



March 8, 2016
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.

MINUTES

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 Tuesday, March 8, 2016 at the Harris Town Hall. Approximately 25 residents were in attendance, including all board members (Michele Smith, Becky Adams, Gary Rosato, Ken Haubrich, Dennis Kortekaas, Jim Kelley and Burl Ives); a copy of the sign-in sheet of attendees who signed in will be attached to these minutes. Also in attendance were ICTV, Brian Carlson from the Itasca Fair Board, Lilah Crowe from the Itasca County Historical Society, Rusty Eichorn – Itasca County Commissioner/District 4, and Matt Wegwerth – Township Road Engineer from SEH.

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 from the floor for a moderator for tonight's meeting. Mike Ives was nominated by Cyndy Martin; Rusty Eichorn was nominated by Jim Kelly. There were no other nominations for moderator.

Upon a show of hands vote, the clerk declared that the electorate voted to approve Rusty Eichorn as the Moderator of the Annual Harris Town Meeting.

4. Approve minutes of the annual meeting held March 10, 2015

The minutes from the March 10, 2015 annual town meeting 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 additions, corrections, questions or comments from the residents in attendance.

A motion by Jim Wicklund, second by Dennis Kortekaas, to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2015 Annual Town Meeting as written. Upon roll call, motion carried by a unanimous vote.

5. Receive and approve the Treasurer's Annual Financial report for Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2015

The Treasurer's Annual Financial Report for 2015 was included in the annual report, on page 7. The report recapped there was a beginning balance on Jan 1, 2015 of \$1,204,837.63. There were no audit adjustments in 2015, but there was a fund transfer out of Capital Improvement to Building & Grounds in the amount of \$28,217.00. Receipts for the year were \$997,030.45 and disbursements were <\$760,016.95>. The ending balance as of 12/31/15 was \$1,441,851.13. The breakout by fund was also shown on the report.

There were no questions or comments from the floor.

Motion by Mike Ives, seconded by Cari Alleman, to approve the Treasurer's Annual 2015 Financial Report as presented. Upon voice vote, motion carried.

6. Review Road Report

A written road report was included in the annual meeting agenda packet on pages 8-10, and included Road & Bridge fund levy information from 2015, road work completed in 2015 with associated expenses, and proposed road work and estimated costs for years 2016 and 2017.

The Clerk explained that this was a report 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.

The Town Question results from the Board of Canvass were recapped by moderator Eichorn; the question on the ballot was: ***“Should the Town issue up to three million dollars on general obligation street reconstruction bonds to perform bituminous road maintenance?”***

- YES votes: 141
- **NO votes: 319**
- Under votes: 1

Total ballots cast: 461

Thus, the results were that the bonding question for road repair **failed**.

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

7. Review Levy Comparison for years 2012 through 2017

A levy comparison, by fund, from 2012 adopted to 2017 proposed, was provided for everyone's review in the annual report packet on page 13. Moderator Eichorn recapped that the total proposed levy for 2017 was \$930,000, which was the same overall levy amount as adopted in 2015 and 2016, but with fund amounts as follows:

- General Fund \$ 140,000
 - Road & Bridge Fund \$ 490,000
 - Equipment Fund \$ 10,000
 - Cemetery Fund - \$0 -
 - Recreation Fund \$ 25,000
 - Buildings & Grounds Fund \$ 50,000
 - Fire Fund \$ 80,000
 - Capital Improvement Fund \$ 135,000
- Total: \$ 930,000

There were no comments/questions

8. Consider Approval of the 2017 Operating Levies

There were two options listed under item 8, to either (a.) Approve the proposed operating levy for 2016 in total, or (b.) Approve operating levies by fund.

Craig Nelson made a motion to go with option (8b) and review and approve the 2017 proposed operating levy by fund, as shown by fund in the detail on pages 14-22 of the Annual Town Meeting Report dated 3-8-2016. The motion was seconded by Jim Wicklund, and upon a vote, the motion carried by a majority vote.

8b. Approve operating levies by fund:

- General Fund \$140,000 proposed

Motion by Dan Butterfield, second by Gary Rosato, to approve the General Fund levy in the proposed amount of \$140,000. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

- Road & Bridge \$490,000 proposed

Motion by Mike Ives, second by Judy Myers, to increase the Road & Bridge levy to \$800,000.

Discussion: Since the option to bond failed, there is not enough money in the proposed levy to take care of the town roads. The township is losing Sunny Beach Road and others and so more money needs to be levied in this fund.

Residents asked what the road improvement plans would be now that bonding failed to pass. Supervisor Ives responded on behalf of the board, that the township intends use the 2016 major construction line item budget in the Road & Bridge fund, plus rolled over money from 2015 and some savings from the Capital Improvement Fund to improve the worst part of Sunny Beach Road - from Adair to Wendigo Park Road (apx 1.5 miles). Moderator Eichorn also referred the electorate to the Road Report on pages 8-9 of their annual report for a recap of projects/plans for if bonding passed/didn't pass.

One resident voiced that he was not willing to pay more in taxes for roads, and felt the vote results echoed the same. Another resident asked for clarification on what the Capital Improvement Fund was all about; Treasurer Becky Adams answered by explaining that it is a savings account for larger projects and purchases and that within the fund, there are both dedicated and non-dedicated dollars in savings. One resident noted the total balance of the Capital Improvement fund at the end of 2015 was \$790,575.38 and would like to see all of that used on roads. A resident also voiced that the township is not looking at a temporary problem; the need for additional road funds will continue due to roads deteriorating over the years.

One resident commented that they appreciate the motion to increase the Road & Bridge levy for 2017, but \$800,000 was too much. Another person voiced that the people who live on Sunny Beach Road, Islevew and Birch Street pay more taxes than any other residents in Harris Township and therefore, deserve to have their roads fixed. Another resident commented that his current property taxes are 8% of his gross income; and while it would be nice to have good roads, he had concerns about where extra money would come from for him to afford additional taxes. There was a comment that the township is behind the eight-ball with repair of some large roads, and if the levy doesn't start increasing, they will never get fixed.

Moderator Eichorn then called the vote on a Road & Bridge levy of \$800,000 rather than the \$490,000 proposed levy. Vote was taken by a show of hands: those in favor of the \$800,000 levy was 7; those not in favor were 13. The motion failed.

A motion was then made by Dennis Kortekaas, and seconded by Mike, to levy \$490,000 for the Road & Bridge fund as proposed. Motion carried by a majority – though not a unanimous - vote.

- Equipment Fund \$10,000 proposed

Motion by Gary Rosato, second by Dan Butterfield, to levy \$10,000 for the Equipment fund as proposed. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

- Cemetery Fund \$ -0- proposed

Motion by Gary Rosato, second by Dan Butterfield, to levy zero dollars for the Cemetery fund as proposed. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

- Recreation \$25,000 proposed

Motion by Dennis Kortekaas, second by Gary Rosato, to levy \$25,000 for the Recreation Fund as proposed. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

- Building & Grounds Fund \$50,000 proposed

Motion by Cyndy Martin, second by Jim Kelley, to levy \$50,000 for the Building & Grounds Fund as proposed. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

- Fire Fund \$80,000 proposed

Motion by Dennis Kortekaas, second by Cyndy Martin, to levy \$80,000 for the Fire Fund as proposed. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

- Capital Improvement Fund \$135,000 proposed

Motion by Mike Ives, second by Jim Kelley, to levy \$135,000 for the Capital Improvement Fund as proposed; \$15,000 of this is dedicated to equipment and \$120,000 is dedicated to roads. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

9. Consider requests for a financial support via special levies, and hear related presentations

- Itasca County Agricultural Society (as authorized by Minn. Stat. § 38.12 and 38.18-.19)

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 2017. Brian explained that the funds would be used for operational support of the Itasca County Fair, and not for capital improvement projects.

Regarding the fairgrounds, Carlson shared that the county management plan has been updated. A few things in the works for the fair grounds are improvements to the Trailhead Building and the Solid Rock Church booth; getting a new incubator for the children's barn; bringing back the demolition derby, and increasing the water pressure near the horse barns. They are also looking for directors to the Fair Board.

Motion by Mike Ives, second by Jim Kelley, to approve a 2017 special levy for the Itasca County Agricultural Association (aka Fair Board) in the amount of \$1,000.00. Upon a vote by the people, the motion passed unanimously

- Itasca County Historical Society (as authorized by Minn. Stat. § 138.053)

A letter was received from Lilah Crowe, Executive Director of the Historical Society, asking for special **levy** of \$1.00 per capita for 2017, 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 was in attendance at tonight's meeting from the Historical Society to do a presentation.

Crowe explained that they are celebrating Itasca County being 125 years old. Timeline boards are being posted around the town, in businesses and in the court house for people to review, and there will be events through the year. Some of these include opening the time capsules from 25 years ago and burying new time capsules; in June, there will be a display of 125 years of transportation; the County Commissioners will reenact the first meeting of the board at the fair; and the Mines & Pines shopper has started a trivia game with cash prizes for winners.

Motion by Mary Ives, second by Cyndy Martin, to approve a \$1.00 per capita special levy for the Itasca County Historical Society, collectible in 2017, which represents an annual amount of \$3,253.00 based on the township's 2010 census. Upon the call for a vote, the motion for a special levy passed unanimously.

10. Old business

There was no old business from the residents in attendance, but Eichorn reviewed Harris Township's 2015 *accomplishments* page as listed in the Annual Meeting Report packet; he applauded the board and residents on everything that was done in Harris Township the past year, and on their strategic planning and collaboration. The township website was also commended.

Gary Rosato gave a special thank you to Larry Key for 30 years of service as a township supervisor, to Bonnie Key for 13 years of service as the Town Hall Caretaker, to Mike Hendricks for many years as a recreational advisor to the board; to Cyndy Martin and Judy Myers for volunteering to produce two newsletters, and to Michele Smith for 12 years of service as the Township Clerk.

11. New business

Mary Ives thanked the town board for doing a road study, and developing a five-year road improvement plan for bituminous roads.

12. Set time and place for the next Annual Meeting, to be held the second Tuesday of March 2017

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.

Motion by Dan Butterfield, second by Jim Kelley, to hold the 2017 annual meeting at 8:15pm at the Harris Town Hall, on the second Tuesday of March. Motion passed by a unanimous vote.

13. Adjourn

With no other business, questions, or concerns voiced by the people of Harris Township, Jim Kelley made a motion, Cyndy Martin seconded, to adjourn the Annual Meeting of Harris Township at 9:07 pm. Moderator Eichorn declared the meeting adjourned.

In summary, the following levies were approved, collectible in 2017:

General Fund Operations	\$140,000
Historical Society (\$1/pp of 2010 census)	\$ 3,253
Itasca Co. Agricultural Assoc. (Fair Board)	\$ 1,000
Road and Bridge Fund	\$490,000
Equipment Fund	\$ 10,000
Cemetery Fund	\$ -0-
Recreation Fund	\$ 25,000
Building & Grounds Fund	\$ 50,000
Fire Fund	\$ 80,000
Capital Improvement Fund	\$135,000
 Total Levy	 \$934,253

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

Respectfully submitted,

Michele R. Smith, Clerk of Harris Twp

Annual Town Meeting - March 8, 2016

1. Michele & Smite
2. Matt Wegner
3. ~~Gerrard~~
4. ~~Frank Kelly~~
5. ~~Mark~~
6. Ruth Kiddle
7. Sandra Pint
8. Mike Neuman
9. ~~Dennis Kortinas~~
10. ~~John P. Myers~~
11. ~~John Allen~~
12. Craig Nelson
13. Mike Hendriks
14. ~~John~~
15. Mary Kelly
16. Frances Haubrich
17. Dan Butterfield
18. Dennis Carlson - Guest - Fair board
19. Rick Libbee
20. ~~Andy Albert~~
21. ~~Carl Allen~~
22. Rusty Eubank
23. Lonnie LaDoy
24. Buck Ives
25. Gladys Crowe
- 26.
- 27.
- 28.
- 29.