fire pit, located closer to the lake, will be removed and replaced with additional native trees. This type of project requires a variance. Itasca Co. Board of Adjustment will view on May 10, 2010 at 11:00am. The public hearing of the Itasca Co. Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment will be May 12, 2010 at 9:00am.

There was no one in attendance at tonight's meeting regarding this variance request. The applicants live in the cities, and no phone number was provided on the information from the county so the Clerk was unable to contact them.

Supervisor Key and Rosato both looked at the site; it's across from Oak Island Estates. There was no concern voiced by the board, as it seemed to be improving the area.

The township's facts of finding form was reviewed. All questions were answered affirmatively, with the exception of #2, which was not applicable. (A copy will be attached to these minutes.)

***Supervisor Rosato made a motion to recommend approval of the variance application by Brian and Hazel Blenkush, to construct a 4' paver walkway at 30253 Sunny Beach Road. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key, and upon roll call, motion carried.***

Key will attend the site viewing on May 10<sup>th</sup>, and the public hearing on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

## 6. Town Hall Report

A town hall report was received from the Town Hall Caretaker, and reviewed by the board. There were no injuries, and the number of rentals was up.

## 7. Maintenance Report

The monthly maintenance report as prepared the by Maintenance Crew was reviewed by the board. There were no concerns nor questions by the board.

## 8. Old Business

- Cemetery – grave heater

Supervisor Key shared that there are 2 used ground heater for sale in Hibbing. They are good size units, and Key thinks 1 would work great for a grave heater. The cost is \$12,805/unit. **The Board approved Key to pursue the purchase of a ground heater for the cemetery.**

- Discussion with Blaines, residents on the corner of the Wendigo Park Rd and Harris Town Rd

Christopher and Maisy Blaine have the property that adjoins the Service Center property, to the north. They are interested in selling, and the town board discussed purchasing it, given its key location to the cemetery and service center parcels.

The Blaines own four acres, and a home, which have a current 2009 estimated market value (EMV) of \$127,100, and a proposed 2010 EMV of \$130,000. However, in speaking with Supervisor Key, Blaine explained that they'd recently done a lot of remodeling, and the home hasn't been assessed since many of the improvements have been completed. There are 2 septic systems on property, which they talked about combining. Blaine also commented that they would like 6 months to move. With regards to a selling price, Blaine said they'd have to have \$155,000.

The Board discussed the next steps:

- An offer equal to the 2010 EMV or \$130,000 would be made by Supervisor Key, as homes in today's market are not generally selling over this amount. Room for negotiation was approved up to \$138,000.
- An appraisal was considered, and a title search for a cost of apx \$500. If the negotiated rate is not agreeable to Blaines, Key will ask for first consideration after an appraisal is done.
- Advantages to Blaines if sold to the township: No realtor fees (usually 6% or \$10,000), no closing costs, they can take appliances if they want, no futher improvments to the home/property would be needed, and possession is not needed until October 1, 2010 (for heating purposes)
- Advantages to the Township: This is a critical piece of property for the cemetery and service center expansion project. There are funds available in Service Center capital improvement fund that could be used to purchase this property. The owners want to sell.

If an agreement is reached between Key (representing the town board as buyers) and Blaines (the sellers), the Attorney Andy Shaw will be contacted to start the legal proceedings to implement the terms of the purchase.

- Verde Lane concerns by P. Lotti

Supervisor Key was contacted by Peter Lotti, property owner and senior care provider on Verde Lane. Lotti has some major concerns regarding non compliance of the Hammerlund gravel pit near his

property. The gravel pit expanded in 2007, and a significant portion of the 'wooded buffer zone' was logged off between his property and the gravel pit.

Lotti shared aerial photos with Key, which showed the pit before and after the expansion, how the tree buffer was reduced, and the close proximity of the gravel pit to Lotti's home. Also shared by Lotti were letters to Hammerlund Construction and to Itasca County regarding non-compliance of the Hammerlund gravel pit extractive use permit for the past 3 years. The health, safety, and property damage issues includes: noise, dust, vibration, runoff from unstablized trash filled material, operating before 6am/after 7pm, unsafe trucks hauling, the potential washouts due to stump burial, and well water quality. Lack of drainage of stagnate water is also an concern.

The county has been called, but the residents of Verde Lane would like letter of support from the Township to submit with their letter/petition to the county board. This is affecting 17 homes.

The board discussed that to support our mission statement, a letter of support was a reasonable request. However, the letter would go to Lotti, and state that the board supported that Hammerlund's business activities need to be in compliance with the county ordinances and regulations for a gravel extraction permit.

Julie Kennedy will work on the letter with Supervisor Rosato and Clerk Smith in the next few weeks.

- Norway Road - private drive sign

The "private drive" sign has been removed by Carl Erickson on Norway Road, as instructed by the Town Board, due to this being a public cartway.

## 9. New Business

- Public hearing continuation on amendments to the Itasca County Subdivision Ordinance Draft: May 12, 2010 at 11am in the County Board Room

Julie plans to attend this meeting

- Township Legal Seminar: Thursday, June 10, 2010 in Otsego, MN (see attached agenda)

No one would be attending this seminar, though the session on becoming a city were of interest.

## 10. Adjourn

***A motion was made at 10:16 p.m. by Supervisor Key to adjourn the P&D meeting; the motion was seconded by Supervisor and the meeting was adjourned.***

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Clerk of Harris Township