

Comprehensive Plan and Budget Work Session
HARRIS TOWN BOARD
Wednesday, March 7, 2012, 7:30pm

The Harris Town Board met at 7:30pm on Wednesday, March 7, 2012 at the Harris Town Hall for a budget and comprehensive plan work session. The following officers of the board were present: Supervisors Gary Rosato and Dennis Kortekaas and, Treasurer Becky Adams and Clerk Michele Smith. Absent: Larry Key

Also in attendance: John Powers – Applied Insights, Julie Kennedy – SEH, Allie Jervelin – ICC engineering intern, and residents Dan Butterfield, Judy Myers, Mike Vroman, and Joleen Pulkinen.

There were two purposes of tonight’s work session as posted:

1. **Comprehensive Plan:** Meet with Applied Insights (John Powers) to continue discussions regarding the process of updating the Harris Township Comprehensive Plan. (This is the rescheduled meeting, from Feb. 29th which was cancelled due to the weather and dangerous road conditions.)
2. **Budget:** Review past, current, and projected expenses and balances by fund, and review the recommended budget and levy by fund for 2013. Also review the draft annual report that will be distributed at the Annual Town Meeting.

1. Comprehensive Plan Work Session:

The work session began at 7:30pm, and started with the Comprehensive Plan portion. John Powers facilitated the meeting, according to the agenda he’d prepared; overall comments by the board are noted. *(A copy of the agenda will be attached to these minutes.)*

1. What’s happened since the public meeting (for input on the proposed Community Complex idea)?
 - Board: Rumors of a “taj mahal” town hall
2. Review of Community Center design meeting
 - Board: Many residents who came to the public input session thought that the board had already decided to do something, which was not the case.
3. Community Center Design: Next step:
 - Review student work– see matrix sheet summary (*attached*), as prepared by the ICC intern from all the sticky notes collected at the public input session: (Powers noted that the matrix it’s a summary only – and not a recommendation to the board.)
 - A. Four general themes /options were explained, especially with regards to the town hall:
 - a. Do nothing – at all; same town hall, same scattering of maintenance facilities
 - b. Use - no change to existing town hall, but consolidate the maintenance and cemetery expansion
 - c. Reuse – same town hall location, but remodel the hall, and consolidate the maintenance and cemetery expansion, and
 - d. New site - and new town hall, with consolidation of the maintenance and cemetery expansion

The matrix included the advantages and drawbacks under these themes for taxes, parking, township property, security, build green, hall rental, maintenance/upkeep, and other.

- Decide on project option:
The purpose of the matrix was for review by the board, to use when trying to decide and justify the option they decide on.

Board: Rosato expressed that for him, justification for a new hall would be annexation of the current hall property, destruction of the existing hall (due to tornado/fire/etc.), the extreme deterioration of the existing hall, or if the electorate wanted it. Supervisor Kortekaas concurred.

Powers explained that it was acceptable for the board to make a ‘double’ decision, such that they could approve the consolidation of the maintenance and the cemetery expansion plan, but *not* the new town hall / community center plan. However, he recommended reserving an area at the Service Center property for a new community center, should it be needed some day.

In updating the comprehensive plan, Powers recommended including the development of a master plan for the 39 acres, and identify the key components for the property; it’s where the board could designate the land use – but without any immediate action necessary. The development of a master plan could be stated as an “objective” – as something to achieve. Thus, in the updated comp plan, it could state that an objective of the board is to develop a master plan for the service center/cemetery property in next 5-7 years (by the next time the comprehensive plan is reviewed). The board liked this idea, as they are not ready to determine the nitty gritty of a town hall design. Powers added that all of the analysis gathered thus far can be included in the appendix of the comp plan, for future review.

- Provide students direction for option design:
No further design work will be needed by the interns, given the discussion above.

In summary, the board was between the “do nothing” and the “use” options, where the consolidation of maintenance and the cemetery expansion are included, but with no change to town hall. Supervisor Key was not in attendance tonight, and his input will be important for the maintenance facility consolidation and cemetery expansion options.

- Set up a public review meeting for April
Give the discussion above, an additional meeting on the community complex will *not* be needed.

4. Hwy 169 Corridor Public Meeting

- Set date:
March 21st, 2012 at 6:30pm at the town hall; post cards will be going out next week. A copy was shared with the board. (*A copy will be attached to these minutes.*)
- Set agenda:
Powers shared a draft agenda for the public input session (*a copy will be attached to these minutes*). The purpose of the meeting will be to secure community suggestions and commentary of land use and transportation issues within the highway 169 corridor and possible township responses.

Annexation will be discussed, as per the matrix developed for future discussion at a public input session. John noted that he will not be advocating any one option, but want to have residents discuss the following with regards to annexation:

1. Status quo (no annexation allowed)
2. Status quo + overlay district
3. Property owner driven annexation (“piecemeal” annexation) - often by developers
4. Orderly annexation agreements – township works with city on parameters, triggering mechanism, how far they annex, what included, option of tax sharing, etc.

- Invitees: All township residents, staff from the city of GR, Itasca county, and the state (MnDot)

5. Review project calendar:
 - April – Next planning meeting
 - May – Public meeting on draft comp plan
 - June & July – Review/revise comp plan
 6. Other business
 - None
 7. Adjourn (comprehensive plan portion)
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2.) Budget Work Session

Clerk Smith had shared a draft annual report and draft minutes from the February 15th budget work session with the board two days ago, in hopes that they'd have some time to review prior to tonight's budget work session. The report included the 2013 proposed levies by fund, as discussed and proposed by the board at 2/15/12 budget meeting. Smith reviewed the summaries as follows:

- Total proposed 2013 levy: \$845,000; same as last year, and 4 years prior to that (no change since 2008)
 - General Fund: \$100,000; same as last year
 - Road & Bridge: \$430,000; same as last year
 - Equipment: \$0 levy; same as last year
 - Cemetery: \$0 levy; same as last year
 - Recreation: \$40,000; a *decrease* of \$10,000 from last year
 - Building & Grnds: \$50,000; an *increase* of \$10,000 from last year
 - Fire: \$85,000; an *increase* of \$10,000 from last year
 - Capital Impvmt: \$140,000; a *decrease* of \$10,000 from last year

The board did not have any questions or concerns.

A motion to adjourn tonight's work sessions was made by Supervisor Kortekaas at 9:07pm; Supervisor Rosato seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith – Clerk