

**MINUTES from the REGULAR Meeting
Harris Township Board
Wednesday, June 8, 2011 at 7:30pm**

The Regular Meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, June 8, 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 and Gary Rosato, Clerk Michele Smith and Treasurer Becky Adams. **Absent: Dennis Kortekaas.**

Also in attendance: Julie Kennedy – Twp Road Engineer from SEH, Ben Otto – ICC engineering student intern, and Bart Johnson - resident.

1. **Pledge to the flag**, followed by the reading of the township mission statement
2. **Approve the minutes** of the Regular Meeting on May11, the P&D Meeting on May 25, and the Annual Road Review Meeting on June 1, 2011.

A motion was made by Supervisor Key, seconded by Supervisor Rosato, to approve the minutes as presented for the dates noted above. Upon roll call, motion passed.

3. Service Center concept plan presentation by ICC Engineering Intern (Ben Otto)

Ben gave a final PowerPoint presentation to the board (a copy will be attached to these minutes), on the concept plan for the Service Center. The other interns, Phil McDonald and Rashid Dewberry, were unable to attend tonight's meeting. A key point of tonight's presentation was the windbreak in the Harris Cemetery. It was noted that the students met with Mike Hendricks – Township Recreational Advisor, Harry Hutchins – ICC Forestry Instructor, and Mike Oja – Itasca County NRCS, when seeking options and recommendations for the windbreak proposal.

The total width of the wind break was adjusted to be 100-120 feet, in a straight path, behind the cemetery's current Section 3. It would be close to the existing roadway by the garage, but beyond where it's platted. It was noted that it would take 5 or more years of growth to get protection from the wind by planting rows of 3 different types of shrubs, deciduous trees, and conifers. Ben also covered how to protect young trees & shrubs from animals while they're growing. The board asked if an option to spade in more mature trees was considered. Ben explained that the smaller seedlings were recommended in order to save money as many trees will be needed to cover the area.

The Board thanked Ben for the great presentation, and the work done by all the interns this past year.

Bart Johnson – who's harvesting the field in the new section of the cemetery – was in attendance at tonight's meeting. He commented that he likes the placement of the windbreak, though he's not excited to lose 120 feet. However, he can accept it – should the board decide to move forward. It was noted that Bart also works at ICC, as the Engineering Department Program Coordinator/Instructor.

The board said the next step, as recommended by Mike Hendricks, is to take some stakes/lath, and layout the size of the windbreak at the cemetery to help visualize the size and placement. The board liked the idea of a site visit in the fall, after the field had been cut by Johnson.

4. Bid Opening – Mishawaka Road reconstruction project

Bids were opened today at 4:00pm at the SEH office for the township's Mishawaka Road reconstruction project. Supervisor Rosato attended the opening. Two contractor bids were received:

(A copy of Julie's memo and bid abstract that the board reviewed will be attached to these minutes.)

- Anderson Brothers - \$278,208.70
- Hawkinson Construction - \$310,142.90
- Engineer's estimate - \$296,224.00

Julie noted that she recommends that the bid be awarded to Anderson Brothers, for their low bid amount. The company is out Brainerd, and has a pit near Deer River. SEH has worked with them before, and they are a reputable company. Local companies were listed as subcontractors.

Supervisor Key made a motion to award the Mishawaka Road project to Anderson Brothers for their lowest bid amount of \$278,208.70. Supervisor Rosato seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Julie will prepare and send out an award letter the Anderson Brothers. She will bring back a contract once it's completed with certificate of insurance, and then preconstruction meeting will be scheduled. July 10th is the earliest that construction will start, and residents will be notified of the meeting and construction dates.

5. Roads

- Julie Kennedy – Road project updates

Julie commented that she is working on several smaller projects, including Bear Creek, gravel roads, culvert policy, etc. but nothing that required action by the board tonight.

6. Treasurer's Report: May 2011 financials

Treasurer Adams noted that in the disbursement amount for the Road & Bridge fund, there were the 4 months of SEH bills that came in. She also noted that the General Fund disbursement contained the cost of the 2010 audit. For the June bills, the majority were for regular operational items, except some road improvements in the payment to Commercial Asphalt Repair for rubberized crack sealing.

A motion was made by Supervisor Key to approve the Treasurer's report of May financials as presented. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Rosato, and passed.

7. Business from the Floor

Jerry Stejskal – resident of 31597 Sunny Beach Road

Mr. Stejskal voiced a concern at the December 8, 2010 Regular Meeting regarding the Woodtick access on Sunny Beach Road and the brush along the creek. He explained that when you pull out of the landing area, you can't see the road from the west, due to all the brush. It's a real safety concern, as this landing is located on a corner. He added that visibility from the east is not good either, but from the west is really bad. Stejskal would like to see it cleaned out.

Supervisor Key did have the maintenance guys take a look at the area after the December 8th 2010 meeting, and they did some trimming to the west. However, the Key was later approached by the DNR and reprimanded as they do not like the wetland area altered at all. It was possible that the area to the east could be trimmed however, as it's owned by a private property owner - Winston Taylor.

Mr. Stejskal offered to talk to the DNR, to explain the safety issue with reduced visibility. The board encouraged him to do so.

8. Recreation

Nothing was reported.

9. Correspondence

Board Action items:

- *Notice from Itasca County of herbicide treatment of forest site in Harris Township; consider posting*

The board approved the Clerk post of the letter and map as received from the County, for herbicide treatment on June 27 and July 8, 2011, in a forest site in the southeast corner of Harris Township, near the state of Minnesota's property.

- *Consider letter from Itasca County Assessor, explaining option to transfer local Board of Appeal and Equalization duties to the County Board.*

The board discussed that if the Township board did turn over the Board of Appeal, residents would have to go directly to the county court house to air their grievances regarding their property value assessments, rather than come before the local Harris Town Board. The board agreed they preferred to provide this service for their residents.

Supervisor Rosato then made a motion to retain the Local Board of Appeal and Equalization at the township level. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key, and duly passed.

- *Notice from Itasca County of Local Board of Appeal & Equalization Training, Thurs. July 21, 2011*

Supervisor Rosato noted that he will be attending this training, as his certification has expired.

10. Consent Agenda

1. Consider approval of cemetery sites purchased by Bobbye Drasner: Sec 3, Block 16, Lot 1, Sites 1 & 2
2. Consider approval of cemetery sites purchased by Lola Vroman: Sec 2, Block 42, Lot 1, Sites 7 & 8

A motion was made by Supervisor Key, seconded by Supervisor Rosato, to approve both items 1 and 2 on the consent agenda. Upon roll call, motion passed.

11. Old Business

- Consider approval of the revised Harris Cemetery grave opening "Fee Schedule", to reflect no burials on holidays.

In response to the action taken by the board at the May 25th, 2011 P&D Meeting, to remove the holiday option for burials, the Clerk presented the board with a draft letter and revised fee schedule. Upon review, **the board approved the clerk to send the letters and scheduled out as presented**, to the local funeral homes.

- Lake Country Power (LCP) permit application for the ROW, for new utilities.

The town board hosted a neighborhood meeting on April 27th, 2011 where LCP shared where new power lines will be laid on KeyView, Norberg, Birch Hills and East Harris roads. There will be borings where LCP has to go under bituminous road or driveways. Julie has reviewed the permit application, with no concerns. Over all, what Supervisor Rosato had was the official application which was tentatively approved the night of the neighborhood meeting on 4/27/11.

Supervisor Key then made a motion to approve the Lake Country Power permit application for use of the road right of way as presented in their diagram/map for the placement of new utilities. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Rosato and was passed.

Chairman Rosato signed the permit and will provide a copy to the Clerk, to attach to these minutes.

- Response to Environmental Service to Itasca co, concerning possible trespass of SSTS and access.

Rosato investigated the notice the town board received from the Environment Services department of Itasca County dated April 17, 2011, about a possible trespass of a portion of and/or entire SSTS and clearing of vegetation for placement of a House Boat onto an undeveloped public access between Pokegama and Hale Lakes, off Sunny Beach Road.

Rosato found that no violation has been made. He reviewed the property boundaries with land owner, with the understanding that a recent survey has not been done. He reviewed where public landing is, and shared aerial photos with the board (a copy will be attached to these minutes). Rosato stated he saw no cause for concern; he did *not* feel the residents with the house boat were trespassing on public land and could not

justify spending any taxpayer's money on any further action. **Supervisor Key agreed with Rosato's findings of facts.** Rosato will take his information to the county and talk to the Don Dewey in Environmental Services.

- Qwest – internet at the Town Hall:

Upon further investigation and calling for installation, Treasurer Becky Adams was informed that DSL internet is *not* an option at the location of the Town Hall. Adams will look into other providers, as time allows.

12. New Business

- Consider buying back a cemetery site from Lorine Burt, Sec 2, Block 42, Lot 2, Site 7 for \$125

Clerk Smith received a call from Barbara Peterson, who would like the township to buy back a single cemetery site that is next to where her dad, Allen Burt, is buried. Her mom – Lorine Burt – does not want to be buried there, nor does she, or any of their family.

Two sites were originally purchased by Barbara's uncle, David Vroman (Harris Township resident) at the time of Allen Burt's death. One site was used for Allen Burt's burial – and other was dedicated for the burial of his wife, Lorine. However, the sites were in David Vroman's name – even though given to the Burts.

The board clarified that since the site was purchased by David Vroman, who recently died, the unused cemetery site would legally go to his wife Lola Vroman as his heir. And even though Lola asked that the sites be dedicated for use by Lorine Burt or Lorine & Allen Burt's daughter (Barbara Peterson), the site would need to be purchased back from Lola Vroman (not Lorine Burt). If purchased by the township, the check would have to be made payable to Lola – the legal site owner.

A motion was made by Supervisor Key to purchase back the cemetery site from Lola Vroman if so desired, for \$125 as was the purchase price. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Rosato and duly passed.

Clerk Smith will contact Barbara Peterson to explain the board's decision.

- Date for the next Round Table with the City of Grand Rapids staff:

Supervisor Rosato spoke with Tom Pagel of the City of Grand Rapids, looking for the next round table meeting date. Tom Suggested either June 20 or 21. Neither dates work for Julie and the 21st would not work for Clerk Smith. However, Rosato said they may hold one on the 20th even if Julie can't be there.

Rosato will confirm the date/time with Pagel and advise the board accordingly.

13. Approve payment of bills

The board reviewed the attached bill listed titled for June 2011, in the total of \$31,641.23, with no questions nor comments.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to approve the attached bill list titled, "June 2011 Bill Listing to Board" in the total amount of \$31,641.23. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key and duly passed.

14. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:36pm by Supervisor Key, and seconded by Supervisor Rosato. Motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Harris Twp Clerk

