

**Harsen's Island St. Clair Flats Association
Minutes February 14, 2015**

Directors Present: Barbara Crown, Patrick Feighan, Donna Halacoglu, Jim Laethem, Denne Osgood, Dennis Szymanski, Rosemary Wiczorek

Excused: Todd Brady, Susan Bryson, Jerry Freeman, Carol Johanson, Art Koster, Nancy Lamastus, David Martin, Mary Ann McLane, Kathy O'Connor; Cindy Pilato, Paul Wargo; Lois Whipple

Guests and Members Present: George and Neva Covalle, Carl Mount; Larry Rehe, Bernardo Licata, David Bryson

Barbara Crown brought the meeting to order at the Lion's Hall, at 9:30 am, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The November minutes were presented, **Pat Feighan made a motion to approve, Denne Osgood seconded; motion carried, minutes to be placed on file.**

(Note: By prior announcements there were no board meetings for the months of December 2014 and January 2015)

Treasurer Report: Treasurer Rosemary Wiczorek presented the November 30, 2014 and the year ending December 31, 2014 Treasurers Report, as well as the current January 2015 reports. As of January 30th 2015 the HISCFA bank account had \$2,108.76 in the checking account. Dues from membership are starting to come in.

Pat Feighan made a motion to approve the November 2014, the December 2014 and the January 2015 Treasurer's reports, Denne Osgood seconded, all present approved; reports to be placed on file.

Secretary Report – Donna Halacoglu reported that the membership letters were sent out on Feb. 3rd. There are 46 paid members today, she picked up 109 letters today at the Post Office. We mailed out a month earlier this year.

Old Business:

Auxiliary Water Station, Bates Cut – Per the recommendations of the Algonac Water Department the water will be turned off from December 1st to April 1st in order to preserve the integrity of the pump system.

Letter of approval from the Association has been sent to Clay Township to be included in the Lake St. Clair Circle Tour. If we are included, signs will be placed on the Island.

New Business

Community Assistance Fund - The Association will be setting up a special fund for special needs of the community. If we find out a resident is in need, we can use these funds to help out. For now donations from our Annual Membership drive will go into this fund. Once the account is funded we will be better equipped to help the community when the need arises.

Water Station – Pat Feighan and Jim Laethem reported that as the result of an automobile accident, the association's Main Water Station at North Channel and Columbine, was damaged early on the morning of Wednesday Feb. 11, 2015. Damage was done to the station as well as the AT&T substation box located at the site. Additional damage was done to the adjacent property. A police report was taken at the scene and it is currently being reviewed for approval by the police chief and subsequent release. Other than that we have very little information about what happened. We hope that the person involved was not seriously hurt. Our insurance company has been notified of the accident. Details will be provided to the board as they are released.

Pat Feighan and Jim Laethem also presented the board with a Power Point presentation of the workings and flow controls of the Main Water Station. The purpose of the Power Point was twofold, 1) To establish a common data base for getting competitive bids from companies on a new delivery system for the bulk water users. 2) To provide the association with a working schematic of how the Main water Station was operated for future reference. Pat and Jim will be report out to the further as information becomes available.

As a result of the discussion on the annual operational costs of maintaining the Water Stations several members and guests asked why we just don't shut off the water station, and no longer make it available to the Island residents. After a discussion and review the association board stated that while it understood the comments were well intentioned, it affirmed it is not willing to give up this service to the Island residents that do not have the privilege of city water to their homes. The Association will continue to strive to make the water station a more

income neutral endeavor. The new water station card system seems to be working toward this goal. We will continue to look at the expenses of the water station and the income generated.

Advertising Sign – Jim Laethem brought up that new lights need to be changed out below the sign. When the snow piles are down, we will ask the field committee to take a look at what is needed. Todd Brady to look at what we need to update the digital read out at the field.

Drive like Your Children Play Here Jim Laethem and Pat Feighan have proposed new signs become available to the residents that can be placed in yards. Our hope is to get people to slow down on the roads around the island. They will be doing some more research on this project and bring it back to the meeting. Pat Feighan is continuing to work with the St. Clair Road Commission to see if similar signs can be affixed to existing county road signs.

Field Committee -Pat Feighan and Jim Laethem reported that not much going on at the field right now. Two trees were planted this fall in memory of past director Don Verslype. A memorial will be held this spring. Wayne Yax informed the committee that he has retired and no longer doing snow plowing and other work for the association. Daryl DuPage was contracted to do the initial plowing and Barbara is follow up with Daryl DuPage and make sure the field drive way will be plowed and a new contract initiated.

Government Committee Pat Feighan and Jim Laethem attended and reported out on the last Clay Township Board meeting. Pat Feighan explained that the IRS currently has a \$250K lien on the township properties due to monetary penalties assessed for improper tax filings. Because of that we, Clay Township, are now considered a “Township in Risk” by Federal agencies and lending institutions. As a direct result, our application for Federal Grant monies to fund the Krispin Drain Project was denied. Supervisor Artie Bryson is looking at other avenues. On the positive side the IRS has waved the previously assessed fines and penalties for the years 2010 and 2011 of approximately \$450K. The penalty for 2012 is still outstanding (\$200K) and the penalties for 2012 and 2013 have yet to be assessed. It is hoped these too will be either dismissed or reduced.

It was announced that the Algonac / Clay Township Library Board has an opening. Anyone interested please contact supervisor Bryson

The new St. Clair County WINS emergency alert system is nearing completion and release. Police Chief Don Drake is working with other township and county officials on the final operational touches.

Supervisor Bryson announced a plan to form a committee to explore Clay Township joining services with Algonac to reduce costs and streamline services.

Public Acts 491 and 492 were passed by the Michigan State Legislature in its end of session agenda. These acts call for allowing Golf Carts on Non State roadways with speed limits of 35mph or less. Individual counties and local governments can adapt or deny these actions. It is now under review by the township.

It was reported that the township clerk, Lisa White, is to be arraigned next week on embezzlement charges. She has yet to resign her position and a recall election has been initiated.

Proposed Events on Browne’s Field in the upcoming year – Barbara would like to draw our residents to Browne’s Field. We all know the field is under utilized by the residents and we hope to bring people to the field with events. Some of her proposals are: trunk to trunk sale, steak out picnic, used car and boat sales on lot. She will be getting a committee together to explore these possibilities.

Walking Paths: Barbara Crown stated she would like to revisit the walking path areas especially those that the DNR allowed on their property. Pat Feighan and Jerry Freeman worked previously with the DNR and Site Manager John Darling to get this going, it has tremendous potential. Pat Feighan reported that he takes walks on this area weekly, and felt we need to work with the DNR and get messages out to our residents. There is a very nominal fee for an annual access pass of \$13. Pat stated that the DNR is more than willing to work with us on this. We just need to step up and get the ball rolling.

Raffle Day Prizes - Barbara suggested model Chris Craft boats as a possible prize for the raffles. It was well received. Raffle prizes need to be selected by April 1st in order to get the tickets.

Comments from directors and guests: David Bryson was asked about the cutting of ice in the North Channel, he intimated that the Coast Guard will do it again if they feel it is necessary.

North Channel Ice Breaking Concerns: A lengthily discussion was held concerning the recent Coast Guard ice breaking activities and the protracted disruption of Champion's Auto Ferry service to the island. David Bryson was asked about the potential for future ice breaking activities in the North Channel, he intimated that the Coast Guard probably will do it again if they feel it is necessary. A request was made that board chairman Patrick Feighan write a letter in behalf of the association to the US and Canadian Coast Guard, requesting in the strongest terms possible, that they restrict their ice breaking activities to the South Channel only. It was explained that unlike the USCG the Canadian Coast Guard is not an arm of the Canadian military branches. They fall under the Canadian Dept. of Fisheries and are highly subsidized by the shipping industry. An alternative suggestion was made to seek a restraining order through the courts as a judge may see the hardship experienced by Harsens Island residents in a more favorable light. The board is considering both actions.

Barbara made a motion to adjourn at 11:15 am, Pat Feighan seconded, adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crown
President
Acting Recording Secretary