

**MINUTES from the REGULAR Meeting
Harris Township Board
Wednesday, February 8, 2012 at 7:30pm**

The Regular Meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, February 8, 2012. 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, Mike Hendricks – Twp Recreational Advisor, & Dan Butterfield and Judy Myers – township residents.

1. **Pledge to the flag**, followed by the reading of the township mission statement
2. **Approve the minutes** of the Regular Meeting on January 11, the P&D Meeting on January 25, the Work Session for the Comprehensive Plan / Public Input Session on the proposed Community Complex on January 18, and the Budget Work Session on February 1, 2012.

- Motion by Kortekaas, second Key, to approve. Passed.

3. Business from the floor

- **Judy Myers – resident**

Judy Myers had some concerns that she expressed to the board. Some of the concerns were noted, as follows:

- Myers had been to the township website, and has read the minutes. However, she would like to see the itemized bill list included with the Regular Meeting minutes. The clerk thanked her for the feedback, and said she'd be happy to add the bills list going forward. She also agreed to try and post minutes to the website by the weekend following Regular monthly meetings, after they have been approved by the board.
- Myers was in attendance at the January public input session regarding the proposed Community Center Complex, and asked the board if a referendum would be needed before a new town hall/community complex would be built. She also commented that she likes the current town hall and size; she felt it had the best kitchen around - great size and well stocked – and that it can seat up to 100 for meals.

The board explained that the purpose of the public input session was just to gather ideas from residents on the concept of a Community Complex & new town hall, as they review and update the township's Comprehensive Plan. There was no intent to make a decision about moving forward on the concept from the input session, nor are there plans to make a decision any time soon – it would probably be more like 10-20 years down the road, and that the goal was not to do anything until they had the money for it.

- The township pays the ICC Engineering Interns \$10/hour, which surprised Myers as she was under the impression that interns are usually paid with college credits. However, Julie Kennedy – an Engineering instructor at ICC - explained that student actually have a choice of either “for credit” or “for pay” internships. If they are paid by the hour, then they don't get any credits. Julie added that she mentors the interns for credit – she is *not* paid for this service by the township.

Myers asked if the interns got paid to pick up trash along the road they adopted (Wendigo Park Road). Julie clarified that that no, that work is done by student volunteers from the ICC Engineering program.

- Myers commented on the hourly rate of an SEH Road Engineer, and asked if it was necessary to have Julie Kennedy at both the Regular and P&D meetings, as there seemed to be some redundancy in her reports according to the meeting minutes. Myers asked if perhaps she could just supply a written report for one of the meetings.

The Board explained that Julie is an expert on roads – where the board is not. Having Julie available to discuss and look at township roads when there’s a problem is a valuable service to the township as she knows what needs to be done and how to prepare accurate bids and quotes. In addition, for audit purposes, Julie knows all the legal paperwork that is needed when contracting a road project.

When Myers asked about how Julie was chosen, the board explained that they appoint a road engineer each year during the Reorganization Meeting, just as they appoints a township attorney, a newspaper, etc.

The board also clarified that they still do the annual road inspections every year in the spring – not Julie – and that the board has to approve any/all road projects or funds to be spent on road repairs that may be recommended by SEH.

- Myers asked if a 5 person town board had ever been considered, and that she thought it would be a good thing. Supervisor Rosato commented that it has been loosely considered, given the township’s large size, and that one advantage of a fiver person board would be that 2 board members could “talk” and meet without being a quorum. However, a disadvantage of a larger board, as noted by a resident in the audience, was that when the board doesn’t agree, or can’t get along, nothing gets done.

The board thanked Myers for coming to the meeting and expressing her concerns, as they appreciate the feedback and hearing from township residents.

4. Treasurer’s Reports:

- Treasurer’s report for Dec 1 – 31, 2011 and for January 1 – 31, 2012

Treasurer Adams commented that she and the Clerk had balanced their 2011 books, and agreed on yearend balances by fund. Therefore, the December 2011 and January 2012 financial reports were ready for board review.

Supervisor Key made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to approve both reports, for December 2011 and January 2012 financial activity, as submitted by the Treasurer. Upon roll call, the motion carried.

Adams informed the board that she’d started the application process to complete W2s electronically (online) for township officers and employee, though the Social Security Administration. The application will be coming before the board, to verify that she has a legitimate role in completing W2s. Currently, Adams still has to manually type the W2s, and noted it’s getting harder every year to find a manual typewriter for this process.

Adams also met with a banker at Wells Fargo, as money was transferred in 2011 from savings to checking, to cover the costs of the Mishawaka Road project. However, not all of the funds were used, and so options of what to do with the money not used (apx \$75,000) will need to be discussed and decided on by the board. Adams agreed to bring this topic up during a future budget meeting, and discuss how much can be invested long term vs. short term.

5. Roads

- Julie Kennedy / SEH – project updates
 - 2012 costs to reclaim and overlay: Julie checked on the possibility of correlating with other communities that are doing road projects this summer, in order to save on costs. However, no one is planning any reclaim projects. There are some cities that will be doing overlays, and so the township may be able save on any patching/overlay projects this summer.
 - Preventative maintenance roads: Julie is working on which roads should have preventative maintenance done, given the amount budgeted for this type of work in 2012. She will put together some numbers for the next budget meeting on Feb 15th. She reminded the board that they will need to prioritize which roads to do, and determine how we can get the most for the township’s money based on the roads locations (to save on transportation costs).

- ICC Engineering Interns will be at the February 22nd P&D meeting, to present options gathered from the Community Complex public input session on January 18th. They will also be at the February 29th work session for the Comprehensive Plan.
- Hwy 169 Corridor Public Input Session has tentatively been scheduled by John Powers for Wed. March 21st, 2012 at 6:30pm, at the town hall. Once confirmed, a postcard mailer will be sent out to all residents, as was done for the last public input session on the Community Complex discussion.

6. Recreation

- Mike Hendricks: Contract renewal and project proposals

- Creative Services Contract renewal

Mike presented the board with his Creative Services contract for the upcoming year, where he serves as a Recreational Advisor to the board on park and recreation projects and maintenance. Mike recapped that this year's contract is identical to his contract for the last 5 years, including the description of service and his hourly fee of \$50/hour.

A motion was made by Supervisor Key, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to approve the renewal of contract with Creative Services (Mike Hendricks) for the upcoming year as submitted by Mike Hendricks, at an hourly rate of \$50/hour. Discussion, at request from audience member: The board clarified that the township contracts with Mike for his expertise and experience in parks & recreation. Mike recommends and coordinates construction management of the parks, and solicits proposals quotes and bids for board review. With no more discussion, roll call was taken and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

- Projects and estimated costs for budget consideration (see memo, attached to these minutes):

- **Wendigo ball field:**

- Fencing in front and in back of player's area for apx \$2,250 (\$90 lin. Ft @ \$25/ft)
- Player's benches (2) @ \$800 each for total of \$1,600.

Mike recommended doing both of these projects in 2012, due to the anticipated use by the baseball team called the Black Squirrels; Wendigo will be their home field. If approved, Mike would move ahead and get quotes for both the fencing and the benches.

Supervisor Key made a motion to proceed with Mike getting proposals and costs for the fencing at Wendigo Ball Field, and for the 2 player's benches, for board review. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, and upon roll call, motion carried.

- **Wendigo Parking lot** – pave for apx \$23,000

- **Wendigo Tennis Court** – spectator benches, 2 six foot, @ \$300 each = \$600.00

Mike commented that these tennis court benches had been an intended project for 2011, but just never got done. Therefore, he requested permission from the board to move forward with getting the 2 spectator benches ordered and installed in 2012.

Supervisor Key made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to proceed with the purchase and install of the 2 spectator benches at Wendigo Tennis Court for approximately \$600. Upon roll call, the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

- **Remove Wendigo hard surface game area** - If removal done by crew, cost was estimated for \$1,000, with replacement cost of a with 40x40' concrete slab for \$10,000; total cost apx \$11,000. Mike noted that this area is not a safe place to play.

- **Fertilize Township Properties:** In the spring, the township maintenance crew could do the application for apx \$2,000; in the fall, a contractor was recommended as they are licensed, and are required for public areas, at an estimated cost of \$2,000.
- **Capital replacement fund for Wendigo Tennis Court** was suggested by Mike, as the cost of replacing the tennis court was \$65,000. The current court is 35 yrs old and has just about used up its life; Mike was not sure how much longer the court would last.
- **Crystal Picnic Shelter (a second one**, in addition to current shelter) for a total cost of apx \$9,000, which included a 60x20 shelter to match the current one, a concrete slab, and electrical work.
- **Tree planting** – at Crystal Park and the Cemetery; Mike’s estimate for the ideas he had, was \$3,025. The board discussed that they need to address parking at cemetery before any trees for a wind break are planted. Mike recommended putting additional trees at Crystal, and starting some at the cemetery in 2012.

The board thanked Mike for all of his recommendations, and will consider them in more detail at the upcoming budget meetings.

- Rinks are still open, at both parks, per Supervisor Key. The ice did get soft at Crystal with the warm weather, but with the recent cold snap, it’s okay again. He hopes to keep the rinks open another week or so, until the next warm up.

7. Correspondence

Board Action items:

- Notice from Itasca County regarding Cert of Compliance for septic system at the “Blaine property”
Supervisor Rosato talked with Environmental Services, in reference to the septic system at the sight of the torn down house on the former Blaine Property, which adjoins the Service Center property. Supervisor Key confirmed that while the house was demolished and removed, the septic is still there. However, they are planning to abandon it this spring.
- Itasca Co. Twp Assoc. Annual Dinner: Apr 9th – Deer River Twp Hall (consider payment with March bills)
In discussing the April 9th annual meeting of the Itasca County Township Association, all officers confirmed that they are planning to attend. Clerk Smith will complete the reservation form and submit to the treasurer for payment during March 2012.

Noteworthy items:

- Notice of the 2012 Fire Contract premium, and calculation spreadsheet received; premium increased apx \$10k

Non-action items

- Donation requests received from Support within Reach, the Itasca County Historical Society, FFAW and Elder Circle; these will be placed on the Annual Town Meeting agenda, for consideration.
- Copies of Itasca County approved zoning, septic, and shoreland alteration permit applications

8. Consent Agenda

- None

9. Old Business

- Update on impact of Itasca County amendment to the Zoning Map to reflect changes of ownership from public and private land throughout the county (Gary); Public Hearing was held today, Feb 8th at 9:00am.
Supervisor Rosato met with Itasca County Environmental Services and confirmed that nothing on the map of zoning changes affected Harris Township. Therefore, it was also confirmed that no one from the township needed to attend today’s public hearing.

- Meeting with Mike LeClaire on GIS system for cemetery:
Clerk Smith met with Mike LeClaire today, to review the status of the GIS system for Harris Cemetery. He said they are getting close to being ready for install, but have a few bugs to work out that are in both the city's program and the township's. Julie Kennedy will contact Mike to discuss when the intern can begin input of cemetery data into the GIS system.
- Trailer Replacement:
Supervisor Key brought information to the board from Pokegama Lawn & Sport for a Felling Trailer, which would replace the Big Tex trailer in accordance with the Capital Equipment replacement schedule. The cost was quoted at \$5,595 plus \$76.00 for license. Key noted that Pokegama Lawn & Sport would not take the Big Tex in on trade, so it will have to put up for bid. Key commented that the Big Tex trailer was really rusting out, and recommended the purchase of the Felling Trailer as presented.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to approve purchase of the Felling Trailer from Pokegama Lawn & Sport for \$5595.00 plus license fee. Supervisor Kortekaas seconded the motion for discussion. The size of the trailer was clarified as 18' in length. Upon roll call, the motion passed by a unanimous vote. (The bid will be attached to these minutes).

10. New Business

- Consider RBA #1 - Clerk's Recommendation of Election Judges for the Mar. 2012 Township Election

A motion was made by Supervisor Kortekaas to approve RBA #1 - outlining the Clerk's recommendation of 4 Election Judges & an alternate, including their rates of pay, for the March 13th, 2012 Township Election. Supervisor Key seconded the motion, and upon roll call, motion passed.

- Consider approval of Resolution #2012-002: Appointing the Absentee Ballot Board for 2012 Twp Election

A motion was made by Supervisor Key to approve Resolution #2012-002 Appointing the Absentee Ballot Board for 2012 Twp Election, which named all election judges and alternate as approved above to be on the board, though only 2 need to meet to review AB ballots. Supervisor Kortekaas seconded the motion, and upon roll call, motion passed.

- Supervisor Rosato shared an invitation he'd received to an open house at the IRRRB for government officials, where they can meet with IRRRB staff and learn how their programs can help. The open house is Wed. Feb 22, from 1:00pm to 4:30pm, in Eveleth.

11. Approve payment of bills for February 2012

Treasurer Adams noted one correction to the bill list, in that the Verizon bill was for cell phones though 1/13/2012 – not 2011 as shown.

Supervisor Key made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas, to pay the bill as presented in the attached document titled "Feb 2012 Bill List to Board", in the amount of \$43,344.01. Upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote.

12. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Supervisor Key at 8:52 pm; Supervisor Kortekaas seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Harris Twp Clerk