

**MINUTES from the REGULAR MEETING
Harris Township Board
Wednesday, May 12 2010 at 7:30pm**

The Regular meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, May 12, 2010. The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm, at the Harris Town Hall, with the following officers present: Supervisors Larry Key, Dennis Kortekaas, and Gary Rosato, Clerk Michele Smith and Treasurer John Jokela. Absent: none.

Guests: Julie Kennedy – SEH, and Ben Otto & Rashid Dewberry – ICC engineering student interns.

1. **Pledge to the flag**, followed by the reading of the township mission statement
2. **Approve the minutes** of the Regular Meeting on April 14, the P&D and Annual Road Review Meeting on April 28, the Board of Appeal & Equalization on May 6, the Work Session to evaluate township employees (closed), and review employee and board compensation (open) on April 20, and the 1:1 employee review meetings (closed) on May 3 and May 7, 2010.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Key, to approve all the minutes as listed above. Upon roll call, motion carried.

3. Service Center concept plan updates - ICC Engineering student interns: Ben Otto and Rashid Dewberry

Ben and Rashid met with Nadine at the Court House to discuss land uses on publicly zoned properties. Some uses not allowed on publicly zoned areas include a town hall, a cemetery, and a maintenance garage. The township will need to get a conditional use permit for these uses, as the Service Center is currently zoned public through a county zoning update, which occurred when the service center was acquired.

Cemetery: Harris Township shows an average of 20 burials per year. The interns are proposing to reserve enough land to expand for 100 years. If the size of each cemetery site is 5'x10 (50 sq ft/site), the township would need about 100,000 square feet total for the expansion. Of the existing property, this would take up approximately half, leaving plenty of room for building a new town hall and maintenance garage.

A diagram was shared with the board, showing property lines, where required setbacks would be, and the scale of property to the proposed buildings and cemetery expansion.

The next step for the interns will be putting information on the diagram for building information and layout. Updates will be shared at the May P&D Meeting.

4. Roads

- Consider approval of the Lake Country Power application for utility permit on township road ROW: Tolerick Road / WO #11868
The Board reviewed the application and diagrams, as found in their agenda packets, with no questions or concerns. Supervisor Rosato then made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Key, to approve the LCP application for utility permit on Tolerick Road, Work Order 11868. Upon roll call, motion carried.
- Julie Kennedy – project updates
 - ***Mishawaka Shores***: This plat was researched to determine where the road right of way (ROW) ends. The survey crew has marked the end of the ROW with lath (ribbons). Julie will put a memo together and send to Mishawaka Shores Association requesting that they attend the May 26th P&D. The board would like to discuss getting a permanent easement for the turnaround.
 - ***Paving Crystal and Wendigo parking lots***: Julie sent information to Mike Hendricks and will meet with him before the May P&D meeting. Mike will be at the P&D meeting to make a recommendation to the board on paving Crystal and/or Wendigo parking lot, including the proposed costs for this project.
 - ***Gravel Road Project***: Julie will have bids for the gravel road project at May P&D meeting.
 - ***Sunny Beach Road culvert***: This culvert has one end that is buried/lost, while the other end is open. The bad drainage affects 3 residents and has been an ongoing problem for 2 years now. Julie suggested fixing it with the gravel road projects and Supervisor Key agreed. Julie also commented that they need to find the ROW there, as a temporary easement may be needed. However, this shouldn't be a problem as all residents in the area want it fixed due to drainage issues, which also affect the integrity of the road.

- **Mishawaka Road:** The drainage project on Mishawaka Road, by Gilberts, still needs to be completed. It was suggested that Julie and Supervisor Key go look at this area of the roadway and to discuss what needs to be done, that will fix the problem. The quote from Hawkinson for a bituminous patch is a top priority, and was previously approved by the board.
- **Underwood Road** – Julie and Attorney Andy Shaw will be finalizing the necessary paperwork with the residents providing a needed ROW. They will also work with the FFA in preparing for the cul de sac project.
- **Birch Street** – An email was received from Terry Weber, resident of Birch Street. He commented that the culvert there is sinking, and causing cracking in his paved driveway. The culvert is in the township’s ROW, and so Weber is asking if the township will fix it.

Key commented that this was looked at it last fall, and pictures were taken. The culvert is open, and working fine, but that there is not enough top cover. Key requested Julie take a look at it. The email will be shared with her as well.

Rosato questioned if the resident should supply the contractor, rather than the township. Is maintaining a driveway culvert the township’s responsibility? We’ve never done this before, to the board’s recollection. The current problem was most likely due to improper installation. Julie will look into what other municipalities do in situations like this.

It was noted that the board agreed to review the township’s road and culvert policy sometime soon.

- **Dead/leaning trees outside ROW** – Supervisor Key said the maintenance crew went online to get phone numbers for residents who have dead or leaning trees just off the township ROW. They’d like to request the resident’s permission to take down these trees that are posing a potential hazard to the various township roads. One of these trees is on Sunny Beach Road, near the Woodtick boat landing. Residents will be told that the township would pay for the removal; and that if it’s not taken down, the resident would be liable if it falls on the road.

5. Treasurer’s Reports: May 2010

Treasurer Jokela went over major items on the May 2010 report, which was given to the board for review. It was noted that approximately \$21,000 disbursed from the road & Bridge fund was for this past winter’s salt/sand.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Key, to approve the Treasurer’s report of May 2010 financials. Upon roll call, motion carried.

6. Business from the Floor

None

7. Recreation

- Mike Hendricks, Recreational Advisor for the township, will be at P&D meeting.

8. Correspondence

BOARD ACTION ITEMS:

- Notice of MN Dept of Agriculture workshops to prepare for the invasion of the emerald ash borer (EAB);
Workshops are free of charge, but space is limited. Preregistration will be open until May 27th. Workshop in Grand Rapids: Wednesday, June 9, from 1:00 – 4:00 at Itasca Community College.

No action taken on this item.

- Review letter from Dust B Gone / Larry Hansen – request for phone call if interested in their services

The board reviewed road to treat for dust this year, and agreed to do the same five roads as last year: Bear Creek, Wagon Wheel, River Ridge, River View, and Hauser

A motion was made by Supervisor Rosato to use Dust be Gone, with the timing of treatment to be coordinated with Supervisor Key (to treat roads after they have been graded, or have had gravel applied via the gravel project). Supervisor Key seconded the motion, and upon roll call, motion carried.

- Minnesota Lawful Gambling LG220 Application for Exempt Permit for Itasca Chapter of MN Deer Hunters raffles at Wendigo Conf. Center on September 30, 2010 (Jack Todd discussed this event with Supervisor Rosato, as Todd will not be in attendance at tonight’s meeting.)

It was noted that this event has been held at Wendigo for the past several years. Supervisor Rosato made a motion to approve MN lawful gambling application for the Itasca chapter of MN Deer Hunters for September 30, 2010 at Wendigo. The motion was seconded by Supervisor key and upon roll call, duly passed.

- ARDC In-Kind Grant Program application for *planning services (staff time)* of regional transportation projects – due May 14
The board agreed that although we see these every year, the timing for Harris Township is still not right. Thus, no application will be completed at this time.

NOTEWORTHY ITEMS:

- Notice of Public Hearing: The South Central Itasca Co. Intergovernmental Planning Board (SCICIPB) will accept public input on the termination of the joint Powers Agreement of the SCICIPB on **July 7, 1010 at noon** in the in the Itasca County Boardroom
- Itasca Co. Sheriff's Office "Calls for Service" reports for 2009 (highest number of calls in Harris Twp in 9 years & equals about 1/7 or 14% of total calls in Itasca County)
- Request for posting public notice regarding a solid waste facility permit – variance on site on Co Rd 62 is being requested, to change slopes.

9. Consent Agenda

1. Consider approval of the RBA regarding compensation for the two full-time maintenance workers and the part time Town Hall Caretaker, as recommended by the board at the April 20, 2010 work session
2. Consider approval of Resolution 2010-004, *A Resolution Designating the Compensation for Officer of the Harris Town Board*, as discussed at the April 20, 2010 work session.
3. Consider approval of the amended "Employee Compensation Policy", as recommended at the April 20, 2010 work session.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Key, to approve all three items on the consent agenda. Upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote.

10. Old Business

- Discuss auditor option for 2009 (Eikill & Schilling)

Due to unsatisfactory service and missed deadlines from the current auditor (Glorvigan) for the past several years, Clerk Smith suggested that the board consider using Eikill & Schilling out of Duluth for the Township's 2009 audit. They are experienced in township audits, and currently do ISD#318's audits as well. The proposal by Eikill & Shilling was for a cost of up to \$5,000, which is the same price currently paid to Glorvigan.

Treasurer Jokela commented that he has worked with this CPA in a prior job and would also recommend them for the 2009 audit. The services offered by Eikill & Schilling are more comprehensive than Glorvigan's, and the board will see a better audit for no extra cost. Plus, the 2009 audit would be completed in time for June 30th filing deadline – something missed the past several years.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to take the recommendation of the Treasurer and Clerk, and contract with Eikill & Schilling for the township's 2009 audit. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key and upon roll call, carried by a unanimous vote.

Jokela will let Deborah Medlin, CPA at Eikill & Schilling know of the award, and will coordinate Clerk Smith on what needs to be sent to Duluth for the audit.

- Newsletter update.

Clerk Smith reported that recent township newsletter proof has been approved, and will be mailed out no later than May 24th, per Treasure Bay Printing.

- Town Hall roof repair

Supervisor Key requested permission to get quotes for roof repair at the town hall. The board agreed, and asked that Key get quotes for both shingles and tin roof options.

- Equipment search – tractor replacement

Supervisor Key has started working with John Richardson at Terex regarding replacement options of the township's tractor. He's considering a skid steer – with a back hoe. He thinks it would work better at the cemetery for preparing grave site openings, and would be easier on the grass. He noted that Itasca County has five of these units that they use for roadside mowing, and have ordered five more. Pluses for a skid steer would be that there are many attachments available, including a brush hog and snow blower, which are easy on/off (not so with a tractor). However, Key is not sure if the skid steer would be as efficient as a tractor, and questioned if maintenance would be more costly, given the hydraulics. It was suggested that perhaps the maintenance crew could try out a skid steer before buying, or even look into a lease to buy option – for a year or so. Key will continue to review the options.

- Ground heater for Cemetery

Two ground heaters were found for sale, of the appropriate size (1100), but Supervisor Key has been unsuccessful in getting a response from the party/company listing them. The price and location were given, but emails and phone calls have not been returned. Key reemphasized that they will need something by fall.

11. New Business

- Consider purchasing a new computer for the township clerk

Clerk Smith explained to the board that the laptop computer she been using, which was purchased for her by the Cable Commission back in 2005, was on its last legs and needs to be replaced. While the computer has had some problems over the last year or so, they have been tolerable. However, the light on the screen now goes out for long lengths of time, especially when transported. Therefore, she is unable to bring it to meetings for fear that the screen will suddenly go black. This laptop is five years old, which is about the maximum life of a computer these days, due to rapid changes in technology.

Smith did check on the feasibility of having the light replaced, but was told that it would not be cost effective to replace the light bar on a computer that's five years old. Plus, there was no guarantee what may be affected when they go into the intricate workings of the computer.

Smith did some research, and provided the board with a recommendation for a replacement laptop, from Hewlard Packard. It is built to your specifications, and was recommended by a very knowledgeable computer resource. The cost of the computer is apx \$1,200, which was after a rebate of \$200 and a coupon for \$300 – a savings of \$500. It was a great computer at a great price. The treasurer agreed that the 2010 budget would support this purchase.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to approve the purchase a new laptop for the Clerk, as presented. Supervisor Key seconded the motion, and upon roll call, motion carried unanimously.

- Discuss Memorial Day plans for 2010 – May 31

After some discussion, it was agreed that no tent would be rented this year, but to instead just use the maintenance garage to set up the coffee and cookies. This is what has been done the past two years, and has worked well. Several years ago, when the tent could be set up by the Veterans memorial, it was well used. However, when set up by the garage last year, no one used it.

Michele will order cookies from Janickes (15 dozen), and get a list together for the maintenance crew to bring to the cemetery garage the Friday before Memorial Day.

Everyone was available to attend the Memorial Day celebration - Larry/John/Gary/Dennis/Michele. Larry will get there early, to get the coffee going (8:00am or so). The color guard usually performs at 10:30am, so we'll try to have everything ready by about 9:30am.

12. Approve payment of bills

Clerk Smith noted that included with the bills is the payment for township election ballots (\$171.60) and for programming the "Automark" ballot marking machine required by HAVA (\$96.19) for the township election, now required by law. She felt this was a small price to pay for staying with March elections, on "Township Day".

Supervisor Key made a motion to approve payment of the bills as presented in the attached document, in the amount of \$28,437.10. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Rosato, and passed upon roll call by a unanimous vote.

13. Adjourn

Supervisor Key made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Rosato to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:00p.m. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Harris Township clerk