

**MINUTES from the REGULAR Meeting
Harris Township Board
Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at 7:30pm**

The Regular Meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, November 9, 2011. The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm, at the Harris Town Hall, with the following officers present: Supervisors Gary Rosato, Larry Key and Dennis Kortekaas, Clerk Michele Smith, and Treasurer Becky Adams. Absent: none.

Also in attendance: Julie Kennedy – Twp Road Engineer from SEH, Joe Gould – MN State Rep. candidate, and Dan Butterfield – township resident.

1. **Pledge to the flag**, followed by the reading of the township mission statement
2. **Approve the minutes** of the Regular Meeting on October 12, and P&D Meeting on October 26, 2011.

A motion was made by Supervisor Kortekaas, seconded by Supervisor Key to approve the minutes as presented for the October town board meetings. Upon roll call, motion carried.

3. Business from the Floor

- Joe Gould – Minnesota State Representative candidate for Dist. 3B (DFL)

Joe came to let the township board and residents know that he is running for the MN State Representative seat for Dist. 3B (DFL), and has been going to every public meeting to hear about challenges/priorities that townships are having, and asking how the state can help them.

Supervisor Key mentioned that the loss of the homestead credit was of major concern as it will especially impact rural communities with higher property taxes. Apparently this change was hidden in a MN state bill, as many of representatives commented that didn't even know it was there.

The board thanked Joe for attending the meeting.

- Dan Butterfield

Mr. Butterfield went to the Itasca County Planning Board of Adjustment (BOA) today for the public hearing on the adoption of amendments to the zoning ordinance relative to variances. Supervisor Rosato was also at that hearing. Butterfield commented that there was a lot of discussion, mostly against the promotion of the proposed amendment. He and other residents want to keep as much of the language as possible, which is currently in the ordinances. They didn't like that the proposed amendments would take "the teeth" out of the county ordinance.

In particular, many folks in attendance did not like that the county wants to eliminate the wording "to ensure compliance, to protect the environment, and to protect adjacent properties and public interest" from the ordinance (see item "E" of the attached notice from the county). This language is already gone at the state level, and the county is proposing to remove it at their level as well.

The BOA public hearing and meeting were tabled until January 11, 2012.

4. Roads

- Julie Kennedy – updates on current road projects

- Mishawaka:

Julie ordered and received the "speed humps ahead" signs as previously requested by the board. For installation, Julie explained there are two options: Have the township maintenance

crew install them, or have Anderson Brothers – the road contractor – install them. Julie noted that Anderson Brothers is not a local company, and therefore would do the installation when they were in the area for another reason. It was noted that the cost to have our crew install the signs was significantly lower than having the contractor do it. **The Board agreed to have our maintenance crew install the signs.**

Julie will go out with the crew to show them where the signs should be placed; they will do the “Gopher One Call” before doing any digging.

The third partial pay request was submitted by Julie, for \$6,942.53. A copy of the “certificate of Partial Payment was given to the board to review. With this pay request, the retainage will be reduced from 5% down to 2.5%.

○ Bear Creek:

Julie met with the residents of Bear Creek last week, and they decided not to install a new culvert. Residents commented that drainage has been better since the road was graded last year by Schwartz. So, they agreed to try grading and improving the crown of the road, to see if that will fix the problem. If not, residents agreed that a new culvert should then be considered. Julie will contact Schwartz about the fixing the crown on Bear Creek.

● Qwest buried telephone wire permit on Birch Street – Qwest Job #MO11 02 770

After reviewing the sketch of the proposed construction for placement of the buried telephone wire under Birch Street, Supervisor Key made a motion to approve Qwest permit Job #MO11 02 770. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas and upon roll call, passed.

5. Treasurer’s Report: October 2011 financials

A verbal recap of the Treasurer’s report was provided by Treasurer Adams, with no questions by the board.

Supervisor Key made a motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report of October 2011 financials as presented. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, and upon roll call, the motion passed.

6. Recreation

● Rink Attendants:

Clerk Smith brought a 2011-2012 Rate Agreement from Express Employment Professionals (aka Express Pros) that she received that day, but requested that the board wait to act on it, as to allow her time to pull last year’s rate agreement for comparison of rates. Smith also commented that she’d referred two people to Express Pros, who’d contacted her and expressed a desire to be a rink attendant at either Crystal or Wendigo Park.

Supervisor Key made a motion to continue using Express Pros for the hiring of the township’s seasonal rink attendants, as they have worked out really well the past couple years. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, and upon roll call, duly passed.

Clerk Smith will put ‘Review of the Express Pros rate agreement’ on the agenda for the November 16th, 2011 P&D Meeting.

● Trails task force meeting tomorrow. Supervisor Kortekaas will try to attend.

7. Correspondence

Board Action items:

- Request letter for monetary donation from the Grand Rapids High School Nordic Ski Team
The board reviewed the letter, and then Supervisor Key made a motion to have the clerk draft a letter to the Nordic Ski team, referencing our “no donation” policy. Supervisor Kortekaas seconded the motion, and upon roll call, the motion passed.
- U.S. Census bureau “Governments Unit Survey” received (due by November 11th)
Clerk Smith asked if the Board wanted her to fill out this survey. She suggested that she could bring it up to the MN Assoc. of Twp district representative at the next meeting on Monday, November 14th. This was after the deadline of November 11, but since that is a postal holiday, it may not matter. The board agreed this was a good idea
- MATIT declaration pages and schedules received for Consolidated Liability Coverage of property, buildings, equipment, etc. received. A review for accuracy is requested.
Supervisor Key agreed to review the schedule in detail, and work with Treasurer Adams to update as needed.

8. Consent Agenda

None

9. Old Business

- Consider approval of proposal from Applied Insights – North, for updating the Twp Comprehensive Plan

Julie talked to John Powers, of Applied Insights, to see when the first work session could be held, should the board approve his proposal for updating the township’s comprehensive plan. Powers said that he’d be available starting last week of November.

Julie reminded the board that at this first general meeting, it would be just Powers, herself, and the board, that would need to meet though open to the public as well. At that meeting, the board would then decide when and how community notices will be made.

Rosato noted the cost to update the township’s comprehensive plan was included in the \$14,500 budgeted amount for Engineering, in the General Fund, for 2011.

A motion was made by Supervisor Key, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to approve the proposal by Applied Insights as presented, for a price of \$11,950.00. Upon roll call, the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

The date for the first meeting was set for **Wednesday, November 30th**, at 7:30pm at the Town Hall. Clerk Smith will check with caretaker on the hall’s availability and post the meeting accordingly.

10. New Business

- None

11. Approve payment of bills

Treasurer Adams noted that the bill list this month was larger than normal, as many items were sent to former Treasurer’s Peggy’s Bishops address by mistake. Adams will contact vendors again with the address change, but pointed out that some bills on the November bill list are from July and August, 2011.

A motion was made by Supervisor Kortekaas to approve the attached bill listed, titled “Nov 2011 Bill Listing to Board”, in the amount of \$62,246.13. Supervisor Rosato seconded the motion, and upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote.

12. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Supervisor Kortekaas at 8:23pm, and seconded by Supervisor Key. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Clerk of Harris Twp