

**MINUTES from the REGULAR Meeting
Harris Township Board
Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at 7:30pm**

The Regular Meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, January 13, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm, 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: Matt Wegwerth – S E H road engineer, Amber Hartl – new town hall caretaker, Frances Haubrich, Marge Kelley, Judy Myers, Dan Butterfield, and two other residents.

1. **Pledge to the flag**, followed by the reading of the township mission statement
2. **Consider approval of Minutes** from Regular Meeting on December 9, 2015 and the Work Session on January 6, 2016

Motion by Supervisor Kortekaas, second by Supervisor Kelley to approve the minutes as presented for December 9th and January 6th meetings. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

3. Business from the floor

- Introduction of the new town hall caretaker: Amber Hartl
Chairman Rosato introduced Amber Hartl to the board, the township's new town hall caretaker. She has been hired through Personnel Dynamic and started her new position a couple weeks ago.
- Judy Myers regarding roads taken over by the board
Myers expressed concern over the board accepting a private road as a township road when it did not meet township standards as outlined in the "Establishing a Town Road" policy. Wendigo Park Circle will need gravel, and Myers asked if the owners would be paying for Class V prior to the board taking over the road maintenance. Supervisor Rosato explained that this road was built to township standards at the time it was developed, and that the board would deal with any deficiencies in the current road condition.

4. Consent Agenda

1. Consider approval of revised Town Hall policy and pamphlet, with garage/rummage sales omitted

Motion by Supervisor Kortekaas and second by Supervisor Ives to approve the consent agenda item.

Discussion: Ives asked that the current town hall rental fees be discussed in the spring of 2016, to consider an increase in rates. Clerk Smith clarified that she will add the new town hall caretaker's cell phone number to the Town Hall policy before printing the brochure. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

5. Roads

- Matt Wegwerth – Township Road Engineer from S E H
Matt explained that S E H is working to find a replacement for Glen Hodgson, the township's designated engineer. Once the new person is hired, Wegwerth said they will be groomed for Harris Township. Until then, he and Sara will be filling in.
- Consider approving the Letter of Agreement proposal for design and bidding services for the proposed 2016 Improvement Projects on Sunny Beach Road, Isleview Drive, and Birch Street.
Wegwerth reminded the board that at the last work session, they discussed the favorable timing of bidding out the 2016 bituminous road project. He proposed bidding with two options: Option (A) would include all the roads previously proposed (all of Sunny Beach Road, Birch Street, and Isleview Drive), and assumes bonding will be approved to finance the \$3,057,000 project. Option (B) would be an alternate bid for just one section of Sunny Beach Road - section #2 from Adair Road to Wendigo Park Road. This is the 'worst' section of Sunny Beach, and the board felt it needed to be repaired in 2016 even if the bonding question on the town ballot fails.

The proposal amount for the design and bidding phases of the 2016 project was \$79,500.00.

The scope of services were outlined in the letter from S E H dated Jan 8, 2016, and Wegwerth pointed out that the proposal was for the project design phase only; it did not include the construction phase. The design phase includes preparation of the plans and specifications, preparation of the bidding documents and bid advertisement. The construction phase will not begin until after March 8th when the bonding vote results are known and the project details are confirmed by the board.

The schedule showed design to be completed by the end of February 2016, and bidding starting the end of February and extending into March.

The board discussed that the proposed cost of \$79,500 is a lot of money if only a portion of Sunny Beach Road gets done. However, it would be an investment for the future as the entire road would still need to be done at some time, and the drawings and design would still be good for at least five years.

The board agreed that it would be more cost effective to bid Option A and Option B at the same time, rather than separately.

Some supervisors expressed that if they waited until after the March town question vote results to move forward with design and bidding, the contractors' pencils may not be as sharp. Wegwerth added that it takes SEH a month and a half to prepare for bidding. This meant that if they didn't start design until mid-March (after the vote results), bids would not go out until late April and by then, many contractors already have their work for the season. In addition, this would mean late summer/early fall construction. However, while not ideal, Wegwerth added that waiting to move forward until after the township election was an option.

A motion was made by Supervisor Ives to sign the Letter of Agreement with S E H for design and bidding services for the proposed 2016 improvement projects on Sunny Beach Road, Isleview Drive, and Birch Street as presented for a lump sum fee of \$79,500.00. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Kortekaas. Discussion and clarification: The design for bids would be for A – a large project of all the roads noted above, and B – a smaller project of just Sunny Beach Road from Adair Road to Wendigo Park Road (the worst section of Sunny Beach); Birch Street and Isleview would only be a part of project A. Design for improving other sections of Sunny Beach Road (only), or for just Birch or just Isleview would not be included; additional design work to do this would cost apx \$5,000 per road/section. Supervisor Haubrich expressed concern with a lump sum only proposal rather than an itemized one, especially given the amount being proposed. Clerk Smith suggested that the board could table a decision until the P&D Meeting on Jan 27th and Wegwerth agreed that would be acceptable. Chairman Rosato then called for a vote. The motion passed, with one opposed vote by Haubrich.

- A signed copy of the Notice of Termination for the Woodland Park Rd and Melody Lane project had been submitted to the state (FYI). No action was needed by the board.
- Other road issues/concerns/comments
 - Lakeview Trail update (see emails between Glen Hodgson and Andrew Shaw)
- Itasca county Transportation Department memo dated Dec 11, 2015 regarding the Township Sign Program. Deadline of Feb 5, 2016 to apply; a resolution by the town would be needed.

The board reviewed the memo from Itasca County regarding the Township Sign Program. The county engineer had also spoken to town officers at a recent Itasca County Township Association meeting, explaining the grant program and that there is \$800,000 for all of Minnesota; the amount that Itasca County would get was unknown. Overall, the program would allow 80/20 cost sharing through a federal grant, whereby a designated person would come in and do road sign inventory and reflectivity testing, and tell the town board what should be replaced. However, if a township has their own plan, they may not need these services. Rosato commented that Harris

Township does have a sign policy in place which was developed by the maintenance crew including a sign inventory, reflectivity testing, when signs were/need to be replaced, and the life of signs. The process has been in place for several years (since 2012). A copy of this sign policy is kept in a binder in the town hall office.

Because the deadline to apply for the program was not until February 5, 2016, a motion was made by Supervisor Kelley, seconded by Supervisor Haubrich, to table a decision on this matter until the Jan 27, 2016 P&D meeting. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

6. Recreation

- Update on skating rink attendants and the opening of warming houses

Supervisor Rosato gave an update on the opening of the skating rinks. Wendigo rink and warming house had been open for about a week, and the rink and warming house at Crystal Park was just opened last night. Both were closed tonight due to lack of available attendants. There are only two rink attendants hired to date, but Express Professionals and Personnel Dynamics were working to find at least one more attendant. Supervisor Ives asked if a sign-in book was being done at the houses. Rosato responded that there is not a sign-in book, but that attendants are keeping a daily headcount. Wendigo had 10 to 15 people/day on average since opening, Rosato commented.

7. Correspondence

- Board Action items:
 - None
- Noteworthy items:
 - 2016 Fire Contract from the City of Grand Rapids: \$79,972
 - Notice from Itasca County of Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment initiated by Itasca County Gun Club; Planning Commission public hearing Wed. Jan 13 at 9am; County Board public hearing on Tues. Feb 2 at 3:00pm. (see copy of notice for more information)
 - Collaborative Opportunities Meeting minutes from Nov 30, 2015 and agenda from Jan 13, 2016
 - Signed contract for Personnel Dynamics dated Jan 7, 2016 for Town Hall Caretaker; rates included
 - CC: Letter from Shaw & Shaw to Itasca County Recorder, of Town's acceptance of platted roads as per resolution #2015-012 (Wendigo Park Circle, Kathryn Avenue, and Nicholas Street)
 - Itasca County request for Annual Report of Outstanding Indebtedness for Dec 31, 2015 (to Becky)
 - Updated "Attachment A" of Itasca County Road Contract as of 12-14,15, and plowing map
 - Rosato noticed that one road was not marked on the snowplowing map: Davis Road. He added that the county knows to plow Davis Road, but that it was not on snowplowing map. Rosato agreed to contact the county.
 - CC: Donation decline letter sent to Elder Circle, per Resolution #2008-004
- Non-action items
 - Copies of Itasca County *approved* land use and subsurface sewage treatment system permits
 - Copies of Itasca County approved shoreland alteration permit applications from 2015
 - Holiday cards from S E H and Wells Fargo

8. Old Business

- Review and discuss Paul Bunyan Communications map of areas with no service

Supervisor Ives shared a map from Paul Bunyan Communications of Harris Township, and where their services are or will be. A section noted in pink on the map was where Paul Bunyan plans to come in via a Federal grant they just received. Tan sections on map are where there is internet services currently. Dead zones, where there is no internet services (via Paul Bunyan, Mediacom, or Century Link) were also shown on the map. For example, Field Crest Road is considered a dead zone as there are providers that provide internet services.

Paul Bunyan explained to Ives that these dead areas where there is no broadband/high speed internet may be eligible for federal grant dollars. However, if even one home has service, the entire area is *not* eligible.

In order for Paul Bunyan to go after the dead zones, they suggested that township residents do a petition and a business plan – including how the lack of internet impacts them, and the number of residents willing to purchase services. Ives added that people who are passionate about getting Paul Bunyan broadband internet services into Harris Township are needed to get this process started. He suggested anyone interested should contact him.

The map from Paul Bunyan Communications will be kept in the town hall office.

- Consider approval to update the “Employee Compensation” page of the current Township Employee Manual, to increase the Skating Rink Attendant hourly wage from \$8.00 to \$9.00/hr.

Rosato explained that the current Employee Compensation page shows that Skating Rink Attendants are to be paid \$8.00/hour. However, when contracting with Express Pros employment agency, they said that the rate had to be at least \$9/hr based on minimum wage requirements. As a result, the contract which the town board approved indicated \$9/hour and not \$8/hr as had been paid in the past. Rosato and Adams as HR representatives for the township agreed to go with the \$9/hr rate, given the explanation of the requirement by the staffing agency.

Clerk Smith asked that the Employee Compensation page of the Township employee Manual be revised accordingly, to \$9.00/hr for rink attendants.

Motion by Supervisor Kortekaas, second by Supervisor Kelley, to increase the Skating Rink Attendant rate to \$9.00/hr on the Employee Compensation page of the Township Employee Manual. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

- Consider township email account options as presented by JDI Net and PC Refresh (tabled from Dec 9th P&D meeting)

The board was still unsure of the costs and what would be involved in moving to township specific emails for the board and employees.

Motion by Supervisor Kelley, second by Supervisor Haubrich, to table this matter until the March 23rd, 2016 P&D meeting. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

- Consider setting dates for budget work sessions in February 2016

The board set the following dates and times for budget work sessions:

- Monday, Feb 1, 2016 at 7:00pm at Harris Town Hall
- Wednesday, Feb 17, 2016 at 7:00pm at Harris Town Hall

Clerk Smith agreed to post these accordingly.

9. New Business

- Consider Resolution #2016-001 to accept petition requesting a vote on the issuance of bonds

Chairman Rosato explained that the board needs to either accept or reject the petition that was submitted by township residents, asking the board to place the question of issuing bonds for road improvement on the town ballot in March 2016. If the board rejects the petition, the option to bond is dead for a year. If they accept the petition and approve the resolution, a question will go on the ballot and the voters will decide if the board will proceed with bonding for 2016 road improvements.

Motion by Supervisor Ives, second by Supervisor Kelley, to accept the petition and approve Resolution #2016-001 to put the question of bonding on the next Township Ballot for March 8, 2016. Discussion: Clerk Smith noted that the wording for ballot as shown was per the bonding attorney, and that the line “BY VOTING “YES” ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION, YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROEPTY TAX INCREASE” is required by state statue; it cannot be modified to say “may” cause an increase. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

- IRS Business Mileage rate decrease notice for 2016: \$0.540/business mile (down from \$0.575/mile in 2015)
No board action required; this was just for the board's information.
- Consider approval of RBA #1 – approval of township Election Judge list for March 8, 2016
Motion by Supervisor Kelly, second by Supervisor Haubrich, to accept the Clerk's list of Township Election Judges at wages as presented in the RBA. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.
- Consider approval of Resolution #2016-002 Appointing Absentee Ballot Board for March 2016 Twp Election
Motion by Supervisor Kelly, second by Supervisor Haubrich, to approve Resolution #2016-002 to appoint all election judges to the Absentee Ballot Board for the March 2016 township election. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

10. Treasurer's Report – dated January 13, 2016, *if ready* (of December 1-31, 2015 financials)

Treasurer Adams recapped the treasurer report, cautioning the board that the fund balances as of Dec 31, 2015 are preliminary until after 2015 audit is completed. She also reminded the board that 12/31 balances reflect the December 2015 apportionments which are used for cash flow for bills during the first half of 2016.

- Balance Dec 1, 2015: \$1,100,284.48
- Receipts: \$ 405,567.71
- Disbursements: \$ (64,001.06)
- Balance Dec. 31, 2015: \$1,441,851.13

Motion by Supervisor Kortekaas, second by Supervisor Ives, to approve the January 13th Treasurer's report of December 2015 financials as presented. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Treasurer Adams then requested permission from the board to get new laptop computer, as she has been using her own personal computer since she became Treasurer. Adams would like the same model and software that was purchased for the clerk in 2015 from Computer Enterprises for apx \$1,000. Clerk Smith noted that the budget for computers in the General Fund was \$1,500 for 2016.

Motion by Supervisor Kortekaas, second by Supervisor Kelley, to approve the purchase of a new laptop computer form Computer Enterprises for the Treasurer – not to exceed the budgeted amount of \$1,500. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

11. Approve payment of bills for January 2016

In response to a question, Adams confirmed that the maintenance crew's paychecks were for five weeks or 200 hours; this is why they were higher than the normal 160 hour paychecks.

Motion by Supervisor Kelly, second by Supervisor Haubrich to pay the bills as per the attached document titled "January 2016 Bill Listing to Board" in the amount of \$28,372.05. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

12. Public Input (*please limit comments to 5 minutes*)

- **Dan Butterfield:** Sound from the live TV broadcasts was not good per a friend of his who watches online from Texas. Butterfield also asked the clerk to please explain the absentee ballot process for those who would like to vote AB for the Township Election. Clerk Smith explained the process and added she would also put the information on the home page of the township website.
- **Judy Myers:** The board should consider contacting Itasca Community College to have them tell students to contact the two local employment agencies regarding the available rink attendant positions.

13. Upcoming events and meetings

- Wed. Jan 20 Board of Audit and Budget Work Session..... 7:00pm Harris Town Hall
- Wed. Jan 27 Planning & Development Meeting..... 7:30pm Harris Town Hall

- Mon. Feb 1 Budget Work Session..... 7:00pm Harris Town Hall
- Wed. Feb 8 Itasca County Township Association Meeting..... 7:00pm Itasca Co. Court House
- Wed. Feb 10 Regular Meeting..... 7:30pm Harris Town Hall
- Wed. Feb 17 Budget Work Session..... 7:00pm Harris Town Hall

14. Adjourn

With no other business to become before the board, a motion was made at 8:59pm by Supervisor Kortekaas to adjourn tonight’s meeting. Upon a second by Supervisor Kelley, the motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Clerk of Harris Township

January 2016 Bill Listing to Board

| | Description | Amount |
|-------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Gary Rosato | Mtgs, wages, labor, less withholding | 795.32 |
| Dennis Kortekaas | Mtgs, wages, labor, less withholding | 539.30 |
| Burl Ives | Mtgs, wages, labor, less withholding | 401.81 |
| Jim Kelley | Mtgs, wages, labor, less withholding | 426.31 |
| Ken Haubrich | Mtgs, wages, labor, less withholding | 502.52 |
| Michele Smith | Mtgs, wages, labor, less withholding | 1,326.72 |
| Becky Adams | Mtgs, wages, labor, less withholding | 907.86 |
| Dan Key | Labor less withholdings | 2,765.79 |
| Derrick Martila | Labor less withholdings | 2,947.08 |
| PERA | ONLINE pmt:: Payroll withholding | 1,551.11 |
| Blue Cross Blue Shield | insurance premiums 1/1/16-4/1/16 | 3,086.49 |
| Burggraf's Ace Hardware | bulbs, gloves, ice melt | 110.61 |
| Century Link | ONLINE pmt:: Dec phone service | 286.18 |
| Davis Oil | fuel for equipment | 210.67 |
| Grand Rapids Public Utilities | Utilities, lights and town hall | 211.42 |
| Herald Review | notice-public office, filing notice | 465.60 |
| Home Depot | ONLINE pmt:: service center supplies | 186.60 |
| Itasca County Auditor | Proposed tax notices | 512.42 |
| Itasca County Sheriff's Dpt | annual alarm permit fee: Garage, Cemetery, Service Center | 30.00 |
| L & M | service center supplies | 203.76 |
| Lake Country Power | ONLINE pmt:: energy bill - service center, wendigo, crystal, cemetery | 562.58 |
| MediaCom | PHONE PAY:: sept phone and internet service - town hall | 101.40 |
| Minuteman press | agenda packets | 76.06 |
| ODC | vehicle and trailer registrations | 64.00 |
| Range Water | water cooler Dec | 10.00 |
| S E H | Engineering Services - misc. services | 4,420.00 |
| Schwartz and Sons | grader work done on Bear Creek Road and Wagon Wheel - 11/11 as requested | 390.00 |
| Shaw and Shaw | title examiner, lakeview trail, road bonds, application and resolution | 1,235.75 |
| Verizon | cell phone bills - Jan 12 | 105.53 |
| Waste Management | Dec and Jan invoices - 3 yd rel on call | 337.81 |
| Wells Fargo Credit Card | auto payment - and balance pmt | 885.73 |
| Commissioner of Revenue | Payroll withholding :: electronic payment | 243.00 |
| EFTPS | Payroll withholding :: electronic payment | 2,472.62 |
| Total | | \$ 28,372.05 |

Approval to pay :: January 13, 2016, Checks numbered 16988 through 170

Ken Haubrich

Burl Ives

Jim Kelley

Dennis Kortekaas

Gary Rosato