

**MINUTES from the REGULAR Meeting
Harris Township Board
Wednesday, January 12, 2011 at 7:30pm**

The Regular Meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, January 12, 2011. 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.

Also in attendance: Julie Kennedy – SEH Road Engineer for the township, and Kevin Geislinger (see #3 below).

1. **Pledge to the flag**, followed by the reading of the township mission statement
2. **Approve the minutes** of the Regular Meeting on December 8 and the Work Session at the Blaine property on December 13, 2010. (There was no December 2010 P&D meeting).

A motion was made by Supervisor Rosato, seconded by Supervisor Key, to approve the December 2010 minutes as presented. Upon roll call, motion carried.

3. Business from the floor

- **Kevin Geislinger – Grand Rapids Area Baseball Association (GRABA)**: Raffle permit request for the 11th annual Bottom of the 9th GRABA Fishing Tournament on February 20, 2011.

Kevin came to tonight's meeting to request approval of the *MN Lawful Gambling LG220 Application* for the fishing contest that is held annually off of LaPlant access in Harris Twp. The contest runs from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 20, 2011. Part of the raffle will be held right on the lake, while some will be held at Zorbaz after the contest – unless there is not enough ice (18") to drive safely onto the ice, and then the raffle will all occur at Zorbaz. Kevin added that this is a great fundraiser for their baseball association, as they usually clear between \$3,000 - \$4,000, to help minimize player fees.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to approve the gambling permit for the GRABA Bottom of the 9th Fishing Tournament and fundraiser, to be held February 20, 2011. Supervisor Key seconded the motion, and motion carried.

The application was signed by Chairman Kortekaas, and given back to Kevin.

4. Treasurer's Reports:

- There was no Treasurer's report for Dec 1 – 31, 2010, as the year end balancing is still in progress.

5. Roads

- Julie Kennedy / SEH – project updates
 - **Mornes Road** (see information packet attached to these minutes)

Julie shared the draft letter she'd like to send to the residents tomorrow to invite them to the Mornes Road neighborhood meeting on January 19, 2011 regarding the proposed corporate boundary adjustment by the City of Grand Rapids. And due to the relatively short mailed notice, Julie also planned to call each of the 6 affected road residents to confirm their attendance. The letter has been reviewed by Andy Shaw, the township's attorney, and he did not have any concerns with its content or wording.

The draft letter was reviewed by the board, and Supervisor Rosato requested that it be clarified in the letter than the road itself wouldn't be moved – but rather, it's just the ROW boundary that is being moved. Julie added this was a good point, and she will change the letter wording accordingly.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to approve the neighborhood meeting invitation letter be sent to Mornes Road residents with the modification as noted above. Key seconded the motion and upon roll call, motion passed.

A draft “joint resolution” was also in the packet of information on Mornes road. Julie explained that this is a document that would be needed should the boundary adjustment go forward. One item of the city’s resolution that the board liked was #3: “Grand Rapids has no current plans to annex any other areas of Harris Township”.

Another document that would be prepared to along with the joint resolution is an agreement to outline everything that has been discussed about the boundary adjustment at various meetings and work sessions.

No action on either document was needed by the board tonight as they were for review only.

o **Mishawaka Road:**

The ROW surveys have been completed for the township’s portion of the Mishawaka Road, needed especially for the tight sections where houses are very near to the road. The soils are also being checked, and a preliminary plan has been completed. Reclaim and overlay is planned for much of the road, with sub-cuts as needed. Drainage will also be improved where required, and curb and gutter may be used. Julie would like to get the residents’ input on the areas where drainage is a problem during the upcoming neighborhood meeting on February 2nd, and watch for runoff problems this spring.

Another topic that Julie wants to talk about during the neighborhood meeting is “traffic calming” effects, to slow down traffic in the densely populated areas. Some ways to do this are using speed humps, and narrow striping.

It was noted that they are *not* planning on improving the Mishawaka Road from the landing, eastward to the highway, but rather only the section northward from the landing33.

At the Feb 2nd Mishawaka neighborhood meeting, preliminary plans for the road improvement will be shared/discussed. Notice of the meeting will be going out to Mishawka residents this week.

6. Recreation

- o **The ice rinks** at Wendigo and Crystal Parks have been open for a while, and the ice is good. Both are being used regularly. A new attendant was just hired by Express Pros, when one quit.

7. Correspondence

Board Action items:

• **Email of Pokegama Lake walkway update, from Jennifer Utecht**

Clerk Smith received an email from Jennifer Utecht, requesting help from Harris Township to distribute the donated woodchips along the Pokegama Lake walkway. Supervisor Rosato suggested waiting until the annual meeting to discuss this issue, as it involves the expenditure of taxpayer’s dollars for the Maintenance Crew’s time, and equipment fuel. The rest of the board agreed.

Clerk Smith was asked to invite Jennifer to the annual town meeting in March to speak about her mission, and request for help. Then, the chairman of the town meeting could entertain a motion to allow the township to spend up to a certain dollar amount on helping maintain the walkway and/or parking lot near Zorbaz. The vote outcome would then allow the board to respond to, or deny, Jennifer’s request for assistance with the walkway.

Noteworthy items:

- **“Notice of Appeal” from Itasca County Planning Commission**, regarding P. Lotti and Hammerlund Construction’s gravel pit. Site visit is on Monday, Feb 7, 2011 at 8:45 a.m., and a public hearing is on Wed. Feb 9, at 9:00 a.m.

Supervisor Key will attend both of these meetings and report back to the board.

- **“Traffic Sign Maintenance/Management Handbook”** was received from Mn Assoc. of Twps, and given to Supervisor Key / Maintenance crew.
- **Greater Pokegama Lake Association Newsletter** (note Pokegama Lake Walkway article by Jennifer Utecht)

Non-action items

- Township funding request from the Itasca Co. Agricultural Association for \$1,000. (This will be placed on the Annual Town Meeting agenda, for consideration.)
- Copies of Itasca County approved applications for zoning, septic, and shoreland alteration permits.

8. Consent Agenda

a.) Consider approval of Harris Cemetery site sold to N. Wesley Thompson: Sec 1, Block 14, Lot 1, sites 5 & 6

A motion was made by Supervisor Rosato to approve the consent agenda item (a); Supervisor Key seconded the motion, and upon roll call, motion carried.

9. Old Business

- **Blaine property deconstruction by Habitat for Humanity update**
Supervisor Key received a call from Chris Ryerson at Habitat for Humanity. The deconstruction of the house has been completed, and they have removed everything they wanted from the property, and boarded up any openings where windows and doors were removed. The next step, per Key, will be the demolition of the remaining structures. He talked to the Grand Rapids Fire Department and got the name of who to contact about a “controlled burn”, where buildings are burned under controlled circumstances and used for firefighting training. **Supervisor Key requested permission from the board to pursue having a controlled burn, and setting it up for this spring. The board approved his request.** It was noted that Blaines will come in the spring to pick up the swing set and trampoline that were left behind.
- **Meeting reminders** of the January 19th, 2011 Mornes Road neighborhood meeting, 7:30pm, Harris Town Hall, and of the February 2nd, 2011 Mishawka Road neighborhood meeting, 7:30pm, Harris Town Hall.
- **December 2010 Town Hall Report** (as there was no December 2010 P&D Meeting)
The town hall report was reviewed as submitted by the Harris Town Hall Caretaker. There were no accidents or damages reported, and \$475 was collected for 12 rentals from Nov 8 to Dec 4, 2010.
- **Comprehensive Plan meeting**
Supervisor Rosato attended the City of Grand Rapids comprehensive plan focus group meeting for surrounding communities. There was not much discussion related to the Harris Twp border, and any concerns/issues with the city’s proposed land use. There was a lot of discussion about trails in the area. Overall, Rosato did not have any concerns with what the city is proposing, and any effects on Harris Township or its boundaries.
- **Ground thawing machine - cemetery**
When asked how the new grave thawing machine was working, Supervisor Key reported that during the first trial run, the generator quit. It was taken back to the store and repaired; the dial had burned out, due to the vibration. Key then mounted the generator on the wheels, and when it was run for 89 hours during another trial run, it did fine. A couple more heating blankets were ordered, and while it will be a more controlled heat, it really won’t thaw the ground any faster than the previous thawer.

10. New Business

- **Budget Meeting:**
The board discussed setting up an initial budget meeting to discuss major items for consideration during the budgeting process. Things such as equipment, updating our comprehensive plans, parks, cemetery, etc. Road would not be discussed at this initial meeting. **The budget meeting was set for**

Monday, January 24, 2011 at 7:15pm at the Blandin Foundation. Julie will get some preliminary numbers prior to that meeting, with regards to the comprehensive plan costs.

- Email alerts for flags lowering was shared by Supervisor Rosato. He suggested that the Maintenance crew sign up for these free email alerts and explanations of when the American flag should be raised and lowered. Notices are included for holidays, tragedies, etc. Since we are a government institution, the board agreed that our flags should reflect the wishes of the governor.

11. Approve payment of bills for January 2011

The bills for January totaled \$31,344.25. Noteworthy items were checks to Express Employment for 3 weeks of rink attendant wages. Also, included were the dues for the Itasca County Twp Association. And, at the bottom of the bill list was noted the electronic payment for Wells Fargo payroll withholdings (it no longer can be paid via check).

Supervisor Rosato made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Key, to approve the payment of bills per the attached list titled "January 2011 Bill listing to the Board", totaling \$31,344.25. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key and upon roll call, motion passed by a unanimous vote.

12. Adjourn

Supervisor Key made a motion to adjourn at 8:26 p.m., and was seconded by Supervisor Rosato. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Clerk of Harris Twp