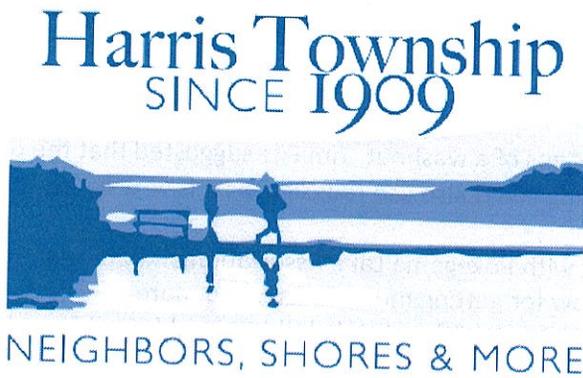


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Mission Statement:
The Harris Town Board strives to enhance the quality of life, protect the environment, and maintain economic stability for the residents of their community.

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Boat Landings Work Session

August 17, 2020

6:30 pm

Present: Chair Ken Haubrich, Vice Chair Peggy Clayton, Supervisors Jim Kelley, and Mike Shack

Absent: Supervisor Dennis Kortekaas

Others Present: Sarah Carling, CEDA, and Tim Fitz, Itasca Soil and Water Conservation

The purpose of the work session was to look at all of the boat landings (Mishawaka, Casper, Robinson, Wood Tick, and LaPlant) in Harris Township, with the hope of securing funding, grant dollars, etc to work on the betterment of the landings.

The group met at Mishawaka Landing located on Mishawaka Road. This specific landing has always been a point of contention, as far as parking. There are many fishing tournaments held on Pokegama Lake every summer, and Mishawaka Landing is heavily used by participants. As parking is always an issue, the board decided to paint parking lines in the spring to alleviate some of the issues. It has been met with appreciation from constituents. Unfortunately parking still remains an issue.

Discussion was held on removing the picnic area to allow for the possibility of 7 to 11 additional parking spots. Trees would need to be removed, the bank would need to be knocked down, and the retaining wall would also need to be removed. Riprap was discussed, to stop erosion, on the shoreline.

Tim Fitz made mention that a CPL Grant, (an 80-20 grant) which is specific for public water access, would be a qualifying fit for our landings. This grant would allow for a feasibility study, to include assessment funding, and engineering and re-design of up to \$25,000. Additional discussions took place on redesigning of the landing to include a turnaround, and a buffer. The feasibility study would allow for an engineer to come in and re-design the landing, and put in a buffer to help the runoff. Suggestion to also go after a clean water grant to conduct the feasibility study. Discussion held on what to include in a grant application, and who could write a grant. John Connelly is available through the County, and there is no charge for his services.

Sarah had also suggested TED, which is a tourism and economic development grant program. A letter is all that is needed, laying out the importance of our landings, high traffic and improving water quality, and what we want to use the funds on. This is a \$10,000 grant, which would allow for a feasibility study/engineering, to be done. Sarah will check to see if we can get our letter in, or if that window has closed.

Discussion held on options for the township, with one option to give the landings to the County or to get a joint powers agreement in place with the DNR. Supervisor Kelley stated that he was contacted by the DNR on a joint powers agreement, so this was a positive note. Sarah will bring in Sarah Thompson, Land Department, to get some additional ideas on resources, etc.

A motion was made by Supervisor Kelley and seconded by Supervisor Clayton to recess at 6:49 pm, to allow for driving to the LaPlant Landing. Motion carried.

The work session reconvened at 6:56 PM at LaPlant Landing.

LaPlant Landing was one that showed signs of a washout. Tim Fitz suggested that the township could divert runoff with piping. Discussion followed. This landing could also use redesign, as it is very limited on turning around/parking.

Discussion held on perhaps partnering with Pokegama Lake Association and other entities, to work together on all landings in the County. This would allow for getting more dollars, and more stakeholders, to conduct a feasibility study. Additional stakeholders could provide additional funding resources. A suggestion was also made for a maintenance fee for parking, when fishing tournaments are held. Discussion followed.

A motion was made by Supervisor Schack and seconded by Supervisor Kelley to recess at 7:09 PM to drive to Robinson landing. Motion carried.

The Work Session reconvened at 7:17 pm at Robinson Landing.

Robinson Landing had a washout on both sides of the landing. Robinson was rebuilt last year. Discussion held on concrete on a portion of the landing, pads would be a good placement, diverting water, and putting a catch/pipe, and get the landing expanded to spread out the water drainage. Tim stated that this landing is in need of a buffer, to get water disbursed, etc.

The group discussed a boat washing station, if there is one on the lake, and where one could be installed. Tim stated that AIS has funding available, but the bigger question is location. Discussion followed.

A motion was made by Supervisor Kelley and seconded by Supervisor Schack to recess at 7:26 pm to move to Casper Landing. Motion carried.

The workstation reconvene at 7:35 pm at a Casper Landing.

The water level is extremely high, in looking at the dock, which almost appears to be floating. Supervisor Kelley stated that the dock would need to be re-aligned to get closer to the ramp for landing boats.

This landing is a heavily used area for boaters and for swimmers, (even though there are signs denoting no swimming). Additional parking was suggested, along with a picnic area, and the possibility of a swimming beach, which was in place many years ago.

Discussion held on the fenced area on the hill. A good portion of the neighbors garden is on township property. Years ago the township put up the current fence due to ppl moving around on the neighbors property. The neighbor knows that if the township wants the land back, he would not have any problem if that area was taken back.

Parking is an issue. A more suitable picnic area etc. could be put in place, along with additional parking, if the property would be taken back. The road into this landing does belong to the township, except for a very small portion/corner which belongs to the neighbor. Getting the property back would also allow for more parking, putting in a swimming beach, etc. Discussion held on "no wake" signage.

Discussion held on riprap, putting in a buffer, etc. A lot could be done with redesign of this landing. Discussion held on ownership of the road. The township does not plow the road to the landing. Supervisor Kelley did some checking and he discovered that the road into Casper is considered part of Sunny Beach Road access, and so it would be the township's road.

Discussion held on the next steps the group should take in order to start working on grants, etc. for the landings. Sarah suggested the township contact an engineering firm to obtain a quote on conducting a feasibility study on all of the landings. Tim stated that Itasca Soil and Water utilizes HR Green Engineering. BARR Engineering was also another suggestion. Supervisor Kelley will check with SEH. Tim stated there might be funding available through the DNR.

Discussion held on the area currently being used for launching houseboats at Casper. Tim asked if the township was charging a fee for houseboat access, as a fee should be implemented.

Both Tim and Sarah shared that they now have a better understanding of our landings, know the importance of maintaining these landings, and what would be needed and necessary, with regard to obtaining grant funding.

Wood Tick Landing was not visited by the group. The landing is very small, but does have boat access. The "No parking sign" needs to be replaced as it is no longer visible, due to fading.

Tim and Sarah will brain storm on grants, funding etc available for landings. Sarah will also talk with Sarah Thompson, Land Department, to see if there are any other resources, etc. available.

Short discussion held on the likelihood of the Land Department (County) taking over the landings. Supervisor Haubrich wants to look at this as an option. It could also be brought before the voters at the annual meeting, if this is the direction.

The option of getting a joint powers agreement with DNR was once again discussed, as it appeared to be the right time to sit down with The DNR. Supervisor Kelley will follow up with the DNR.

A motion was made by Supervisor Kelley and seconded by Supervisor Schack to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 pm.

Submitted by:



Peggy Clayton, Acting Clerk

Signed by:



Ken Haubrich, Chair

