

**MINUTES**  
**P&D and Reorganization Meeting**  
**Harris Township Board**  
**Wednesday, March 27, 2013 at 7:30pm**

The Planning & Development and the Reorganization Meeting of the Harris Town Board were both held on Wednesday, March 27, 2013. The meetings were held 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 – Township Road Engineer from SEH, Allie Jurvelin, Holly Busker, & Claire Schumacher – ICC student interns, Mike Hendricks – Township Recreational Advisor, and 5 township residents: Dan Butterfield, Judy Myers, Jeff Schrunk, Marlin Herbert, and Cyndy Martin.

**1. Pledge to the flag** followed by the pledge to the flag

**2. Re-organizational items**

The reorganizational portion of tonight's meeting was called to order by Supervisor Key at 7:30pm.

◆ *Oath of office given to Supervisor Key and Treasurer Smith*

Re-elected Supervisor Key and re-elected Treasurer Adams took the *Elected Official Oath of Office*, as led by Clerk Smith. These oaths were signed, and will be kept on file at the Town Hall. Smith presented Key and Adams with their Certificate of Election, as the required campaign financial reports had been received as required.

◆ *Elect Chairman*

Motion by Supervisor Rosato, second by Supervisor Key, to appoint **Supervisor Kortekaas** as Chairman. Upon roll call, motion passed unanimously

◆ *Elect Vice Chairman*

Motion by Supervisor Kortekaas, second by Supervisor Key, to appoint **Supervisor Rosato** as Vice Chairman. Upon roll call, motion passed unanimously

◆ *Appoint Deputy Clerk*

Clerk Smith informed the board that she had not yet found someone to serve as her deputy clerk; her former deputy, Katie Fannin, had moved to the cities. Smith agreed to continue looking for a deputy, and will advise the board accordingly.

◆ *Appoint Deputy Treasurer*

Treasurer Adams informed the board that she would be re-appointing **Chris Jenkins** to be her Deputy Treasurer, who'd served in this role for the past two years. The board had no objections.

◆ *Designate official newspaper*

Board agreed **the Grand Rapids Herald Review** be the official newspaper of Harris Township

◆ *Designate a township attorney*

The board agreed to designate **Andy Shaw** as township attorney.

◆ *Designate a township road engineer (see letter from Julie Kennedy / SEH dated March 27, 2013)*

Julie Kennedy of SEH commented on the letter, which requested that the board consider SEH for reappointment as their 2013 Township Engineer. Similar to last year, SEH proposed the following structure for authorizing Township engineering work:

- Project Work (i.e. annual gravel road project, major construction projects)  
Upon authorization from the board, SEH will prepare and present to the board, a letter of proposal with a lump sum fee for each project. SEH will conduct no work until a proposal is approved by the board.
- Miscellaneous Engineering Work (i.e. land use or road reviews, auditor requests, meetings.)  
Upon authorization from the board, SEH will complete the requested work on an hourly basis at the rate shown on the attached 2013 Harris Rate table, which was said to be the same rates as last year.

***A motion was made by Supervisor Rosato to re-appoint Short Elliot Hendricks (SEH) as Harris Township’s Engineer, and that their work will be done on a proposal/project basis, as presented. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key, and upon roll call, passed by a unanimous vote.***

◆ *Designate a bank as the town depository*

Treasurer Adams recommended continuing to use the banks currently being used: **Wells Fargo for checking and savings, and American Bank for savings.**

***So moved by Supervisor Key, second by Rosato, to continue with Wells Fargo Bank as the main depository, with a saving account also at American Bank. Motion carried.***

◆ *Designate an official posting site(s)*

The board agreed to again designate the **posting board in front of the Harris Town Hall** as the township's official posting site, along with the boards at Crystal and Wendigo Parks to be used when 3 posting sites are legally required

***So moved by Supervisor Key, second by Rosato, to continue using the town hall as the main posting site for all township notices, as well as Crystal and Wendigo Parks when needed. Motion carried.***

◆ *Affirm / appoint members to committees/boards*

a. *Weed Inspector*

Dennis Kortekaas (re-appointment)

b. *Collaborative Opportunities Team*

Supervisor Rosato has been attending these meetings regularly, and would like to continue. Supervisor Key also would like to start attend the meetings on a regular basis. The board approved that both supervisors could attend these meetings.

c. *Trails Task Force*

Dennis Kortekaas (re-appointment)

d. *Maintenance Crew Leader*

Larry Key (re-appointment)

e. *Safety Representative*

Gary Rosato (re-appointment)

f. *Human Resource / Personnel Representative*

Treasurer Adams (re appointment) with Supervisor Rosato to assist as needed

g. *Cable Commission Representative*

Treasurer Becky Adams was reappointed as the designated Cable Commission Director, with Clerk Michele Smith and Supervisor Rosato as alternate Directors, to fill in for Adams as needed.

*h. County zoning and environmental services representative (to attend meetings)*

Supervisor Key was re-appointed to attend county zoning and environmental services site visits and public hearings, with Rosato and Kortekaas as back-up representatives. Key will be the main contact person for these issues.

*i. Firewise*

Supervisor Kortekaas was reappointed to attend the monthly Firewise meetings as a representative from Harris Township.

*j. Upper Mississippi Flood Mitigation Task Force (new)*

Supervisor Key had been on this task force since it began in the fall of 2012, after severe flooding. The group's goal is to bring groups together to discuss ways in which flooding can be dealt with. The board agreed to have Key represent the township on this task force.

*k. IRRRB Residential Redevelopment Program (new)*

Resident Dan Butterfield was appointed in 2012 as the township's representative for the IRRRB Redevelopment Program, which is designed to assist residents in tearing down a building in the township. Dan was reappointed to this position.

*l. GIS Users Group (new)*

Clerk Smith started attending this new group just last month, as led by Mike LeClaire, GIS/CAD technician for the City of Grand Rapids. The purpose of the GIS user group meetings is to discuss GIS benefits and display some of the tools GIS has to offer with partnering communities. Smith will continue to attend these meetings, and will invite board members to attend as desired.

◆ Review Resolution #2003-8, establishing an administrative policy for board meetings, and consider updating/amending, especially the Order of Business & agendas (see #6)

In reviewing this resolution from 2003, Clerk Smith found that the board was varying from the meeting time and agendas outlined in the resolution. In particular, she noted that the meeting time in the resolution is 7:00pm, but the board currently meets at 7:30pm.

Also, according to the resolution, the Town Hall and Maintenance Reports are reviewed during the Regular meeting; however, the board currently reviews them during the P&D meeting.

Clerk Smith provided the Regular Meeting agenda template and the P&D agenda template, and asked the board to review and advise of any changes they'd like going forward. The board agreed to add a "Public Input" session just prior to adjournment at both the Regular and P&D meetings. This would allow the public to comment on any business discussed by the board that evening.

Smith will prepare an updated resolution and bring back to the board for review at the April P&D meeting on 4/24/13.

### **3. Business from the floor**

Jeff Schrunk:

Schrunk asked which township roads would be repaired, and when. He commented that he hasn't found a worse road in the township than Underwood Road; it's only been fixed twice in 54 years. Schrunk lives on the Underwood Road, near the intersection with Wendigo Road / County Road 67. He felt an overlay would be beneficial on this section of Underwood Road. Marlin Herbert, who lives on the other end of the Underwood Road, added that his end of the road is also in need of repair.

The board acknowledged the poor shape of both ends of the Underwood Road. After road inspections have been done, the board will discuss what roads should be done, and when.

#### Judy Myers:

Myers requested a written report whenever a board member attends the various committee or task force meetings, so that it can be shared with the public. The Board agreed this was a good idea.

#### Cyndy Martin:

Martin commented on the board adding a “public input” session at the end of their meetings. She asked for clarification that this would be for comments about items discussed during the meeting, and would be in addition to the “business from the floor”. The board confirmed.

#### Dan Butterfield:

Butterfield gave an update on the Itasca County Board Meeting where public input was heard on their updated comprehensive plan. The recreational land use section was discussed, and trails were talked about a lot – especially motorized vs. non motorized trails.

#### Intern project update:

The ICC student interns gave an update on the trail feasibility study they’re working on, and handed out a “MN DNR trail Grant Programs Matrix Info” sheet to the board. (*A copy will be attached to these minutes*). The matrix provided an overview of what each of following 4 grants options would offer, including levels of assistance (% coverage, and maximum grant amt), township trail eligibility, project periods deadlines:

- Local trail connections
- Regional Trail Grant
- Parks & Trails Legacy Grant Program
- Outdoor Recreation Grant

Overall, this matrix provided a snapshot of grant funding options, should the board move forward with a trail system; it would help with the feasibility of the trail costs.

Julie Kennedy commented that the last two grants listed would probably give the *least* priority to Harris Township, whereas the first two would allow much better priority ranking possibilities.

At the next P&D meeting in April, the interns will provide some cost estimates and overall criteria for the feasibility of a trail.

#### **4. Roads**

- Julie Kennedy – update on road projects (see handout)
  - 2013 Gravel Road Project - Letter of Agreement

A proposal between Harris Township and SEH for the 2013 Gravel Road Improvement Project was reviewed by the board. The estimated cost was \$15,000 for new aggregate on the following 4 roads, plus fees to SEH of \$3,900 for their services outlined in the letter: (Note: The board chose *not* to do Davis Road, as previously considered.)

    1. Forest View Trail
    2. Pennela Road
    3. River Ridge Road
    4. River View Road

Kennedy reminded the board that Braun Intertec tests the gravel pit and the gravel after placement. And that they use gravel with a high level of binder. The tentative schedule for placement was also included in the letter of agreement.

***A motion was made by Supervisor Key, seconded by Superior Rosato, to have SEH continue with the Gravel Road project for roughly \$15,000 plus SEH fees of \$3,900, and to approve the project as outlined in the Agreement for Professional Services with SEH. Upon roll call, motion passed by a unanimous vote.***

Kennedy noted that gravel quotes will be solicited by the end of April.

- 2013 Road Rehabilitation Road Project - Letter of Agreement

A proposal between Harris Township and SEH for the 2013 paved road rehabilitation project was reviewed by the board. The estimated cost was \$400,000 for new surface rehabilitation (only) of pavement on the following 5 roads plus fees to SEH of \$19,800 for their services outlined in the letter:

1. Southwood Road
2. Robinson Road
3. Stony Point Road
4. Westwood Lane
5. Westwood Road

Kennedy reminded the board that the rehabilitation of the paved roads consisted of a 1" tight blade leveling course and a 2" overlay of bituminous, plus aggregate shouldering. A 4" double yellow centerline and 3" single white fog line was included for Southwood Road only. Drainage correction was *not* planned for any of the roads, nor would any right-of-way issues be corrected.

Since the County's bid opening for adjacent road projects is coming up in early April, the board needed to decide tonight if they are would coordinate bidding with the county on the township road projects, in order to save on mobilization costs. The potential cost savings to bid with the county could be as much as \$100,000 per Kennedy, based on the price of bituminous.

If the township coordinates with the county on the paved road projects, the Township would not contract with the contractor; the county would - and the township would pay the county. If they decide to bid with the county, the township would be committed to bidding only, but could say "no" to the construction project should the board change their mind once bids are received. Once a bid is awarded, however, then township would be committed to the projects.

The board discussed Southwood road drainage. The flooding of several residents off Pine Landing continues, yet the township project does not include drainage changes or ditching. This was a tough decision, but is what they needed to do to improve the road. Kennedy noted that change orders are an option for ditching, if the bids come in lower than expected.

***A motion was made by Supervisor Rosato, seconded by Supervisor Key, to approve the Letter of Agreement proposal between Harris Township and SEH for engineering services for the 2013 pavement rehabilitation project with costs of roughly \$400,000 plus SEH fees of \$19,800 as outlined in agreement; bidding with the county for these projects was also approved. Upon roll call, the motion passed by a unanimous vote.***

- Other road issues

- Supervisor Key commented that the road breakup is bad this spring. Norberg Road looks really bad. Key feared there will be water over some township roads. He did note that the township can borrow signs from county if needed.

## 5. Recreation

- Tennis Courts

Mike Hendricks was in attendance and discussed refurbishing the tennis courts at Wendigo and Crystal parks. He suggested refurbishing the 4 tennis courts plus the basketball court at Crystal Park. He would like to look at them again after the snow melts, and then have the repair quotes updated. The previous quotes came in at approximately \$26,000 for the 3 projects.

***A motion was made by Supervisor Key for Mike Hendricks to continue with quotes to repair the courts. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Rosato and upon roll call, passed by a unanimous vote.***

- Turf treatment

Hendricks reminded the board that nothing was done last fall regarding turf treatment due to the dry weather conditions and the ground being too hard. He didn't know what conditions would be like this spring, since

there is still a lot of snow on the ground, but he will talk to the experts and report back to the board. Hendricks may come back to the board with recommendations to do something this spring.

## 6. **Town Hall Report**

The town hall report, as prepared by the Town Hall Caretaker, was reviewed. There were 14 rentals, with no damages or accidents. There were no questions by the board.

## 7. **Maintenance Report**

The maintenance report for March, as prepared by the Maintenance Crew was reviewed. There were no damages or accidents reported. The board did not have any questions.

## 8. **Old Business**

- Consider approving snowplowing contract with the Itasca County (due April 10<sup>th</sup>)

The board, after having reviewed the county snowplowing contract provided in the agenda packet, did not have any questions or concerns. The snowplowing rate was \$660/mile – the same as last year.

***Supervisor Key made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Rosato, to approve the Itasca County “Agreement for work on Township Roads” for snow removal as shown on Attachment A at a rate of \$660/mile. The contract period is May 1, 2013 to April 30, 2014. Upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote.***

- Update from GIS user’s group meeting

Clerk Smith attended a GIS users group meeting on March 7<sup>th</sup>, led by Michael LeClaire – the GIS/CAD Technical for the City of Grand Rapids. The purpose of the meeting to discuss GIS mapping benefits and what it can offer partnering communities. Currently Harris Township contracts with the City of Grand Rapids for use of their GIS system for Harris Cemetery.

At the meeting, Smith noted that Harris was the only entity using GIS for their cemetery, other than the city of Grand Rapids, but that Cohasset was interested in adding it. The others in attendance – from Deer River, Cohasset, Nashwauk and Grand Rapids– all use GIS for their public utilities, including water and sewer.

Smith’s biggest take away from the meeting that was adding GIS layers (such as roads) would *not* increase the yearly cost sharing fee currently paid to Grand Rapids by the township. That fee is based solely on population. There would be some upfront costs, however, to add a layer - for design (likely to be minimal), and data entry.

Some suggestions by LeClaire for Harris would be to add a road layer so that road sign maintenance could be done via GIS, as well as providing access to road ROWs, easements, and vacations which could be accessed via computer or smartphone.

LeClaire said they’ve found that the more GIS databases are used, the more users realize the capability that’s out there. And, the more field employees use and update the data, the more they trust it and buy into its use and capabilities.

The next GIS users group meeting date has not been set, but Smith will let the board know so that they may also attend if desired.

- Review *draft* minutes from March 12, 2013 Annual Meeting; any changes or corrections?

Smith apologized as she forgot to include the annual meeting minutes in the agenda packet for the board to review. She will include them for comment at the April 10<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.

- Fiscal disparity tax update

At the direction of the board, Supervisor Rosato checked with the Auditor’s office to find out more about their position on the Fiscal Disparity program and tax, and how the township could best support them.

Unfortunately, Auditor Jeff Walker had been out ill, but the information was on his desk, indicating he is working on it. There was also an article in Herald Review about this, indicating that the county probably won’t be able to repeal the tax, but the board commented that a letter of support to local and state representatives could still send a message.

- Century Link bill

Treasurer Adams explained that because the Century Link phone bill is usually received right *after* the Regular board meeting, Adams calls ahead for the bill amount so it can be included on the bill list at the regular meeting. However, the amount told to her for March bill was in error. As a result, Adams asked the board to approve an additional check to Century Link for \$185 to make up for the shortage.

***A motion was made by Supervisor Rosato, seconded by Supervisor Key, to approve an additional payment to Century Link in the amount of \$185.00 in order to be current with the March 2013. Upon roll call, the motion passed by a unanimous vote.***

- Dumpster contract

The board asked when the current dumpster contract with Waste Management would be done, as there is another vendor who has much better rates. Adams explained that the township has another year left on their 3 year contract.

## 9. New Business

- Consider calling for portable bathroom quotes

Supervisor Kortekaas agreed to call for quotes on portable bathrooms for the township landings, parks, and the cemetery. Supervisor Key said he had requests for a portable bathroom at the town hall, for use by kids playing outside during rentals, and for use by the maintenance crew when working at the town hall. Kortekaas will get a quote on that option, and will bring back information to the board at an upcoming meeting.

- Consider setting a date for preparing annual reviews of Township employees, and review of Township Officer and employee compensation:

The board set **Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>** as the meeting date for employee review preparation and review board and employee compensation. The work session will start at 7:30 p.m. but be closed during the employee review portion due to Minn. Stat. § 13D.05 Subd. 3(a). It will then be opened to the public at 8:30pm for the board/employee compensation review portion.

- Consider publishing another township newsletter, in time for Memorial Day.

Clerk Smith recommended publishing 2013 newsletter twice a year – in May, just before the Memorial Day celebration, and in March, just prior to the annual township election and annual meeting.

One of the ICC interns offered to create one for May, as she will still be working for the township. However, she will not be employed by the township for the March 2014 newsletter as she will graduate in May 2013. The clerk commented that would not be able to do a newsletter in March either, due to her workload at that time of year (elections, account balancing, annual report prep, etc.)

***Supervisor Rosato made a motion to have Allie Jurvelin put together a township newsletter as part of her work as an ICC intern with the township. It is to be mailed out to residents prior to Memorial Day. Supervisor Key seconded the motion, and upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote.***

Articles were later noted to be needed by the Regular meeting in April.

- Consider the request for a letter of support in favor of the collaborative efforts to develop an Active Living Center at the YMCA (see email from Ed Zabinski)

The board discussed the email from Ed Zabinski, and letter of support he was requesting for an Active Living Center at the YMCA. Rosato offered to ask someone to come and give a presentation about this project at an upcoming Regular Meeting. The board liked this idea. Then, after the presentation, they would consider whether or not to write a letter of support for the project.

- American Bank – Updated information

Treasurer Adams explained that she was in need of board signatures in order to update the township records at American Bank, where a township savings account is maintained. The board signed the necessary paperwork.

- New insurance laws

Supervisor Key asked if the new “Obama-care” will effect health insurance requirements for township summer interns, as they are hired directly by the township (i.e. Will the township need to offer them insurance?) Treasurer Adams agreed to check into this.

- Public Input:

- Dan Butterfield commented on letter of support request for the Active Living Center. He thought a presentation would be beneficial as there may be duplicate projects going on with Elder Circle and the Manor House.
- Judy Myers commented on the water runoff on Southwood road. She wondered if a developer may have been responsible for creating the problems during land development. Myers suggested it may be worth the township looking into.
- Jeff Schrunk commented on the current Waste Management contract. He said that Local Boy is very competitive and that he didn't have to wait until the end of his contract with WM to switch to Local Boy as they offered to pay the rest of his contract, and not charge him until the contract was paid off. The board was not sure if this would work for the township, as they are on an “on call” contract.
- Jeff Shrunk also commented on the trails. He asked if any of the trails being considered in the feasibility study are motorized. And if not, that they should be, since non-motorized trails do not pay any taxes. Shrunk felt the township needs snowmobile and 4 wheeler trails – not walking or biking trails. He suggested conducting a poll of residents, asking which they prefer.

## 10. Adjourn

***At 9:36pm, Supervisor Rosato made a motion to adjourn tonight's meeting. Upon a second by Supervisor Key, the meeting was adjourned.***

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith – Clerk of Harris Township