

**Minutes from the Harris Town Board
Work Session – Sunny Beach Road
October 1, 2014 at 7:00pm**

A work session of the Harris Town Board was held on Wednesday, October 1, 2014 starting at 7:00pm at the Harris Town Hall for an informal, information gathering “neighborhood meeting” for residents of Sunny Beach Road.

The purpose of this work session was for the board to meet with road residents and hear their comments about the condition of Sunny Beach Road as well listen to their concerns, questions, and requests - and to discuss potential road improvements to Sunny Beach Road in the next few years. No board decisions would be made at this meeting.

In attendance were Supervisors Rosato, Key, Kortekaas, Kelley, and Ives, as well as Clerk Smith. *Absent: Treasurer Adams.* Also in attendance was Glen Hodgson – SEH Road Engineer for the township, and apx 36 residents (the vast majority from Sunny Beach Road); *see attached copy of meeting sign in sheet.*

The work session / neighborhood meeting was called to order at 7:02pm by Chairman Rosato, and followed by the pledge to the flag. Rosato made some opening remarks about the purpose of tonight’s work session, and then turned the meeting over to Glen Hodgson – SEH Road Engineer.

Hodgson recapped that Sunny Beach Road is 5.7 miles long with 190 property owners along the road. And that each year in the spring, the board does annual road inspections of all township roads. This past spring, Sunny Beach Road again bubbled to the top for needing improvement.

In looking at the road, Hodgson considers it in 3 sections:

- Harris Town Road to Adair Road:
 - 3.0 miles in length; still in good enough shape for an overlay.
 - **\$540,000** was a rough estimate to repair this section of road.
- Adair Road to Park Road:
 - 1.3 miles in length; deteriorated to the point that an overlay is *not* feasible – and so should be reclaimed
 - **\$390,000** was a rough estimate to repair this section of road
- Park Road to Wendigo Road
 - 1.4 miles in length; on the line for still being a candidate for an overlay, but may need to reclaim
 - **\$252,0000** was a rough estimate to repair this section of road
- **Total of \$1,182,000 or 1.2 million dollars, as a rough estimate for all 5.7 miles of Sunny Beach Road.** Hodgson cautioned that his estimates did NOT include:
 - Any right-of-way acquisition if needed, no shoulder widening if desired, no culvert replacements – such as near Hale Lake or Woodtick (and it’s needed) or raising the road in that area given the water that almost goes over the road.
 - Drainage repair not included, other than a little bit of remedial ditching. Also the cutting down of hills, making curves less sharp, etc. was not included in his estimates.

Overall, there are a lot of things to consider when looking at a road repair project of this size. And so Hodgson and the board asked the residents for their input on what they saw as needing repair on Sunny Beach Road, or areas they felt were fine as is. Below are notes from what residents said in response to this request:

- Audience (q) questions, (c) comments, and (d) discussions:
 - Q: What is the average road repair budget?
A: The Township usually spends \$300,000-\$350,000/year for major reconstruction
 - Q: What about tightblading? Is that an option?
A: Yes – they would do some of that per Hodgson, when overlaying a road. (The process was explained)
 - Q: Have soil borings been done?
A: No, but pavement borings have been.

- Q: What is the current tonnage of the road, as it sits today?
A: 9 ton road on the one end, 7 ton in the middle and on the east section.
- Q: Are there other sources of money available for road repair other than the township budget, such as from the city or state?
A: There was no known funding from the city or county – as they have their own road issues. And the IRRRB does not work with townships and does not do roads. There are grants out there for economic development – but township’s roadways would not fit with the grant purpose.
- Q: Is there a way to *borrow* money for road improvement projects like this?
A: Yes, a Township can bond for it. This is a loan that the township sets up by selling bonds for certain period of time; it’s kind of like taking out a mortgage. The current interest rates look to be around 3%. Several residents voiced that they would be in favor of bonding to get the road fixed all at one time.
- Q: Is Sunny Beach Road currently up to county road standards?
A: No, per Hodgson.
- C: First section of the road is NOT safe – as it’s not curved correctly. Very dangerous – including one death. The board responded that while they recognized that the *road itself* is problem, they are only looking to fix the road *surface* (not the design/width/etc.)
- Q: There are a couple corners that seem have wider shoulders; would the repairs follow existing pavement?
A: Yes – but perhaps something could be done with the shouldering of these corners; need to look at.
- D: Flooded areas of the road were discussed at length, especially around Woodtick as water has come over the road twice, per residents. Another area discussed was “Peterson’s” – now owned by Sutherland, as it is a very low and wet area, and it needs to be corrected. Soil borings here were suggested by a resident to know what’s there.
- C: There is a heave / buckle in road near Petersons/Sutherlands. It needs to be fixed.
- C: Resident would like road fixed ‘right’ if it’s going to be done - especially parts that have been underwater.
- Q: Would pavement at the landings (Casper aka Troop Town and Woodtick) be redone?
A: This has not been determined yet; they would need to be looked at.
- C: The first 2 miles of Sunny Beach Road were resurfaced not that long ago and cracks came back right away – as well as the dips in the road. The board and Hodgson responded that this is common with overlays. If you overlay a crack, it will crack again in the same spot. Crack filling does help with preventive maintenance and is very effective. Sunny Beach Road would have crack filling done the summer after it’s improved.
- Q: Could the whole road physically be redone in a summer?
A: Yes, per Hodgson.
- C: Resident would like to see the entire road done all at once, but if bonding not feasible, do over 3 years.
- Q: There’s a plan to have natural gas run down Sunny Beach in the next year or so; is that a concern?
A: No, per Hodgson; SEH would coordinate with them and any other utilities.
- Q: Are there any plan drawings for residents to review?
A: No not yet. However, they may be working on plans in the next few months - especially if the board decides to bid in the spring of 2015.
- C: There are plans for 2 new houses to be built in Oak Island estates in the spring or 2015. It might be best to haul all the heavy materials on the *old* road – rather risk damaging a newly redone road.
- Q: Are walking or bike trails being considered?
A: This hasn’t been discussed yet – but Hodgson was contacted by a couple people who requested them. They would be an expense, but perhaps grants could be obtained to build them – though they wouldn’t cover the maintenance costs.
- C: Mail boxes: New breakaway posts are only needed if road is 45 mph or greater; the speed limit on Sunny Beach is currently 30mph in the areas posted so new posts will probably not be needed.
- D: Speed limits on Sunny Beach were discussed; some residents expressed they would like to see the entire road 30mph, while others felt the first straight section off of Harris Town Road could handle a 40 or 45mph speed limit and then go down to 30mph (similar to how LaPlant Road is posted). Also there is a lack of speed limit signs on the road – and the section from Wendigo Park Road to Co Rd 67 is not posted

at all. However, MnDOT is currently reviewing this section in order to determine the limit. The town board can dictate the speed limit of a township road but only down to 35mph; and 25-30pmh has been requested by some of the residents.

○ Q: Have traffic counts been done?

A: Apx 7-8 years ago, there was a traffic count done regarding a “relief road”. It was thought that there were 800 cars/day on Wendigo Park Road, which came from Sunny Beach. The counts on Sunny Beach Road itself were not known. A resident commented that perhaps the area with the most traffic should have work done first.

○ C: Speed humps were mentioned, but the majority of those in attendance did NOT want them.

○ Q: Will there be follow up neighborhood meetings for Sunny Beach Road improvement plans?

A: Yes, when more is known regarding budgets, bonding, and basic design, another neighborhood meeting would be held for residents of the road.

○ Q: Who decides if / how / when the road is improved? Do the people have to vote on it?

○ A: The town board decides by a motion/majority vote regarding what would be done and when. A vote by the township residents is not needed. The board was not sure about bonding – but didn’t think a vote by the people was needed for that either.

With no other comments/questions from the audience, the neighborhood meeting ended at 8:20pm. Residents were encouraged to contact Glen Hodgson with any other concerns or comments they had regarding Sunny Beach Road.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Smith – Harris Township Clerk