

**MINUTES from the REGULAR Meeting
Harris Township Board
Wednesday, April 13, 2011 at 7:30pm**

The Regular Meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, April 13, 2011. The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by Chairman Rosato, at the Harris Town Hall, with the following officers present: Supervisors Larry Key, Dennis Kortekaas, and Gary Rosato, Clerk Michele Smith and Treasurer Becky Adams. Absent: None.

Also in attendance were Julie Kennedy from SEH, Beth George from ICTV / Cable Commission, and resident Dick Gunderson, from the Underwood Road.

1. **Pledge to the flag**, followed by the reading of the township mission statement by Chairman Rosato.
2. **Approve the minutes** of the Regular Meeting on March 9, the P&D and Reorganizational Meeting on March 30, the Board of Canvass Meeting on March 8, and the Special Meeting to review employees and compensation on April 6, 2011. Also, consider preliminary "approval" of the DRAFT Annual Town Meeting minutes on March 8, 2011, which will not be officially considered for approved until the next town meeting in March, 2012.

Supervisor Kortekaas made a motion to approve all of the minutes as listed above. Supervisor Key seconded the motion, noting that the annual meeting minutes will not be considered for official approval until the next town meeting in 2012. Upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote.

3. PEG fees / Beth George – ICTV

Beth George came tonight on behalf of the Grand Rapids Area Cable Commission (GRACC). At the commission's last meeting, a request to increase the Public, Education and Government (PEG) access fees from TV subscribers by \$0.25/month was made, and passed. The PEG fees are paid as a part of the franchise agreements with Mediacom and Paul Bunyan, and the fees can be passed along to subscribers. Both providers are currently charging 75 cents/month, per subscriber for PEG fees, which totals approximately \$48,000.00. It was noted by George that 100% of the PEG fees go to the GGRACC, who then passes the money onto ICTV for capital equipment, such as items for the ICTV broadcasts and website.

In order to increase PEG fees, the communities of the GRACC have to first approve it, which requires the need for a public hearing in each community, including Harris Township. Harris's current contribution toward the total PEG fees is just under \$5,000. The additional 25 cents/per subscriber/per month (a total of \$3.00/year per subscriber) would bring in an additional \$1,600 from Harris residents. With that money, ICTV is looking to improve cameras, with up-to-date technology. Their studio also needs to be updated as well, for compatibility purposes with the technology.

Beth George requested that the board set a date for a public hearing. The hearings for all communities need to be held by August in order to meet the necessary deadlines.

Supervisor Key made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to hold a public hearing for Harris Township residents on Wednesday, May 4th, 2011 Wed. @ 7:30pm at the Harris Town Hall, to consider PEG fees increases as requested by the GRACC. Upon roll call, the motion carried.

Beth George will attend the public hearing to explain the PEG fee rate increase to residents. Clerk Smith will publish notice, and check on availability of the Harris Town Hall.

4. Business from the floor

Dick Gunderson, resident of Underwood Road, had a question about mailbox placement after the Underwood Road turn around project. Julie Kennedy stated she would be giving an update on this under item #6 Roads.

5. Treasurer's Report of March 2011 Financials

Treasurer Adams recapped the treasurer's report of March 2011 financial activity, including the fund balances as of the end of March. Also, she noted that a revised December 2010 Treasurer's Report was provided for the board's review, as it reflected some audit adjustments which affected the year's ending balances for several funds. If the board compared this revised report to the previous December 2010 report, they would notice that the total yearend balance as of 12/31/10 did not change, but that the balances between funds did change. These changes were a result of the 2010 audit by Eikill and Schilling, and the fund balances carry forward into 2011 as the beginning balances for each fund.

A motion was made by Supervisor Key, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas to approve the treasurer's report of March 2011 financials, and of the revised December 2010 report as presented. Upon roll call, motion carried.

6. Roads

Julie Kennedy / SEH – project updates (*see memo*)

Underwood Road Turnaround Project:

Spring inspection has been conducted and the area, in general, looks very good. The snow plowing did take its toll on the turf restoration with the plows tearing out several of the bio-rolls and some of the sod. There is some slight ponding at the southeast corner of the cul-de-sac, but there was still ice and snow in the south ditch so she'd continue to monitor it over the next few weeks. There was no sign of any erosion or any damage to the bituminous. Photos were taken and placed in the file.

The contractor will be contacted in the next few weeks to obtain a schedule for final punch list items, which will include that mailboxes need to be reinstalled. Julie plans to pull the residents and postal service together to discuss the best placement for the mail boxes. This will be done once road restrictions are lifted.

Stony Point Drainage Project:

Spring inspection has been conducted and the site, in general, looks very good. A few of the riprap rocks have shifted as a result of winter snowplowing. There is no sign of any erosion on the side hill or at the outlet of the riprap. The bituminous edge is rough, but the gravel placed there last fall is still intact. Photos were taken and placed in the file.

Community Complex Project (Service Center):

Julie contacted the County to inquire about the requirements for abandoning the existing septic system on the old Blaine property. Don Dewey, ESD Director, provided the following statement: "Pump and fill the septic tank with soil; also the drywell - if there is one. Also, the drainfield can be left as is." Julie recommended having the maintenance crew abandon the system if they have the time, otherwise, hire a contractor to do so. The board agreed that they'd like to see it done this year, in conjunction with demolition.

2011 Gravel Road Project:

According to the Gravel Road Management Plan (see attached), the roads designated for the 2011 Gravel Road Project are Jane Lane, Vromans Road, Hughes Road, and Wagon Wheel Road. The total length of the project is 1.25 miles with an estimated cost of about \$30,000 for the new 4" Class V lift.

The board discussed whether to only apply new Class V to these roads, or to make improvements such as sufficient turnarounds and improved drainage. The board agreed that no improvements should be made this year – but that gravel should be applied as preventative maintenance, and as budgeted for.

The board agreed to authorize Julie to obtain sealed quotes from local contractors for the proposed gravel work to be performed. She will bring the quotes back to the board at the May 11 meeting for consideration of a contract award.

A motion was made by Supervisor Key, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to continue with the 2011 gravel road project as planned for maintenance of Jane Lane, Vromans Road, Hughes Road, and Wagon Wheel Road. Upon roll call, motion carried.

2011 Grading contract:

As requested by the board at the March 30th P&D meeting, Julie reported that the proposed contract with Swartz to grade the township roads for 1 month has been accepted. Key reported that they have not yet started grading, however, as roads are still too wet.

2011 Seal Coat Project:

A bituminous condition inspection was conducted on Norberg Road, Key View Road, and Wendigo Park Road. Julie planned to get quotes from local contractors to determine the cost for either crack sealing or patching, and tabulated results will be presented at the May 11 meeting.

Supervisor Key added that he'd met with Commercial Asphalt regarding Wendigo Park Road and Aspen Drive. They charge by the lineal foot, and they agreed to provide an estimate for each road to repair. He recommended repairing the newer roads every 2 years. Bids will be coming in to Key for Woodland Park Road, Verde Lane, and Wendigo Park Road, as well as Melody and Aspen.

2011 Mishawaka Road Improvement Project:

The following "ad on" options for the Mishawaka Road Improvement project were discussed by the board:

1. Overflow parking near the public landing

The area on the inside of the curve is already being used for overflow landing parking creating unsafe travel conditions for those on Mishawaka Road. The estimated cost of an 8' wide paved bituminous shoulder for parking purposes is approximately \$32,000 and includes the need for permanent easement from one resident.

Julie recommended not providing additional parking for boat/trailer parking on the Township road, but to rather seek other means for additional parking for the landing. She also recommended providing deterrent measures necessary to prevent illegal parking on the existing road, such as additional "no parking" signs, ditching, and paying for law enforcement to patrol the area during busy landing weekends. **The board agreed with Julie's recommendation, but did not wish to seek out other parking area options.**

2. Ditching throughout the Project Area to eliminate road surface cross-sloping

Standard engineering practice is to design the road surface with a center crown so the storm water is routed to ditches along either side of the road. The existing Mishawaka Road has several areas in which the road surface is cross-sloped rather than crowned. The estimated cost of a 2' deep ditch in the necessary areas is approximately \$73,000 and includes the need for permanent easement from 16 residents. Approximately 10' - 15' of permanent easement is needed outside the township's existing ROW, and a 30' temporary easement for construction will also be needed.

Julie recommended ditching throughout project area, meeting with residents to show them the impact of the ditching improvements and to request permanent easement in order to construct and maintain the proposed ditch.

The board opted to wait on making a decision regarding ditching until after the Mishawaka Neighborhood Meeting with residents on 4/20/11. Julie will send out a notice for this meeting to residents.

3. Turf or gravel shouldering

Either option is acceptable from an engineering standpoint, for graveling the shoulder or sod shouldering. The estimated cost of changing from aggregate to sod turf shouldering would be approximately \$4,500.

Julie said either option would work, though she personally prefers aggregate, as it would promote a larger walking area along the side of the road. The board again opted to wait on this decision until after hearing from residents at the 4/20/11 Mishawaka Road Neighborhood Meeting.

7. Recreation

Nothing reported.

8. Correspondence

Board Action items:

- None

Noteworthy items:

- Copy of a letter from the MN Office of Admin. Hearings to Chad Sterle, acknowledging receipt of the joint resolution between Grand Rapids and Harris Township, regarding Mornes Road ROW. An email was also provided to the board, from attorney Andrew Shaw, containing the administrative order regarding the annexation of the road ROW. He stated "This concludes the matter, and my file is now closed."

Non-action items

- Copies of county approved "Zoning/Land Use Permits"

9. Consent Agenda

None

10. Old Business

- Consider setting a date for the town's Annual Road Meeting, to be posted and published
The board chose to hold the Annual Road meeting on Wednesday, June 1, 2011 at the Harris Town Hall at 7:30pm. Clerk Smith will post and publish notice in the Herald Review newspaper. The supervisors will contact Julie, to arrange pick up of their road inspections sheets.
- Property taxes payable on Blaine Property for 2011 (see email from John Jokela)
An email from former treasurer John Jokela was shared with the board, and stated that because the sale of the Blaine property occurred after July 1, the township is responsible for paying the 2011 property taxes as it cannot be reclassified until the following year. In 2012, the property will be reclassified as a municipality landowner, and will have zero tax.

Treasurer Adams will verify if the entire 2011 taxes of \$594 is due, or only the taxes for the first half the year (\$297).
- Discuss next Township newsletter content and deadline:
Clerk Smith requested that articles for the next newsletter be given to her by the April 27th P&D meeting. This will allow her 2 weeks to prepare the newsletter, and get the draft to Treasure Bay printing by May 12th. This date will assure that the newsletters can be prepared and delivered to residents in time to remind them of the Memorial Day celebration at the Harris Cemetery.
- GIS system for township:
Supervisor Rosato reported that at the last Mayors & Managers meeting on March 25, 2011, the Grand Rapids City Engineer Tom Pagel and GIS/Cad Technician Michael LeClair gave a presentation on a Geographical Information System (GIS). This system allows for mapping and identifying the location of infrastructure in the cities/towns, with a capacity for zoning and record keeping. It was explained that this system could be used for the entire township, including roads, easements, and the cemetery.

The city of Grand Rapids is developing this project and is offering to collaborate with other communities in order to reduce/share costs. Various options were explained, as were the estimated costs. Supervisor Rosato felt this system would be a huge benefit for Harris Township, and could be used for Harris Cemetery – especially as it expands. More information on cost of the GIS system will be presented at the next Mayors and Managers meeting.
- Deputy Treasurer:
Treasurer Adams informed the board that she contacted former Deputy Treasurer Chris Jenkins, and that he has agreed to be her Deputy Treasurer again for the upcoming year.

- Lake County Power (LCP) neighborhood meetings:
Supervisor Rosato met with LCP and they gave him 2 maps for the board to review. On the maps, yellow areas were shown to indicate what areas will require the replacement of lines. The township roads that will be impacted are Norberg, Birch, Keyview, and East Harris. LCP was in support of holding neighborhood meetings, as proposed by Rosato. There will likely be some changes to property, including tree removal within the ROW. It was noted that not all residents of these roads will be impacted, as only certain areas of lines need to be replaced.

The board agreed to hold the neighborhood meeting at the beginning of the April 27th P&D meeting, at 7:30pm at the Harris Town Hall. LCP asked the township to notify the affected residents of the meeting, but the board agreed to invite all residents of the roads – affected or not. A LCP representative will be present at the meeting. Julie Kennedy agreed to prepare the notice, as was done for a similar meeting when LCP replaced lines along Wendigo Park Road, and send to residents of Norberg, Birch, Keyview and East Harris roads.

- Dumpster at Blaines, for garbage:
Supervisor Key asked for permission to get a dumpster at the Blaine property, for garbage. **The board supported his request.** Plans for demolition of the buildings on the property will be discussed at the P&D meeting on April 27th.
- Skid steer forks:
Supervisor Key shared with the board that when they recently purchased a Terex Skid Steer, they should have gotten a forks attachment, especially to aid in the moving of cemetery headstones. The cost of these forks from Terex, where the equipment was purchased, is \$750.

The board agreed that forks for the Skid Steer would be a great benefit, and Supervisor Kortekaas made a motion to approve the purchase from Terex for approximately \$750. The motion was seconded by Chairman Rosato and upon roll call, passed unanimously.

11. New Business

- Road side clean up
The board discussed a roadside clean up date for the township's "Adopt a Road" section of River Road. It was noted that there is still a lot of water left in the ditches. Supervisor Key agreed to do the section near his home, and Supervisor Rosato agreed to do the rest, using his 4-wheeler. The officers thanked the supervisors for their willingness to do this.

Julie noted that the ICC Engineering students will be cleaning up the roadsides of Wendigo Park Road and Harris Town Road on May 2nd.

- Internet at town hall
The board discussed the potential benefits of having wireless internet installed at the Harris Town Hall. It would be good to have during meetings, elections, and rentals. Treasurer Adams agreed to check into the cost for this, and report back to the board.

12. Approve payment of bills for March 2011

The bill list, as per attached, was reviewed by the board. The bills totaled \$44,996.01. Treasurer Adams noted that one of the larger bills for \$25,042.31 from Pokegama Lawn and Sport was for a John Deere 1445 front mower and a John Deere X300R riding lawn mower. Both of these items replaced current equipment as scheduled in the capital equipment plan, and will be funded from the Capital Improvement/equipment dedicated fund.

A motion was made by Supervisor Key, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to pay the bills as per the attached bill list titled "April 2011 Bill Listing to board" in the amount of \$44,996.01. Upon roll call, the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

13. Adjourn

A motion was made by Supervisor Key, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to adjourn tonight's meeting at 9:13pm. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Clerk