

**MINUTES of a TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION:  
Neighborhood Meeting – Mornes Road  
January 19, 2011 – Harris Town Hall**

The Harris Town Board met on Wednesday, January 19, 2011 at the Harris Town Hall for a work session / neighborhood meeting with Mornes Road residents. The purpose of this work session was to:

- Discuss the ROW boundary adjustment request by the City of Grand Rapids, to have Mornes Road become a MSAS road (Municipal State Aid Street).

The work session began at 7:30pm and the following officers were present: Supervisors Dennis Kortekaas, Gary Rosato, and Larry Key, Clerk Michele Smith, and Treasurer John Jokela.

Also in attendance were the township attorney, Andy Shaw, township road engineer, Julie Kennedy, Grand Rapids Mayor, Dale Adams, and City of Grand Rapids Engineer, Tom Pagel.

Residence in attendance: John Mornes and Dan Mornes.

Names of effected residents (6) of Mornes Road:

- Meyers, Charles & Donna
- Holzemer, Todd & Mary
- Mornes, John & Martha
- Smith, Tony & Terri
- Jarvi, Victor
- Winkleblack, Robert (passed away, now Patrick Winkleblack)

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The work session was called to order at 7:30pm by Chairman Kortekaas, and then turned over to Tom Pagel, City Engineer.

Mr. Pagel explained that the city of Grand Rapid's population is over a 5,000 threshold, and therefore is eligible for Municipal State aid; this means they receive part of the gas tax - based on population and based on need – and that they can designate 20% of their total roads miles as state aid streets. The city has 93 miles of road, so 19 miles can be so designated.

Pagel went on to explain that another way the City can get additional state aid money is when they get a road from the county; that road can then be designated as a state aid road – in addition to the 20% of total road miles. This is what happened with Davis and Mornes Roads. However, there is a problem with Mornes Road: The statues say that the entire state aid road must be within the city limits, and only half of the Mornes road is currently within the city limits; the other half is in Harris Township. And because Davis Road connects to Mornes Road, it cannot be deemed as a state aid road either.

The benefit for the city to make the corporate boundary adjustment would be apx \$50,000 in state aid. The benefits to residents would be that the city is willing to buy the 33 feet of permanent ROW from them, and agree that they would not be subject to any assessments for improvements to road. They would also be allowed to keep multiple driveways. Pagel saw this as a win-win proposal.

Next, Julie Kennedy, the township's Road Engineer gave her comments to the board. She explained that notices for tonight's meeting were mailed to each affected landowner (a copy will be attached to these minutes), and that she also contacted everyone but Mr. Winkleblack - either face to face, or via phone call – to discuss the issue at hand. A summary of their overall comments is as follows:

- Meyers: Donna was concerned about losing the trees that are near the edge of the road, and the maintenance of her driveway given its location along the Davis Road. The Township currently maintains that part of Davis where her driveway is.

The board discussed this concern, and agreed that they would continue to maintain this part of Davis Road, unless a shared maintenance agreement is developed between the City of Grand Rapids and Itasca County.

- Holzemers: Julie left a message for them, as they live in South St. Paul. Their property is vacant land. Mary's Holzmer's brother John Mornes was in attendance tonight, and told Julie that Mary is fine with the proposed adjustment.
- Mornes: John (in attendance) explained that he'd like to keep the trees that are along the road, even though their trunks are within ROW. Mr. Pagel commented that the city probably would not cut the trees, as they are not planning to widen the Mornes Road. If limbs were hanging over the road, it was discussed that the trees could just be pruned rather than cut down.

John Mornes asked about the name of the road – would it become Mornes *Street* or *Avenue* once within the city's jurisdiction? Mr. Pagel answered that no, the name would remain the same: *Mornes Road*.

John asked if the City was willing to purchase the ROW from the residents. Mr. Pagel confirmed that, yes, they'd be more than happy to purchase it from them. With regard to a price, Pagel stated that he would need to discuss the ROW property value with Patrick Pollard.

John Mornes added that he talked to his sister Mary – who owns a 10 acre parcel – and she also would like to keep the trees along the ROW.

- Smith, Tony: Did not have any concerns with the proposed boundary adjustment, and did not see any reason *not* to it.
- Jarvi: Vic did not have any concerns with the proposed border boundary adjustment. He confirmed with Julie that he would not have to move his garage, which is near the ROW.

Julie explained to Mr. Jarvi that regardless of who owns the ROW, repairs/improvements can be made within the ROW to maintain the integrity of

the road. No change in taxes. No change in ability to use the road. Not opposed

- Winkelblack: was owned by Robert Winkleblack, but he has passed away; Patrick is now handling the rental on the property. Julie has the phone number for Patrick, and will try and get in touch with him.

Next, Harris Township's Attorney, Andy Shaw, gave his comments. He explained that there are two ways to move a corporate boundary, based on Mn State Statute 414: The residents can petition to do so, or the two corporate government entities can do by resolution – which is what is basically happening with Mornes Road, between the Harris Town Board and the City of Grand Rapids.

Shaw commented that residents would have a separate tax statement for the northern 33 feet ROW property/parcel within the Grand Rapids city limits. – but with a zero value, as guaranteed by city. There would be no loss to the township's tax base. Overall, Shaw did not have any concerns with the proposal, and added that he saw a benefit to the city and to the residents of Mornes Road.

Julie asked Shaw if a public hearing would be needed before presenting a resolution for the board to act on. Shaw stated he will review that consideration with Chad Sterle – the city's attorney. Shaw will then advise the Clerk and board of his findings. If no public hearing is required, a resolution would be drafted and presented to the board for consideration.

With no further questions from the city, the Mornes Road residents, or the township board, ***Supervisor Rosato made a motion to adjourn tonight's neighborhood meeting. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key and the work session adjourned at 8:00pm.***

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Harris Township Clerk