

**Minutes from the Harris Town Board
Work Session
April 17, 2013 at 7:30pm**

A work session of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, April 17, 2013 starting at 7:30pm at the Harris Town Hall. The following officers of the board were present: Supervisors Larry Key, Dennis Kortekaas, Gary Rosato, Treasurer Becky Adams and Clerk Michele Smith. *Absent:* None.

Also in attendance during the open portion of the work session were Julie Kennedy – SEH Engineer, and residents Judy Myers, Dan Butterfield, and Cyndy Martin

1. Pledge to the flag

2. Call the meeting to order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kortekaas, and the township’s mission statement was read.

3. Meeting closed to evaluate Harris Township employees: Dan Key, Derrick Marttila, and Bonnie Key.

Chairman Kortekaas closed the meeting to the public to evaluate the township employees, as allowed by Minn. Stat. § 13D.05 Subd. 3(a). The closed meeting was audio recorded as required by statute. The closed meeting adjourned at 8:17pm.

4. Meeting reopened to the public at 8:30 p.m., as posted, and summarize the conclusion of closed meeting

At 8:30 p.m., Chairman Kortekaas reopened the meeting. Treasurer Adams Becky – HR representative summarized that during the closed session, all three township employees were reviewed with no concerns by the board.

5. Review compensation of the township employees

See “Request for Board Action” dated May 9, 2012 for regular township employees current wages, and consider any changes for May 2013 – April 2014

Clerk Smith reminded the board that any changes to compensation recommended tonight would be placed on the consent agenda of the May 8th Regular Meeting, and that checks cut that night would be based on any new rates of pay approved.

- Maintenance Workers: The current hourly wage for both full time maintenance workers is \$17.50/hour. A copy of the “Full time public works maintenance worker” want ad for the City of Grand Rapids was noted to start at \$17.23/hr, with similar duties for Arbo Township, but without any cemetery responsibilities.

Upon a request from the audience, Supervisor Rosato read the job requirements and responsibilities of a maintenance crew member for Harris Township. Benefits were also mentioned by Rosato, and noted here for reference:

- Medical insurance:
Single medical coverage, through Blue Cross/Blue Shield, with premium paid 100% by the township. The plan consists of a \$300 deductible with a \$25 co pay per office visit. Prescriptions are covered, with a co pay of \$5 for generic/\$35 for brand name drugs.
- Dental:
Single dental coverage, through Security Life Insurance / the Minnesota Association of Township Benefits company, is paid 100% by the township. Coverage includes 2 exams/year at 100%; fillings are covered after a \$50 deductible at 80%, bridges etc. are covered after a \$50 at 50%. The calendar year maximum benefit is \$1,000.
- Life Insurance:
They have \$100,000 life insurance, through MN Assoc. of Twps (MBA), paid 100% by the township.

- Retirement:
The guys have PERA for retirement, where a certain percentage is deducted from their paycheck, and matched by the township.
- Paid time off:
Both guys will now have 15 days of paid vacation, according to the township’s policy, and 8.5 paid holidays, which includes 2 floating holidays. They do *not* have “sick days”, but vacation days and their floaters can be used in lieu of day without pay.

Because both Maintenance Workers are excellent employees, and both had a good evaluation, Supervisor Rosato made a motion to recommend a \$0.50/hour pay increase, from \$17.50/hour to \$18.00/hour, which is approximately a 3% increase. Supervisor Key seconded the motion. Discussion: Rosato commented that the board should consider putting a cap on the pay scale at some time. No change to benefits was recommended. Upon roll call, the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

- Town Hall Caretaker: The current rates of pay for the part time town hall caretaker are: \$14.50/hr per cleaning hour and \$14.25/per showing appointment.

After discussing that Bonnie is an excellent employee, and had a good evaluation, Supervisor Rosato made a motion to recommend an increase of \$0.25 to the cleaning hour rate (to \$14.75/hour) and no increase in showing appointment rate. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key and upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Supervisor Rosato, Clerk Smith, and Treasurer Adams will set up a time to meet with the employees to before May 8th to present their evaluation results and proposed wage increases.

- Review “Employee Compensation Policy” last amended July 11, 2012, and update as needed

The board reviewed the policy page for starting wages of a new maintenance worker, a new town hall caretaker, and for temporary employees, including skating rink attendants, summer maintenance interns, moderator of the annual meeting, and election judges.

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to have the rates of the “Employee Compensation Policy” remain unchanged as of the amended date of July 11, 2012. Supervisor Key seconded the motion, and upon roll call, motion passed by a unanimous vote.

6. Review compensation of Supervisors, Treasurer, and Clerk

Resolution #2012-004 was reviewed, as it outlined town board officers’ current compensation:

Township Board Supervisor Serving as Chairman:	\$450.00 per month, plus \$ 17.50 per hour for allocated labor, and \$ 60.00 per regularly scheduled, or legally required, Township meetings
Township Board Supervisors (non-chairman)	\$400.00 per month, plus \$ 17.50 per hour for allocated labor, and \$ 60.00 per regularly scheduled, or legally required, Township meetings
Township Clerk	\$800.00 per month (\$100 of this is allocated to cemetery) and \$ 17.50 per hour for allocated labor**, and \$ 60.00 per regularly scheduled, or legally required, Township meetings
Township Treasurer:	\$600.00 per month, plus \$ 17.50 per hour for allocated labor, and \$ 60.00 per regularly scheduled, or legally required, Township meetings

Deputy Treasurer/Clerk Compensation will be the same as the absent Officer, for duties performed.

All amounts paid to Town Officers as compensation shall be subject to all appropriate taxes and withholdings as provided by law.

**** The Clerks allocated labor includes, but is not limited to, time spent on minute preparation after non-regularly scheduled meetings and work sessions, website updates, and newsletter coordination.**

The board discussed if any changes were desired for May 2013 – April 2014. Treasurer Adams reminded the board that they (township officers) also have the following benefits:

Life Insurance:

A group life insurance policy through the Minnesota Benefit Association, in an amount to be determined by the Town Board, will be provided for each Town Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer (Deputies are not covered). Currently, the Life Insurance for officers is a \$20,000 Term Life Policy.

Retirement

The Public Employees Retirement Association of Minnesota (PERA) plan is used for each Town Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer (Deputies are not included)

Adams noted that there have been some recent changes to PERA for each officer to consider. She will provide that information on an individual basis at the P&D meeting in April.

Supervisor Key recommended increasing the hourly rate for allocated labor of the Supervisors, Clerk and Treasurer from \$17.50/hour to \$18.00/hour, to stay in line with the maintenance crew's hourly rate; furthermore, Key recommended leaving all other rates the unchanged. Motion was seconded by Rosato for discussion: The clerk, treasurer, and board agreed that they were all okay with their currently monthly salaries, and meeting per diem amount. Upon roll call, the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

This rate change recommendation will be considered for official board action under the consent agenda of the May 8th Regular Meeting.

7. Review the pavement rehabilitation project bids, and consider award recommendation, for:

- Stony Point Road
- Westwood Drive
- Westwood Lane

Note: These township roads were bid with Itasca County's road projects.

Julie first commented on the handout she presented to the board at the Regular meeting on April 10th, and that she realized that the last page of the contract was not reviewed / approved. It is a resolution to certify town roads for improvements, and confirms that the County indicated a willingness to enter into an Agreement providing assistance to the township, and that the town board certifies that roads designated for work are officially designated Town Roads. It basically is a part of the contract previously approved by the board.

After reviewing the resolution, Supervisor Rosato made a motion to approve and adopt Resolution #2013-003 "Resolution to certify Town Roads for Improvement" as a part of the "Town Road Construction, Improvement and Maintenance Contract" previously approved, to allow the township roads be bid with the county's pavement project. Supervisor Key seconded the motion, and upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote.

The bids received by the County were then reviewed by the town board. There were four bidders, and the results were provided by Kennedy in her handout. The County will consider an award to Hawkinson

Construction at their next meeting, as the lowest responsible bidder. However, the town board's approval is required to move forward with the construction of the Township projects as part of the County Project Kennedy reminded the board that doing so would obligate the township to pay for their portion of the projects.

Kennedy recommended approval of low bidder, Hawkinson Construction, to do a tight blade and 1 ½" overlay – and Class I shouldering – on Westwood Lane, Westwood Drive, and Stony Point Road. She noted that there was no striping, or ditching/drainage correction included in the bid. The total cost for these 3 roads was roughly \$84,000.

After reviewing the bid results received by Itasca County as shared by Julie Kennedy of SEH, and discussing the township roads included in the bids, a motion was made by Supervisor Rosato to approve construction of Stony Point Road, Westwood Drive, and Westwood Lane as outlined in Itasca County project #2012-8 in which the county board will consider the award of a contract to Hawkinson Construction at their next meeting. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key, and upon roll call, the motion passed by a unanimous vote.

Board discussed that they'd like to have the non functioning culvert taken out Stony Point Road, along with the tree stumps coming up through the pavement on Stony Point Road. They understood it would be in addition to cost of the project bid with county.

In addition, the Board discussed having an engineer look at drainage issues on Southwood near Barney & Jan Bignall's property – near where Pine Landing meets the road. The board agreed that the supervisors and Kennedy should meet onsite to physically see what is going on with the drainage before having the road project done on Southwood. Kennedy commented that this would need to be done soon, as the County is going to start paving LaPlant Road soon, and that May 2nd is the bid opening for Southwood and Robinson Roads.

The board agreed that the Harris Town Board of Supervisors would meet on Wednesday, April 24th at 5:30pm on Southwood Road, near Pine Landing and the Barney Bignall residence, 32771 Southwood Rd. The purpose of this on-site inspection would be to review resident drainage concerns in this area of Southwood Road, with a road engineer from SEH, and discuss correction options for possible inclusion with the road improvement project planned for Southwood Road for the summer of 2013

The Clerk will post this meeting accordingly on Thursday, April 18th in keeping with the open meeting law.

8. Public input session

- Dan Butterfield commented that he'd seen he'd seen a comparable wages spreadsheet for surrounding cities and townships, and based on that, he was glad the board took the action they did on recommended wages for Harris Township employees and officers of the board.

9. Adjourn

Supervisor Rosato made a motion to adjourn tonight's meeting at 9:36pm; upon a second by Supervisor Key, the work session was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith, Harris Township Clerk