

**MINUTES from the P&D Meeting
Harris Township Board
Wednesday, August 24, 2011 at 7:30pm**

The regularly scheduled P&D Meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, August 24, 2011. The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by Chairman Rosato, at the Harris Town Hall, with the following officers present: Supervisors Gary Rosato, Dennis Kortekaas, and Larry Key, and Clerk Michele Smith.

Absent: Treasurer Becky Adams.

Also in attendance: Julie Kennedy, SEH Road Engineer, several residents of Lakeview Drive (Eddie Varin, John Maturi, and Steve Burgraff), and resident Craig Nelson, regarding Mishawaka Landing parking.

1. Pledge to the flag

2. Roads

- Updates by Julie Kennedy – SEH

- Mishawaka Road:

Julie is still watching sub-cut area of Mishawaka Road, as water continues to seep up through the base course – but it is lessening. Julie hopes to pave the wear course sometime in September. **The Board agreed to allow a 1 month extension for ‘significant’ completion of this Mishawaka road project.**

The speed humps will be patched for additional lift at the same time the subcut area is paved. Signs should be up early next week, for the speed humps.

Reconstruction of the City of Grand Rapids’ section of Mishawaka Road was started this week. SEH is making sure no large truck traffic is driven on our area of the road.

Resident Craig Nelson was in the audience tonight, and voiced his concerns that ditches are so deep near Mishawaka landing, making parking alongside the road almost impossible. Julie commented that the ditch design was primarily for drainage, but that it does deter people from parking on the road, which is prohibited. She explained that it’s prohibited because there is a liability with parking on the inside corner – due to lack of visibility. It’s also prohibited to park on the outside of the corner, as there is no ROW, and parking would be on someone’s private property. Julie also noted that the new signs for this area will say “NO parking”...rather than “No parking on pavement” – which implied that they could park on non-paved areas (private property).

- Lakeview Drive:

Supervisor Key received a call about Lakeview Drive from concerned residents regarding its condition. Supervisor Rosato inspected this road in June, and had commented “Very rough condition; not much for ditches; poor shoulders; may be the worst road in the township.” Julie said it’s at the top of the township’s road priority list, for smaller roads.

Several residents of Lakeview Drive were in attendance tonight, regarding this concern, including Eddie Varin, Steve Burgraff and John Maturi.

Overall, there are two issues with Lakeview Drive: 1.) The road bed is crumbling, and 2.) When snow melts, it runs down the hill, across yards and down the road, until it freezes – causing very slippery conditions and unsafe circumstances. The residents asked if ditching or a holding/over flow pond was an option.

Supervisor Rosato suggested having Julie Kennedy look at the situation, for drainage options – even yet this fall. Julie agreed to do that, and report back to the board. If something cannot be done this fall, the residents requested more sand in the winter on the Lakeview Drive.

- Lakes State Tree Service work / permission request

Clerk Smith received a "Power Line Easement Maintenance Notice" postcard, alerting the board that Lakes State Tree Service will have work crews in the area of Service Center property on Wendigo Park Road. The board discussed the information on the postcard and agreed that the township was fine with having Lakes State do the work within the township's ROWs.

Supervisor Key made a motion to approve the request from Lakes State Tree Service for their work along Wendigo Park Road. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, and duly passed.

Clerk Smith will mail in the post card signed by Chairman Rosato, to Lakes State.

3. Business from the Floor

(See above, under Roads)

4. Recreation

Nothing to report; Supervisor Key had not talked to Mike Hendricks lately to determine what's been done and what's left to be done.

5. Town Hall Report - for June 12 – August 6, 2011

The board reviewed the town hall report as submitted by the Town Hall Caretaker. There were 12 rental reservations, but 3 were no-shows; \$250.00 was collected. No damages or accidents were reported.

Discuss cancellation of rentals and the Town Hall Policy, as requested by the caretaker

There were 3 "no-shows" rentals in July. Supervisor Key explained that the caretaker had spent 3 hours showing the hall and setting up the rental, yet the renters simply didn't show up the day before, to pick up the key. And, in turn, the caretaker missed an opportunity to rent the hall to others.

It was noted that the deposit for a rental is typically not paid until the day of the rental, so keeping the deposit in lieu of a no-show does not work. People don't sign the lease or pay rent/deposit until day of rental.

Upon review of the Town Hall policy, there is currently nothing in it regarding cancellations, or any penalty for canceling without sufficient notice.

Supervisor Rosato agreed to meet with the Caretaker to discuss this issue further. He will ask her to include any no-shows on the Town Hall reports, so that the board can watch how often this is happening, and determine if a change to policy and procedure are necessary.

6. Maintenance Report – for July, 2011

The board reviewed the monthly report as submitted by Maintenance Crew. Supervisor Key explained the problems they'd had with one of the large 7130 John Deere tractor tires. The crew has had to replace the tubes several times in a short amount of time/mileage. Todd Figgins, of Figgins trucking, finally helped them to find a solution.

Supervisor Key noted that both student workers are now gone, back in school.

Key also noted that the portable bathroom at Mishawaka Landing was thrown into the lake 2 days in a row, and is now chained down to prevent it from happening again.

7. Old Business

- Discuss if the township wants to contract with ICC engineering interns for 2011-2012 school year

Julie shared with the Board that if they would like to work with ICC interns again this year, there would be 2 great second year students. One project they could work on, as has been requested by the township auditor for two years now, is a road inventory and valuation of our roads. The interns could include such things as length, gravel or paved, when last work was done, and if there is a ROW along the sides of the road. This would be especially helpful, when considering a road project.

Other options would be for the interns to work on designing a parking solution for Mishawaka landing, and LaPlant Road landing. Or, they could work on layouts of the proposed maintenance facility. Working on the comprehensive plan, to add maps and related items, was also another idea. And, looking into a possible walking trail along Mishawaka in the ROW (Cottage Grove area) would be helpful – and determining if it would connect to a main trail by the City of Grand Rapids. The board agreed these were all great ideas.

A motion was made by Supervisor Kortekaas, seconded by Supervisor Key, to approve the hiring of up to 3 interns, at \$10/hour, 10 hours a week, and billed quarterly. Upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote. Julie will prepare a contract, and bring back to the board.

- Shelly Johnson, who owns land that adjoins the Harris Township Service Center, is ready to sell her corner home and property (total of 1.6 acres) for the estimated taxed value of \$94,200. However, the actual market value – what it would sell for – is likely less than her asking price. She originally was asking almost double the market value for her home several months ago, but without any success in selling at that price.

After some discussion, the Board didn't feel they were in a position to jump on the sale of this property. After working with interns, the board realized that the township has a lot of land already. And there are many roads that need attention, and township dollars.

Key will talk to Shelly Johnson, and relay the board's message that they are not interested in buying her property at this time.

- Discuss updating Township Comprehensive Plan in 2011

The board stated at several previous meetings that they would like to update the township's comprehensive plan – especially since the City of Grand Rapids just updated theirs. The comp plan made an impact at the county level – and city level, but is now 6 years old.

Julie commented that the first plan cost the township between \$7 – \$10,000 to go through the process, and was led by John Powers. She suggested having John do the update to the plan since he did the first one, plus he's from the area and shares the board's appreciation of rural. She further suggested that instead of a steering committee, which didn't work out very well the first time, information could be sought via the website and the newsletter. Rosato liked this idea, and added that when a draft of the comp plan has been completed, it could be offered to residents followed by a meeting asking for any comments or concerns – similar to what the city did.

Next steps: If the board would like John Powers to update the plan, Julie will meet with him to discuss what's happened in the township over the past 6 years.

Supervisor Key made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to move forward to seek a proposal from John Powers/Applied Insights for a comp plan update; meetings would be preferred in October or November 2011. Upon roll call, motion carried.

- Discuss meeting date options for G.I.S. system demonstration with City of Grand Rapids staff

The date was chosen to be Wednesday, August 31, 2011 – 7:00pm at City Hall. All supervisors and the clerk are available to attend.

- Board of Appeal and Equalization training

The county has rescheduled the Board of Appeal and Equalization training for Sept 21, 6-9pm. Supervisor Rosato will be attending this training, and be re-certified.

- CPR Training for the Maintenance Crew

A call was received from Pat Hill, who had to cancel CPR training on September 14th. However, it's been rescheduled for Wednesday, Sept 21st, from 1-4pm. The board agreed to also offer this training to the town hall caretaker.

A motion was made by Supervisor Rosato, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to hire Pat Hill to do CPR training with township employees onsite at the maintenance garage (or town hall) for a normal fee. Upon roll call, motion carried.

8. New Business

- Tansy – a noxious weed

Supervisor Kortekaas, who also serves as the township's weed inspector, commented that Tansy is considered a noxious weed, yet he sees it in abundance everywhere – in the township, city, and county. Kortekaas didn't think it made sense to ask township residents to remove it from their private property, when the county/city didn't appear to enforce the guidelines for removal. Kortekaas agreed to talk to the county's noxious weed person for guidance.

- Road side clean up

ICC Engineering Interns will be doing roadside clean up along Harris Town Road and Wendigo Park Road at the end of September. If enough students show up, they will also do Underwood Road. Julie asked for suggestions of other roads, should the turnout be sufficient. The board asked that they do the township's adopt-a-highway portion of River Road.

9. Adjourn

A motion was made at 9:10 by Supervisor Key to adjourn tonight's meeting, and was seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Clerk of Harris Twp