

**MINUTES from the P&D Meeting
Harris Township Board
Wednesday, February 24, 2016 at 7:30pm**

The regularly scheduled Planning & Development Meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, February 24, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by Chairman Rosato at the Harris Town Hall, with the following officers present: Supervisors Gary Rosato, Dennis Kortekaas, Jim Kelley, Ken Haubrich, and Burl Ives, as well as Clerk Michele Smith and Treasurer Becky Adams. *Absent:* None

Also in attendance were Matt Wegwerth – SEH road engineer, Andrew Shaw - township attorney, Dick White and his realtor, Marge Kelley, Ryan DeHut, Cari Alleman, and Judy Myers.

1. Pledge to the flag, followed by the reading of the township mission statement

2. Business from the Floor

- Ryan Dehut – Question on expansion plans for broadband internet services in Harris Township

Ryan Dehut lives on East Harris Road and has DSL for internet, but it is very slow. He asked the board if there were any plans for Paul Bunyan or Mediacom to come out to his area of the township.

Supervisor Ives responded on behalf of the board, commenting that they understood Dehut’s frustration and know a lot of people in the township have this same issue. Ives explained that the board had been in touch with Paul Bunyan Communications and Mediacom, and that what they’d learned from Paul Bunyan is that residents need to start a petition for broadband internet in their neighborhoods - asking for service in their area, indicating who would be interested, and the impact of what *not* having broadband means for them. Petitions don’t guarantee service in their area, but it moves areas up on the list. Ives noted there is a township resident near Dehut that has a petition started in the Wendigo Park Road area.

Dehut indicated he’d be interested in doing a petition in his neighborhood; he asked if there was a template for him to use. Ives offered to share the resident’s name with Dehut who has a petition started, so that she could share the petition information with Dehut.

- Cari Alleman – Write-in candidate for township clerk

Cari Alleman informed the board and ICTV audience again of her write-in campaign for the uncontested position of clerk. She has lived in the township for 17 years, has a business background and works for Kootasca. She noted she is familiar with spreadsheets and budgets, and looks forward to the opportunity to serve her community as clerk.

Chairman Rosato thanked Cari for attending tonight, and reminded everyone that the Town Election will be on Tuesday, March 8th, with polls open noon to 8pm.

3. Consent Agenda

- a. Consider approving the sale of cemetery sites to Morris & Betty Ehalt: Sec 2, Block 39, Lot 3, sites 3 & 4
- b. Consider approving the sale of cemetery sites to Tammy Stevens: Sec 3, Block 26, Lot 3, Sites 5-6-7-8

Motion by Supervisor Kortekaas, second by Supervisor Kelley, to approve the consent agenda items as presented. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

4. Roads

- Matt Wegwerth – SEH Road Engineer
 - 2016 Road Improvements project; consider authorization of advertisement

Matt Wegwerth updated the board that SEH was working on plans for 2016 bituminous road project, and requested authorization from the board to advertise the project bid. The bid would be for the full project as proposed, including all of Sunny Beach Road, Isleview Road, Birch Street, Romans Road and Pine Street; there would also be a request for a bid on just section 2 of Sunny Beach Road from Adair Road to Wendigo Park Road.

Motion by Supervisor Ives, second by Supervisor Kelley, to approve that SEH advertise for bids of the proposed 2016 road project and alternate project. Discussion: Wegwerth clarified that the bid would only be advertised in the Grand Rapids Herald Review, as that's the official township newspaper. The deadline for bids would be 21 days, so the bidding time will overlap the bonding vote results date of March 8th. Wegwerth agreed to update bidders once the bonding results were known, so they had a better idea of the actual project for 2016. The bid results may be known by the March 23rd P&D Meeting; Wegwerth will keep the board updated. The motion to authorize SEH to advertise for bids passed by a unanimous vote.

Annual Meeting attendance:

Supervisor Rosato asked Matt Wegwerth if he'd be able to attend the Annual Town Meeting on March 8th at 8:15pm, in case there are questions about the proposed 2016 road project(s). Wegwerth agreed to attend.

- Other road issues/concerns/comments

- Vroman Road questions/concerns – Dick White

Dick White owns a farm in the Wendigo area near the old Hughes Road, and is selling two forty acre parcels off the end of Vroman Road. The fence line of the parcels come right to the corner of the road, so White came to ask if the new owners would have the right to access the parcels off of Vroman Road.

White talked to Mr. Vroman, who didn't have any concerns about accessing the parcels off of Vroman Road.

White commented that some pins of the property corners were found, but others were not.

Supervisor Rosato shared that he had been out to the area and did a site survey so he was familiar with how Vroman Road ends at the fence line of White's parcels. Rosato also visited with the Itasca County Surveyor, who said the property comes right up to the corner of Vroman Road.

Township attorney Andrew Shaw was in the audience and gave his input on the situation. Overall, the potential buyer of White's two parcels wants to know if there's a public right of way to the property. Shaw explained there are two questions for determining this: (1) Is the road a town road? If so, this creates a public right of way. Most town roads have been recorded, but if the road was *not* recorded, that doesn't mean it's not a town road as it could be a town road by use and maintenance. Question (2) Does the road abut the property? In other words, could a person drive off the end of the road and onto the land? It appears that that it does, as the road is up the section line.

Shaw further explained that when property is sold, a title company will identify if there's any issues with access. White's realtor commented that the title work had not yet been started; the plat drawing was just received today and it appears there's no issue as the end of Vroman Road ends at their property line. And as such, there is access.

The board agreed that they strongly believed there is access.

Shaw commented that he has not examined the title, but it's not an issue unless someone makes it an issue. He advised the board that when title work comes back, if there's any issues, the board can pursue the matter further.

- Salt request on slippery roads

Ives noted that he'd received a call from residents in the Isleview/Birch Street area earlier this week, requesting salt on the road.

- Norberg Drive:

Supervisor Haubrich commented that he'd observed the repairs made last fall on Norberg Drive are not holding up; the cracks have gotten really bad. Supervisor Rosato agreed, and commented that the

traverse cracks were really bad. Matt Wegwerth from SEH was asked look at this road when the ice melts.

5. Recreation

- Rinks update

Supervisor Rosato commented that both Wendigo and Crystal rinks are still open; the rain on Monday actually did a nice job flooding the rinks, which froze nicely. Rosato will check the ice again tomorrow after the recent sunshine, as he anticipated they would be need to be closed soon due to warmer temps in the forecast.

6. Town Hall Report

The board reviewed the town hall report as prepared by the new town hall caretaker, dated 1-29-16. Supervisor Haubrich commended Amber Hartl on the report; he really liked how she prepared it.

Some Town Hall related items reviewed:

- Consider approval of a DJ during the town hall rental on June 18, 2016 for a 50th Anniversary;

As outlined in the #7 of *Town Hall Lease Agreement*, which states: "Board shall clear any entertainment...", the board reviewed the request for a DJ during the June 18th rental. They did not have any concerns.

Motion by Supervisor Ives, second by Supervisor Haubrich, to approve the DJ request for June 18th, 2016. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Clerk Smith will let the town hall caretaker know of the board's approval.

- Discuss coverage of Town Hall duties while Caretaker (Amber) is out of town on April 8-10, 2016

Supervisor Haubrich agreed to be the contact person while the care taker is out of town; Smith will let Amber know, and ask that she provide Haubrich's contact information to anyone renting the hall while she's gone, in case of problems.

- Discuss contacting Construction General Labor Union, regarding their possession of a town hall key

The Labor's Union used to meet at the town hall on a regular basis, but a note was found by the new caretaker in the payment box that they have found another location. However, the renter – Tim McCauley, secretary for the Union – may still has a town hall key, per a note found from the former caretaker. There was no phone number known for McCauley so Clerk Smith offered to send a letter from the township to the address that is on the Union's checks, and request the key be returned if they still had one. The board agreed.

- Consider setting a date to review the town hall policy and lease in detail, for possible updates.

The board agreed the town hall policy and lease should be reviewed in detail. They will keep this on their radar for April or May, when the new clerk is on board. Smith noted that this would be a good idea as she felt there were some discrepancies, such as showing 'dances' as an approved activity on the policy, yet the lease noting any music had to be approved by the board.

7. Maintenance Report: Jan 11 – Feb 5, 2016

The board reviewed the maintenance report as prepared by the maintenance crew. There were no questions or concerns.

8. Old Business

- Cost to publish notice of the Annual Meeting and Election in the Mines and Pines (tabled from 2/10 Regular Meeting)

Supervisor Kelley contacted the Mines and Pines Shopper to ask what the cost would be for the same Annual Meeting and Election notice that was published in the Herald Review. This was done because the board liked the idea that *everyone* in the township got the shopper, whereas only those who subscribe gets the Herald Review. Kelley requested costs for ads with and without a sample ballot:

- \$400 per run, for the notice and sample ballot of a similar but slightly smaller size
- \$279 per run, for just the notice (no sample ballot)

The board then discussed concerns they had about setting a precedence if this notice was published in both the Herald Review and the Mines and Pines Shopper; would people then expect *all* township related notices to be published in both? The board also questioned how many more people would see the notice in the Mines & Pines. And, if sources other than the official township newspaper were to be used for this ad, should ads also be placed on the radio? And if so, which stations?

Motion by Supervisor Ives, second by Kelley, to only advertise the Annual Town Meeting and Election for March 8, 2016 in the township's official paper – the Herald Review (and not in the Mines and Pines, as previously approved on February 10th 2016). Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Changing the official newspaper to the Mines and Pines was also discussed, as the board will designate an official newspaper at the annual reorganization meeting coming up on March 23, 2016. However, certain notices such as road bids need to go in a 'Legal' section of a paper, which the Mines and Pines does not have. Therefore, it may not be suitable for the township's official newspaper.

9. New Business

- Notice of local Board of Appeal and Equalization (BAE): Wed. May 4th, 2016 at 9:00am
Clerk Smith advised the board to put Wednesday, May 4th at 9am on their calendars for the annual Board of Appeal and Equalization. The town hall has been reserved, and notice will be published in the newspaper as the date gets closer. Supervisor Rosato is currently the only supervisor with his BAE certification. The other supervisors were encouraged to get their certification, as at least one supervisor at the BAE meeting needs to be certified in order to hold the BAE meeting.
- Consider setting date for a work session to discuss the 2016 Reorganization Meeting, and officer duties
The Board set **Tuesday, March 22nd at 7:00pm at the Service Center** as the time and place for a work session to discuss the March 23rd 2016 reorganization meeting and officer duties. The clerk will post notice of the meeting accordingly.

10. Public Input

- None

11. Upcoming meetings/events

- Tues. Mar 8 Town Election polls open from noon to 8:00pm Harris Town Hall
Board of Canvass..... 8:10pm Harris Town Hall
Annual Town Meeting..... 8:15pm Harris Town Hall
- Wed. Mar 9 Regular Meeting..... 7:30pm Harris Town Hall
- Tues. Mar 22 Work Session..... 7:00pm Service Center
- Wed. Mar 23 Reorganizational Meeting and P&D Meeting..... 7:30pm Harris Town Hall

12. Adjourn

**Motion by Supervisor Kelley, second by Supervisor Ives, to adjourn tonight's meeting at 8:21 pm.
Motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Clerk0