



Harsen's Island St. Clair Flats Association

Minutes March 10, 2018

Directors Present: Todd Brady, Neva Covalle, Barbara Crown, Donna Halacoglu, Jim Laethem, Dennis Szymanski, Jerry Thiel;

Excused: Craig Baloga, Susan Bryson, Patrick Feighan, Jerry Freeman, Mike Hilla, David Martin, Melanie Most, Kathy O'Connor, Harold Stieber, Paul Stieler, Leonard Verlinden, Lois Whipple, Rosemary Wieczorek;

Guests and Members Present: George Crown, George Covalle, Debbie Thiel.

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

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

Executive Committee Reports

Treasurer Report: In Harold Stieber's absence, Barbara Crown presented the treasurer's reports for February 2018. Barbara reported that the balance in the checkbook for February 28, 2018 was \$11,406.09, with total cash on hand being \$34,459.05. Full copies of the monthly Treasurer's Report are available by contacting Harold at stiebha@gmail.com.

Dennis Szymanski made the motion to approve the February 2018 treasurer's reports, Donna Halacoglu seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, reports to be placed on file.

Secretary Report: There have already been 10 entries received for the Car Show this year.

Communications: There are no communications to report at this time.

Government Affairs: There are no government affairs to report at this time.

Browne's Field: There are no updates to Browne's Field to report at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

- *Annual Membership Letter:* Barbara Crown said that we now have the printer's layout. There has been a delay due to a death in the artist's family. It is expected that the final letter will be able to reviewed by the end of next week.



- *Dan Turke letter response:* Patrick Feighan responded to the Dan Turke's letter from last meeting. Pat's response was read aloud by Barbara Crown and will be placed on file. George Covalle commented that the Transportation Committee needs to draft a letter to the officers and politicians now involved in this new law, in an attempt to possibly mend some of the fences that have been torn down. It is time for a new relationship with Champion's Auto Ferry and the new law imposed.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Open director position:* **Barbara Crown made a motion to appoint current member, George Covalle, to the position of Director on the board of the Harsens's Island St. Clair Flats Association.** George would be taking the place of late President Denne Osgood, term ending 2018. **The motion has been sent via email to all the directors, and a majority vote has been received for approval.** All directors present who did not send in a vote indicated their vote. **Donna Halacoglu seconded to approve, all in favor, motion carried.** George Covalle is now a new director on the board effective today, March 10, 2018.
- *Island Cleanup Days:* Island Cleanup Days at Browne's Field have been scheduled with the township for June 2nd and 3rd, 2018. These days are for residents of Harsen's Island to enable them to get rid of all the junk that has collected over the year or years. It is a valuable service to the Island. In the past they used directors as volunteers to help, but Artie Bryson said they are fully staffed and have no need for the volunteers at this time.
- *Car Show:* Jerry Thiel stated that all the plans for the show are going as planned, and they have already received several donations including an Al Kaline jersey valued at around \$700. Jerry did stress that volunteers are needed for this event, as well as golf carts. We need to find a source for additional golf carts for this year's event.
- *Browne's Field Project:* There was a meeting with Health Department in regards to a septic field on the Browne's Field grounds for a possible future of bathroom/water station combination. The health department representative did many borings to find out if the soil at the field would maintain a septic field. All the borings were positive. They felt that a 50 x 60 field would be adequate for what would be needed. They felt the best place for the field would be behind the area where the portable toilets are currently located, but near the driveway. If the Association pays \$250 for a permit, it would be good for a year, and they would give us an engineered drawing for an infiltrate field. However, Dennis and George felt before the Association paid for a permit, we should probably get bids for the cost of the field based on the information they already had which would give us a ballpark figure. This brought the discussion as to why the Association would pay out this much money for a permanent restroom facility. It was decided this discussion would be better at another meeting when a more realistic cost for the restrooms was obtained. The pros and cons of this project still requires further discussion, but we want to thank George and Dennis for taking the initiative to meet with the health department and get this started.
- *Letter of Support:* Artie Bryson asked the Association board to write a letter of support for the DNR Trust fund grant to buy 9 acres of property located on Harsen's Island bordering the Krispin Blueway trail. The property is adjacent to the \$3.8 million GLRI Habitat Restoration project that was funded by the EPA. The request is attached to these minutes along with the letter from the Association supporting the Township's purchase. **Barbara Crown made a motion to approve writing a letter of support of the township purchasing this property. Dennis Szymanski seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried.** A letter of support was written prior to the motion, so the letter was presented to Artie Bryson in person at the meeting. Letter is on file under correspondence.
- *Committee Review:* This topic was tabled for this meeting.
- *The Delta News:* Barbara Crown and Art Woodford would like volunteers to help with The Delta News again this year. Help is needed for gathering the local articles and photographs. Examples include Reader's



Cove, Lions, Lioness, churches, etc. Barbara will get a meeting together later this month. If anyone has any milestone events they would like reported in the book let us know now. The Delta News advertiser letters will go out next week.

- *Island Road Cleanup*: Susan Bryson has agreed to coordinate this event. The date has been changed to be immediately following next month's Association meeting on April 14th, 2018, with pizza at the Sans Souci Bar afterward.
- *Annual Bonfire and Pig Roast*: It was brought to Barbara Crown's attention that the Idle Hour Yacht Club was yet again going to have a conflicting event the same evening as the Pig Roast on September 15th. Susan Bryson has secured McFat's catering for this event. The committee needs to look at ideas to raise additional funds for this event to keep it going in future years.
- *Digital Communications*: Todd Brady stated that the website is now up and running again. He has proposed to bring in a social media consultant to our May meeting to present to the Association the advantages of possibly hiring a professional at a monthly rate to keep the Association in the public eye.

Additional comments from directors or guests:

- ✓ Clay Township Supervisor Artie Bryson has asked to hire a full-time officer to put in Algonac Schools. This officer would most often be located at the high school, but would also patrol the lower schools as well. It would cost taxpayers 0.25 mil to hire this police officers, which equates to approximately \$25 a year on a home value of \$200,000.
- ✓ A meeting attendee asked Artie Bryson whether any of the Parks and Receptions funds could be used at Browne's Field. Artie stated that the Association has signs at the field which state "for members only." The Association believed that the signs had been removed. The Association went through all the trouble to become a 501(c)3 which allows us to seek out grants. Barbara asked Artie who he hired for writing grants, and Artie stated he does them himself.

Next meeting will be Saturday, April 14, 2018 at **9:30 am** at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall. After the meeting will be the road cleanup, and those who wish to volunteer should report at St. Mark's Church.

Dennis Szymanski made the motion to adjourn; Jerry Thiel seconded. All in favor; meeting adjourned at 10:37 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Most, Recording Secretary

MelanieM@hiscfa.org



APPENDIX



March 8, 2018

To: The Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust

From: The Harsens Island St. Clair Flats Association

Subject: Clay Township's Grant Application

Dear Trustees:

We are writing to advise you of our support for Clay Township's planned Public Access to the Krispin Drain Blueway on Harsens Island Michigan. We are one of the largest homeowners associations in Michigan and represent the interests of over 850 families, businesses, and property owners on Harsens Island and the surrounding St. Clair Flats.

As you are aware the Island and Flats are part of the largest fresh water delta in North America and considered, per DNR publications, as one of the Seven Wonders of Michigan. Previously we worked with the Township, County, State, and Federal entities to rehabilitate the our Island's Krispin Drain, restoring and improving wildlife habitat and creating an eleven mile Blueway connecting the St Clair River's North Channel to Muscamoot Bay in Lake St. Clair. This Blueway provides those kayaking and canoeing it with extraordinary views of wildlife and the flora that is unique to the delta. Fishing opportunities abound. Now that that has been completed, the next step is to provide a Public Access to the Blueway.

Currently there is no public access, the only public way to enter the Blueway is by water, either from the North Channel or from Muscamoot Bay. Neither is opportune to the majority of potential users. This then causes potential users to either abandon their planned trip, or resort to trespassing on neighboring property. Again, not a desirable situation. Fortunately a land owner has come forward with a nine acre parcel that borders the Krispin Drain and has entered into an agreement to sell it to the Township for the expressed purpose of providing the much needed Public Access. The property also borders M154, the state highway that runs through the Island, providing ideal vehicular ingress and egress to the site.

The proposed Public Access site plan development calls for parking, public restrooms, a dock with handicapped accommodations, an elevated tower to view the surrounding marshes, and a walking path around its perimeter. While initially the primary focus was on the Blueway and its uses, we also envision this site will become a "Trailhead" for bikers who come to the Island to traverse the local roads enjoying the natural beauty of our Island.

We feel that not only will this Public Access site be beneficial to all those who use it, but that its use will also be of economic benefit to local business and entrepreneurs catering to the needs of those users. We sincerely hope that you approve Clay Township's grant application.

On behalf of the Harsens Island St. Clair Flats Association Board of Directors,

Patrick F. Feighan
Executive Vice President
Harsens Island St. Clair Flats Association