



MINUTES

from
March 11, 2014
Annual Meeting
Harris Town Hall
8:15pm

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Harris Town Board strives to enhance the quality of life, protect the environment, and maintain economic stability for the residents of their community.

www.harristownshipmn.org

1. Call Annual Meeting to Order

The annual Harris Town meeting was called to order by Clerk Michele Smith at 8:15pm on March 11, 2014 at the Harris Town Hall. Approximately 24 residents were in attendance, including all board members (Michele Smith, Gary Rosato, Larry Key, Dennis Kortekaas, and Becky Adams); a copy of the sign-in sheet of attendees will be attached to these minutes. Also in attendance were ICTV, Brian Carlson from the Itasca Fair Board, Lilah Crowe from the Itasca Historical Society, Glen Hodgson – Township Road Engineer from SEH, and Trish Klein, Itasca County Administrator.

2. Pledge to the flag

Everyone in attendance joined the Clerk in the pledge to the flag.

3. Election of a moderator

Clerk Smith called for nominations of a moderator for tonight's meeting. Rusty Eichorn was nominated by Burl Ives, and seconded by Larry Key. There were no other nominations for moderator.

Upon roll call, the electorate voted unanimously to approve Rusty Eichorn as the Moderator of the Annual Harris Town Meeting. There was no one opposed.

4. Approve minutes of the annual meeting held March 12, 2013

The minutes were provided for everyone's review in the annual report packet handed out at tonight's meeting. Chairman Eichorn dispensed the reading of the minutes. There were no questions or comments from the residents in attendance.

A motion was made by Pat Medure, seconded by Bob Ross, to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2013 Annual Town Meeting as written. Upon roll call, motion carried.

5. Receive and approve the Treasurer's Annual Financial report for 2013

The Treasurer's Annual Financial Report for 2013 was included in the annual report, on page 17. The report recapped there was a beginning balance on Jan 1, 2013 of \$1,196,801.71. There was an audit adjustment of \$442.03, receipts of \$925,223.97, and disbursements of \$848,598.71. The ending balance as of 12/31/13 was \$1,273,869.00. The breakout by fund was also shown on the report.

There were no questions or comments from the floor.

Dan Butterfield made a motion, seconded by Tom Stanley, to approve the Treasurer's Annual 2013 Financial Report as presented. Upon roll call, motion carried.

6. Review Road Report

A written road report was included in the annual meeting agenda packet, and included Road & Bridge fund levy information from 2013, road work completed in 2013 with associated expenses, and proposed road work and estimated costs for years 2014 and 2015.

The Clerk explained that this was a report, as required by MN statute 164.03 subd. 4, and was included to provide information for discussion only; there was no need to formally approve said report.

Comments from the audience:

- Pat Medure noted that Bayview Place was omitted from the Township Road list; Clerk Smith apologized for the oversight and will add it to the list of gravel roads.
- Dan Butterfield commented that during 2013, Harris Township collaborated with Itasca County on the 2013 paved road projects, which saved the township a significant amount of money.
- Burl Ives commented that Sunset Drive is plowed, yet there is no one living on the road. It was noted that there is 1 house on Sunset Lane – but agreed that there were no houses on Sunset drive yet. Ives also asked about Stony Point Road, in which the township pays to have the entire road plowed, yet parts of the road are *not* in Harris Township. This arrangement was confirmed by the town board.
- Craig Nelson asked if township roads could be posted to restrict garbage trucks, in order to prevent damage to roads. The town board commented that township roads are posted, with a 4 ton limit. Trish Klein asked Sheriff Vic Williams, who responded via text that, no, garbage trucks are not subject to road restrictions.

With no other comments or discussion, the moderator moved on with the agenda.

7. Review Levy Comparison for years 2010 through 2015

A levy comparison, by fund, from 2010 actual to 2015 proposed, was provided for everyone's review in the annual packet on page 22. Moderator Eichorn recapped that the total proposed levy for 2015 was \$930,000. This was an overall increase of \$65,000 from 2014. The fund amounts that changed were:

- General Fund increased by \$30,000
- Road & Bridge Fund increased by \$30,000
- Equipment Fund increased by \$15,000
- Fire Fund decreased by (\$10,000)

Someone asked about the increase of the levy in the Road & Bridge Fund; it jumped from \$300,000 in 2011 to \$430,000 in 2012. And now, it was proposed to increase from \$430,000 in 2014 to \$460,000 in 2015. Why? The board responded that in 2012, the overall levy remained the same as 2011, but the fund amounts were reallocated – and several funds were reduced so more could be put into the Road & Bridge fund. The higher amount in the Road & Bridge fund continued to be levied the following years in order to fix many of our township roads, as maintaining paved roads is expensive. And, in looking ahead to 2015, we still have a lot of longer paved roads to maintain and so more funding is needed. Thus, another increase to the Road & Bridge fund is proposed by the town board.

It was mentioned that County Road 441 (Blackberry cut across), from River Road to US Highway 2 will be changing names, as it is becoming a County State Aid Highway. It will become known as County State Aid Highway 91.

8. Consider Approval of the 2015 Operating Levies

There were two options listed under item 8, to either a.) Approve the proposed operating levy for 2015 in total, or to b.) Approve operating levies by fund.

Dan Butterfield made a motion to approve the 2015 proposed operating levy in total, in the amount of \$930,000, as shown by fund in detail on pages 23-31 of the Annual Town Meeting Report. The motion was seconded by Bob Ross, and upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote.

9. Review Resolution #2008-004 Donation or Contribution Request Policy

Chairman Eichorn referenced the Resolution #2008-004, noting it was passed by the Harris Town Board on May 14, 2008. He read the resolution aloud, which stated that the Harris Town Board

determined it was not appropriate to donate public township funds to private or non-profit organizations, as it's difficult to ascertain the direct benefit to the township. As a result, it was resolved that all future requests for donations or contributions made at annual meetings would be denied by the Board, with the exception of donating *by levy* to the Itasca County Historical Society and Agricultural Fair Board, both of which are specifically allowed by Minnesota statutes. There were no questions or comment from the audience.

10. Consider each request for a donation/contribution or an additional levy

- *Itasca County Historical Society*

A letter was received from Lilah Crowe, Executive Director of the Historical Society, asking for special **levy** of \$1.00 per capita for 2015, which totaled **\$3,253** annually, based on Harris Township's 2010 census figure. This is the same amount per capita that has been requested and awarded the past several years,

Lilah Crowe talked about the move from Old Central School to their new building, located down town Grand Rapids, near the Blandin Foundation. There will be 50,000 artifacts, documents and supplies moved in to their lower level soon, and a grant was received to store these items properly.

The Historical Society also has come out with an "Ordinary People - Cooks of Itasca County" cookbook, featuring menu items and stories from historical restaurants in Itasca County such as Kremer's, Roy & Dots, Marlin's Café, etc. as well as logging camp cook stories.

Crowe also mentioned they helped Grand Rapids State Bank celebrate 100 years with commemorative items, to help tell their story, and that it is now free to tour the Historical Society museum, thanks to the county's donation.

A motion was made by Burl Ives, seconded by Cyndy Martin, to approve a \$1.00 per capita special levy for the Itasca County Historical Society, collectible in 2015, which represents an annual amount of \$3,253.00 based on the township's 2010 census. Discussion: Does every township donate? Per Crowe, no – but most do. The unorganized townships do not donate. Upon the call for a vote, the motion for a special levy passed unanimously.

- *Itasca County Agricultural Society (aka Fair Board)*

Brian Carlson, a Fair Board representative, gave a presentation in support of the letter received by Clerk Smith, which asked for a **\$1,000.00** donation via a special levy for 2015. Brian explained that the funds would be used for operational support of the Itasca County Fair, and not for capital improvement projects.

Carlson talked about the fence that was repaired in 2013, due to several storm in 2012. Regarding the fair admission fee, the City of Grand Rapids may pay so that people could walk in for free. Also, maintenance will be done in the horse arena; there are rocks that need to be cleared out for the safety of the horses and their riders. After the rocks are cleared, 6" of top soil will be added. And, the annual car swap will be happening again this summer, as the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce has taken this event over, when given up by the car club. A round-about will be built, but should be completed by the end of summer.

Carlson also mentioned that talks about the master plan for the future of the fairgrounds are being held by the fair board, the county, the city, and a stakeholder user group, in order to work together for the common good of the grounds and community.

Other 2014 projects include an additional transformer on the grounds to increase lighting, more signage around the grounds and on the streets, and PA system updates.

Carlson gave a brief history of how the fairgrounds became the fairgrounds; it moved from the LaPrairie area in 1907 - and in August 1907, the first fair held at the current grounds.

Tom Stanley made a motion, seconded by Dan Butterfield, to approve a 2015 special levy for the Agricultural Association (Fair Board) in the amount of \$1,000.00. Upon a vote by the people, the motion passed unanimously

- The following nonprofit agencies submitted letters of request for a township donation, as shown in the back pages of the annual report. However, no one was in attendance to make a presentation for any of the agencies, nor was there any action from the floor when reviewed one by one. Therefore, no action was taken on the requests for donations from the following:
 - Home Visitor Program
 - Support Within Reach

11. Old business

There was no old business from the residents in attendance, but Eichorn reviewed Harris Township's 2013 *Accomplishments* on page 13 as listed in the Annual Meeting Report packet; he commended the board and residents on everything that was done in Harris Township the past year.

12. New business

- None

13. Set *time* for next Annual Meeting, in year 2015

Eichorn noted that the Minnesota State Statutes dictate that the Annual Town Meeting be held the second Tuesday in March, but that the *time and place* must be set by the people.

Dennis Kortekaas made a motion, seconded by Pat Medure to set the time for the 2015 Annual Harris Town Meeting for 8:15pm at the Harris Town Hall, with the Board of Canvass meeting to held immediately following the Annual Meeting. Upon roll call, the motion carried.

13. Adjourn

With no other business, questions, or concerns voiced by the people of Harris Township, Bob Ross made a motion, seconded by Dan Butterfield, to adjourn the Annual Meeting of Harris Township at approximately 9:03 pm. The meeting was adjourned.

In summary, the following levies were approved for 2015

General Fund Operations	\$150,000
Historical Society (\$1/pp of 2010 census)	\$ 3,253
Itasca Co. Agricultural Assoc. (Fair Board)	\$ 1,000
Road and Bridge Fund	\$460,000
Equipment Fund	\$ 15,000
Cemetery Fund	\$ -0-
Recreation Fund	\$ 40,000
Building & Grounds Fund	\$ 50,000
Fire Fund	\$ 75,000
Capital Improvement Fund	\$140,000
	\$934,253

Note: The Board of Canvass Meeting was held right after adjournment of tonight's Annual Meeting, where election results were announced. (See those minutes for results.)

Respectfully submitted,

Michele R. Smith, Clerk of Harris Twp