

**MINUTES from the P&D Meeting
Harris Township Board
Wednesday, February 26, 2014 at 7:30pm**

The Planning and Development Meeting of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, February 26, 2014. The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by Chairman Kortekaas at the Harris Town Hall, with the following officers present: Supervisors Larry Key, Gary Rosato & Dennis Kortekaas, Clerk Michele Smith and Treasurer Becky Adams. *Absent:* None.

Others in attendance: Mike Hendricks – township’s recreational advisor, and residents Burl Ives, Dan Butterfield, and Judy Myers.

1. Pledge to the flag

2. Business from the Floor

- Judy Myers asked the status of the ROW discrepancy along the north side of the town hall driveway. The board commented that nothing has been settled; a resolution is still in progress.

3. Roads

- Slippery Roads
The board noted that roads have been very slippery, due to the extreme cold, snow and wind.
- County Road 441 (Blackberry cut-across road)
Residents who live on County Road 441 (aka “blackberry cut across”) received notice that the road would be changing to a county state-aid road. As a result, their address will change to reflect a new road name. The board speculated this road would be used for truck traffic, and so they will need to talk to County engineer as the current turn onto 441 (in Harris Township) will not support a lot of truck traffic.

4. Recreation

- Mike Hendricks – Proposal for Services
As stated at the last P&D meeting, Hendricks brought his Creative Services Associates “proposal for professional services” for 2014. He shared a copy of with the board, and noted that it’s identical to the contract from last year, and the five prior to that – including the same scope of services, compensation, and professional terms. The contract was for the 2014 calendar year. *(A copy will be attached to these minutes.)*

A motion was made by Rosato, seconded by Key, to continue with Creative Services Associates as presented in the proposal from Mike Hendricks. Upon roll call, the motion was passed by a unanimous vote.

- Skating Rinks
Supervisor Key shared that the skating rinks at Crystal and Wendigo Parks have been open, weather permitting but that the ice is getting bad – and that the snow blower used at the rinks is currently not working. The board discussed that flooding the rinks when it’s below zero is not a good idea; the water freezes too quickly and flakes off. They also discussed that on average, there has been 1-2 skaters at the rinks every-other-day. Key wondered if it was worth keeping them open. Hendricks noted that February 15th-22nd is typically when the rinks are closed, and he recommended closing Crystal rink now.

5. Town Hall Report

- There was no town hall report received.

6. Maintenance Report

- After reviewing the maintenance report as prepared by the township maintenance crew, the board discussed the snow blower that had broken down. Parts were not going to be available until Friday. The snow blower problems were caused, at least in part, by all the moisture in the Service Center garage. Recently, there was even water running down the sheet rock walls. Key explained that the plow trucks and equipment (ASV, & snow

blower) are covered with snow at the end of the day, and parked in the garage. When it melts, the in-floor heat creates moisture in the garage. And while there is an exhaust fan used to try and remove the moisture, doing so often sucks the pilot light out, and then the furnace quits working properly. Overall, these issues reminded the board why a new maintenance facility is needed, and why they have money set aside in the capital improvement fund, dedicated to a new maintenance facility.

7. Old Business

- Update from the Collaborative Opportunities Team meeting of Feb 20th (see meeting's minutes)
Larry attended the collaboration meeting on February 20th. They discussed the facilitator's contract for another year. Total costs for Mary Jo Wimmer is \$3,600 /year for fees and expenses. The group has received a \$2,000 grant from Blandin Foundation to help with these costs, but the balance of \$1,600 needs to be paid by the members. The group split up the remaining \$1,600 and Harris Township's proportion of the dues was \$241 – at first, but then they then realized that the County wasn't included in the split.

The 'dues' cost per government unit was recalculated to include the county, and based on population. The new amount proposed for Harris Township was \$100. Rosato felt this dollar amount was reasonable and well worth the cost, as the group collaborates to get things done. Harris Township also benefits by relating to others problems, and sharing how they've dealt with similar issues. Some of the topics that the opportunities team talks about are fire protection, trails, human resources, & financial services.

A motion was made by Supervisor Rosato to support the collaborative opportunities team in an amount of not more than \$250/year. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Key, and upon roll call, motion passed by a unanimous vote.

The board and audience members discussed bike trails, which was on the agenda of the next Collaborative Opportunities Team meeting. Burl Ives commented that there are 52 miles of biking trails that the City of Grand Rapids currently plows, yet there are only 4 miles of snowmobile trails within the city limits. It was noted that building trails is one thing (there are grants to help build trails); however, the maintenance of the trails is another thing – and can be very costly. There are no grants to help with trail maintenance costs.

Also discussed at the Feb. 20th collaboration meeting was location of future meetings; it was decided, they would rotate between the members. Supervisor Key wondered if Harris Township would be willing to host one of the meetings. Rosato offered the Blandin Foundation instead, and will talk to Mary Jo about this option.

It was noted that the County will eventually host the GIS program used for cemeteries, zoning, roads, water, and public utilities. The city of Grand Rapids currently does this.

8. New Business

- Notice of Board of Appeal & Equalization received, to be held Tuesday, April 29th, at 9:00am
(Town hall has been reserved, and notice will be published as the date gets closer.)
- Review annual snowplowing contract from Itasca County, for May 1, 2014 through April 30, 2015. Snow plowing rate of \$660/mile is the same as last year. (Signed contracts due by April 9th).

After reviewing the contract packet, the following action was taken:

A motion was made by Supervisor Key, and seconded by Rosato, to approve the snowplowing contract (only) with Itasca County for the next 2014-2015 winter season at a rate of \$660/mile. (The county's grading and dust guard services were not desired.) Upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote.

The contract was signed by the Chairman and Clerk, and will be returned to the county.

- MN Association of Township's spring short course flyer – April 3rd, 2014 – Sawmill Inn, Grand Rapids. No pre-registration; \$50 at the door. Runs 9am – 3pm. (No comments by the board.)

- The draft annual report was shared with the board; Clerk Smith asked the board to review all the contents and give her any input/corrections by Wed. March 5th, as she needed to get them revised and printed in time for the annual meeting on March 11th.

9. Public Input

- Burl Ives commented that he attended a county meeting, and noted that Harris Township has a new assessor/appraiser.

10. Adjourn

At 8:30pm, Rosato made a motion to adjourn tonight's P&D meeting. The motion was seconded by Key, and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith – Harris Township Clerk