



## **Harsen's Island St. Clair Flats Association**

### **Minutes February 17, 2018**

**Directors Present:** Craig Baloga, Todd Brady, Susan Bryson, Neva Covalle, Barbara Crown, David Martin, Melanie Most, Harold Stieber, Dennis Szymanski, Jerry Thiel, Lois Whipple;

**Excused:** Patrick Feighan, Jerry Freeman, Donna Halacoglu, Mike Hilla, Art Koster, Jim Laethem, Kathy O'Connor, Leonard Verlinden, Rosemary Wieczorek;

**Guests and Members Present:** Christine Baloga, George Covalle, Linda Schoonover, Debbie Thiel, Dan Turke.

Barbara Crown brought the meeting to order at the Sans Souci Landing at 9:30 am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The January 2018 meeting minutes were presented. **David Martin made the motion to approve the January 2018 meeting minutes, Jerry Thiel seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, minutes to be placed on file.**

#### **Executive Committee Reports**

**Treasurer Report:** Harold Stieber presented the treasurer's reports for January 2018. Harold reported that the balance in the checkbook for January 31, 2018 was \$15,908.19, with total cash on hand being \$38,924.96. George Covalle inquired as to why the electricity bill was so high for the water station. Harold responded that there are several things requiring electricity at the water station including lights, heating, Browne's Field lighting, Park-n-Ride lighting, and advertisement board lighting. Full copies of the monthly Treasurer's Report are available by contacting Harold at stiebha@gmail.com.

**David Martin made the motion to approve the January 2018 treasurer's reports, Jerry Thiel seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, reports to be placed on file.**

**Secretary Report:** There have already been 7 entries received for the Car Show this year.

**Communications:** A couple thank-you notes have been received by the Association and were read to the group.

**Government Affairs:** Harold Stieber reported that he and Patrick Feighan attended the Clay Township board meeting on the Island last month, most of which discussed the purchase and future use of the proposed kayak launch/park on Harsen's Island. This proposed site is located near the Schoolhouse Grille along the Krispin Drain. The total project is estimated to take approximately 2-3 years to complete which includes the purchase of the land which has not yet been finalized. Along with several grants that are being pursued, it is estimated that this project will only cost the township a total of approximately \$14,000. Plans included restrooms, a walking path, a parking area, trash receptacles, and a kayak launch. Harold also discussed an issue about trash strewn about the road along M-154. He discussed this issue with Clay Township Supervisor Artie Bryson and Artie stated that 1) trash is not supposed to be placed along M-154 because it is a state highway and there are regulations against putting the trash there, and 2) there is already an ordinance in place regarding putting trash at the curb (along residential streets) so



there is nothing further that could be done. At the meeting, Harold mentioned that the HISCFA takes care of a lot of this trash during the Association's annual road cleanup event, and Chris O'Regan (township trustee) suggested that the Association have a second road cleanup event at the end of the summer if there is still a concern.

Browne's Field: Patrick Feighan is asking for volunteers for various projects that will be discussed later in this meeting. The topic of a walking path at Browne's Field was discussed, and whether or not to pursue this project since a walking path is already being proposed for the new township property (kayak launch). Barbara Crown stated that the money allocated to a walking path at Browne's Field could be re-allocated towards the planned restrooms if the walking path at Browne's Field is no longer being pursued due to the walking path being planned for the township site on the Island.

### OLD BUSINESS

- *Annual Membership Letter*: Barbara Crown showed attendees the proposed layout for the new membership letter which includes a revised layout, page designation, and color scheme. Everyone agreed that the new layout was wonderful and shall be pursued for printing. Todd Brady has set up each director with a hiscfa.org email address and those will be published on the final copy as well.

### NEW BUSINESS

- *Scholarships*: Susan Bryson spoke to a contact at the Algonac school district, and that person was sent over a template for what the HISCFA scholarships would require. Guidelines for applicants were discussed at the meeting and whether they needed to be revised. There are currently three high school students that will qualify for a scholarship this year. **Susan Bryson made a motion to stipulate that scholarship applicants must be a resident of Harsen's Island and attend either Algonac High School or Cardinal Mooney High School; David Martin seconded. All in favor; motion carried.**
- *Short-term and Long-Term Goals*: Permanent lighting the pavilion was discussed and how it would hopefully enhance the field and entice new rentals. Neva Covalle stated that she was still working on a lighting proposal. Additionally, a new children's playground was discussed as an item that would like to be obtained. Barbara Crown discussed whether the Association could use the grant writer(s) that the township is currently using. Barbara said she would speak with Artie about getting in contact with that grant writer, and also whether now that the Association is a 501(c)3 we are eligible for some of the township funding. Susan Bryson asked what was the status of the permanent restrooms at Browne's Field. The status is that approval is needed from the St. Clair County Health Department regarding things like the septic system, building layout, etc. Susan suggested getting a pre-fabricated structure brought in rather than refurbishing the existing structure(s). A sledding hill was discussed and the possible locations around the field and multiple uses were addressed (berm, backstop for ball diamond, sledding, etc.). Barbara also mentioned the possibility of getting some sort of enclosures for the sides of the pavilion to block the wind during events, and also updating the volleyball area. The two items that were discussed as short-term goals were lights in the pavilion and installing a security system. A long-term goal to be worked on is the new children's playground structure.
- *Annual Bonfire and Pig Roast*: Neva Covalle asked whether anyone would like to take on the responsibility of putting on this event. The possibility of skipping a year was discussed because of declining attendees in 2017. However, in 2017 there was a conflict with the Idle Hour's 100-year Anniversary party. Susan Bryson stated that she would be interested in heading up this committee for 2018. A tentative date of



September 15, 2018 was identified as a possible date. Susan will be checking for conflicts with other Island organizations. The event will begin at 6:00 pm with food to be served beginning at 7:00 pm.

- *Field Day:* Cindy Pilato has stated that she has agreed to take on Field Day again this year, and the association is so grateful for her support with this tremendous task.
- *Survey:* Christine Baloga was present at the meeting to discuss a survey she drafted and how she suggested distributing it once it is complete. Barbara Crown stated she would be facilitating the meeting and getting a committee together to discuss it going forward. The purpose of the survey is to poll the members of the Association to better understand how they prefer to receive communications from the HISCFA, and also to better understand the demographics of the Island and how the Association can be most beneficial to the members.
- *Digital Communications:* Todd Brady was present to discuss the concerns with the website and what it would take to bring the Association up to speed in the digital world. There are six items that need to be focused on for an optimized digital presence for the HISCFA, and this includes six things: 1. domain name, 2. real estate to buy and host, 3. emails, 4. marketing of the site, 5. keeping it protected and clean, 6. search engine optimization (i.e. linking to Facebook and Nextdoor). Currently the website is hosted on a free site, but for the second time now there is malware present on this site which has rendered it unusable. It is desired to put the website in a paid, protected area where it is much more difficult for the site to become infected, and long-term is a better solution for optimizing the content of the site going forward. **Neva Covalle made a motion to allocate a one-time cost of \$160 for labor for the conversion of the website, and an additional \$350 for maintenance for the year (and a similar cost each year); David Martin seconded. All in favor; motion carried.** Todd went on to say that these things would allow the HISCFA to keep the domain name, keep all of the information on a server in a Level 3 data center in Southfield, MI, have some real estate in which to host the website and emails, and keep it protected and secure and free of malware and viruses. Todd estimated that the turnaround time on this should be approximately 3 weeks.
- *Committee Review:* Barbara Crown passed out a list of the committees that is printed in the Delta News, and will be sending all of the directors the same copy. Barbara is seeking discussion about the committees regarding whether to keep all of them the way they are, modify any members, or whether any new committees need to be formed or amended.

Additional comments from directors or guests:

- ✓ David Martin asked whether there would be a dedication for Denne Osgood on the island. Neva Covalle mentioned she had a suggestion for a memorial for both Mary Ann McLane as well as Denne Osgood near the flagpole. Neva will bring this idea to the next meeting.
- ✓ Susan Bryson mentioned that there is an informative meeting this coming Tuesday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall regarding a possible future marijuana growing facility on Harsen's Island.
- ✓ Dan Turke was present for this meeting, and as he had indicated in the January HISCFA meeting he was going to do some research regarding the MI House Bill 4807, and bring back to the board what he found. He provided us with an oral presentation of his research regarding House Bill 4807 becoming a law. He concluded his presentation stating he would provide us with a written letter of his findings, which he did dated February 17, 2018 and is attached as an Appendix to this document. Keep in mind this may not be all the correct facts, but this is his interpretation. Before the next board meeting each director needs time to re-read this letter in entirety and be prepared to comment on the points made in the letter read by Mr. Turke, as it relates to the House Bill 4807. (attached to the minutes) The meeting was adjourned before the



directors had an opportunity to rebut any of the statements made in this letter. The Transportation Committee needs time to make sure the points in this letter were correct as read.

Next meeting will be Saturday, March 10, 2018 at **9:30 am** at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall. Please note that this is delayed by one week due to availability of directors to run the meeting, and the location has been changed.

**Neva Covalle made the motion to adjourn; Jerry Thiel seconded. All in favor; meeting adjourned at 11:06 am.**

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Most, Recording Secretary

[MelanieM@hiscfa.org](mailto:MelanieM@hiscfa.org)



## APPENDIX



***THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT***

Dan Turke

FOR STATE HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE in 81<sup>st</sup> District

Harsens Island St. Clair Flats Association

P.O. Box 17 Harsens Island, Mich. 48028

February 17, 2018

Members of the Board,

In my response of the "findings" of the January request of House Bill No. 4807 are complete, I have reported in person to the Board on February 17, 2018 with my verbal response, and promised my written response is as follows.

Shortly after the January meeting, and listening to the general consensus of dismay of HB 4807 at the meeting, The initial complaint of the people seem to lay on the premise that the "board" and the people were NOT heard, and simply got a "Robot or Boiler Plate" response. I made a phone call to Representative Dan Lauwers, and spoke with him close to an hour on the topic. His opinion was that the current legislation was adequate, and complete. We agreed and disagreed on the subject of "public input" and "Public Hearing".

My next Phone Conversation was with Inspector Randy Copeland of Michigan State Police Motor Carrier, he stated that there were 4 different parties involved in the creation of the Bill. 1) Representative Dan Lauwers, 2) Himself, Inspector Copeland, 3) a representative of the MPSC, and 4) representatives of Champion's Auto Ferry. He cited that most of the problems



circled around ferry control based on a 110yr old maritime law that was "band aided" to fit Champion's current activity. He also stated that in 2012 the MPSC received a request for fare increase of \$1.00 per unit from Champion's. At that time the MPSC denied the request on the premise that Champion's were already working on a 7% profit margin, and had ample reserve funds for capital improvements. It was also determined that Champion's were to submit a yearly audit from a 3<sup>rd</sup> party auditor, and also submit a 10 yr business and improvement plan. At that time Champion's claimed they could not do business without the increase of fares and filed a lawsuit against the MPSC. The audit nor business plan have ever been submitted.

Inspector Copeland also stated that "it was time to start over" and try a new approach. The first attempt of the Bill failed miserably, the moment the MPSC stepped into the room with the negotiating parties, tensions filled the air over past differences. Also the MPSC felt that Inspector Copeland was "siding with Champion's" and was not tough enough on regulation. The second attempt was more productive and created the "framework" that was passed in the State House, and Senate.

In my reading of HB4807, The Michigan State Police can conduct an Audit at any given time outlined in Sec. 2 . And reads as follows – It "the carrier" shall furnish the Department of State Police, Its proper officials, and its employees, and all data in relation to operations, income, operating expenses, and any transparency required in a reasonable time....general audit.

Sec. 4 also states – in "complaint of ANY party" against the carrier in cause of neglect, failure or refusal of transparency, or perform any rate, fare charge or tariff or any rule of regulation, will be subject to an investigation by the Michigan State Police, failure to comply can result into a maximum penalty of 3 months in a County Jail.

It was also shared that "through put tests" will be periodically conducted, like all other "cash businesses" to ensure integrity of the carrier to the public, on a state level. IE test vehicles on a particular undisclosed day.



I want to make My position clear also in this correspondence, "I am for businesses to make profit" but the transparency of the carrier to the public will also aid in a renewed " trust " between the carrier and the consumer (public). It is only fair to all parties

As all Laws start out, this particular Law is in its "infancy", not all angles of impact can possibly be determined at the time of conception and effected parties. In the advent that I am elected in August primary election, and again in November (main election), I will amend this legislation to include full "public hearings" on a Township level to be used as a condiment, or tool for the Michigan State Police to use as a deciding factor for future rate increases in sec. 4 of this Bill.

Respectfully,

Daniel M. Turke

81<sup>st</sup> District Candidate

P.S Enclosed are Phone contacts that may be used in the interim, if another rate or problem may arise, that direct contact of the Michigan State Police Motor Carrier can be achieved.





Good afternoon,

My contact information is below. Inspector Randy Coplin's e mail is [rcoplin@michigan.gov](mailto:rcoplin@michigan.gov)

Thank you!

Marci

Ms. Marci Kelley, Manager

Regulatory and Credentialing Section

Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division

Michigan State Police

[7150 Harris Drive](#)

[Dimondale, Michigan 48821](#)

TX: [517-284-8110](tel:517-284-8110)

[KelleyM14@michigan.gov](mailto:KelleyM14@michigan.gov)