



## Harsen's Island St. Clair Flats Association

### Minutes September 14, 2019

**Directors Present:** Craig Baloga, Todd Brady, Susan Bryson, George Covalle, Jerry Freeman, Melanie Most, Harold Stieber, Dennis Szymanski, Jerry Thiel, Leonard Verlinden, Lois Whipple, Rosemary Wieczorek;

**Excused:** Neva Covalle, Barbara Crown, Donna Halacoglu, Mike Hilla, Jim Laethem, David Martin, Kathy O'Connor;

**Guests and Members Present:** Artie Bryson, George Rose, Linda Schoonover, Jim Stieber.

George Covalle brought the meeting to order at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall at 9:00 am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The August 2019 meeting minutes were presented. **Jerry Thiel made the motion to approve the August 2019 meeting minutes, Leonard Verlinden seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, minutes to be placed on file.**

#### Executive Committee Reports

**Treasurer Report:** Harold Stieber presented the August Treasurer's Reports. Harold reported that the balance in the checkbook for August 31, 2019 was \$47,062.61, with total cash on hand being \$70,377.95. Harold ran a report of this year's profits over last year, and the Association is down approximately \$5,200 in profits, largely due to the fact that the Car Show had to be cancelled. Field day profits are not completely done being tallied at this time. A total of \$16,750 is currently allocated for the restroom funds. Full copies of the monthly Treasurer's Report are available by contacting Harold at [HaroldS@hiscfa.org](mailto:HaroldS@hiscfa.org).

**Leonard Verlinden made the motion to approve the August treasurer's reports, Lois Whipple seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, reports to be placed on file.**

**Secretary Report:** All of The Delta News publications have been mailed. A total of 385 books have been mailed, and many of them were handed out by board members driving around the Island to hand-deliver them. It cost around \$550 to mail the books this year. Two new memberships were received this month.

Communications: No communications were received this month.

Government Affairs: George Covalle is requesting someone to step forward to fill in Pat Feighan's shoes with taking on the responsibility for Government Affairs. Susan Bryson expressed interest in taking on this role.

Browne's Field: Glenn Templeton volunteered by assisting with pumping out Browne's Field this year, and he used his own water discharge line to assist with this effort. During one of his visits to pump out the field, damage occurred to his discharge lines due to an irresponsible driver going too fast over the line. **Dennis Szymanski made a motion to allocate \$250 to Island resident Glenn Templeton to replace his water discharge lines that were damaged during Browne's Field pumpout; Lois Whipple seconded. All in favor; motion carried.** Measures have already been put in place to prevent this damage from happening in the future.



**Guest Speaker, Clay Township Supervisor Artie Bryson:** Supervisor Bryson wanted to thank the HISCFA for allowing the township to use Browne's Field for hosting the sand bagging effort for the Island. In return, the township provided gravel, grading, and chloride cover at the apron and the driveway where the gravel had eroded from use. He also mentioned that Voakes, Krispin, and Columbine roads are all back open again after the temporary closing of these roads due to the high water situation. Once the stone packs down a little more, the township will be addressing the soft spots on Voakes and Columbine, but a lot of gravel was placed down so that the roads will be ready for duck hunting season. Supervisor Bryson also stated that Wednesday, September 18, 2019 will be the tentative closing date on the property on the Island slated for the proposed kayak launch / park along the Krispin Drain. This was obtained in part from grants from the DNR and St. Clair County, and this property is only costing the township \$14,000 for nine acres of property. Once the property is acquired, the first step will be a parking lot and a dock to launch kayaks, then following that will be restrooms, a nature walk, and an observation tower.

Supervisor Bryson also discussed the garbage situation for the approximately 350 out-islanders. In the past, the township has provided garbage service to the out-islanders by providing trash containers strategically placed near their access points. These containers cost approximately \$140/year per residence, and have brought significant amounts of complaints every year, mostly from residents who say they don't use it (and why are they getting billed for it). Every place that the containers are located has received complaints or misuse. The township board has decided to discontinue this service and will no longer be charging the residents of the out-islands. The containers will be pulled/removed (likely) end of October. There are dumpsters located behind the township office for these residents if they choose to use it. Residents of Lug Island will have their own dedicated, fenced-in dumpster at Tashmoo South, as this is the only location where this service has been previously successful since it is locked up. Five bins were approved for a trial period to be placed at the end of a private roadway where the garbage trucks will not go down, where each location contains at least three mailboxes. Hopefully this will be successful and additional bins can be purchased at a later time.

The township has received a SAW Grant (Sewer Asset, and Wastewater Management grant) and it got funded in total of \$1M and will be available in December. The sewer interceptor on the mainland is in rough shape and has been neglected for 40+ years. This grant will be allocated to potentially re-line the sewer interceptor and will cover the engineering and re-work of this interceptor.

At the ferry, the seawall is completed up to the first corner of the first dock. The load restrictions are currently in place for the safety of the ferry and to not damage anything any further. If we think back to the time when it was a few fare increases ago (~4-5 years ago) when the fare was raised by \$1, the MPSC told Champion's Auto Ferry to raise the fare by \$2, and the second dollar will be placed in escrow for a new boat. The ferry staff stressed that they didn't need a new boat, but rather new docks. The MPSC said "take it or leave it" so the ferry staff *left it* – the MPSC approved the \$2 fare increase but the ferry only took \$1 for the increased fare and instead saved their funds to work on the docks since that was what was needed. The permits are in place currently, it is not just a matter of completing the work.

Supervisor Bryson stated that approximately \$450,000 was spent by the township on combating the high water situation. There are several more things that need to take place regarding this high water situation (especially for next year), but these plans require an approval of an Emergency Action to be funded. Emergency Action letters were sent to the governor (by the township and the county) and the Army Corps of Engineers and the DEQ won't even talk to the township about these plans until the governor signs these letters. Supervisor Bryson is frustrated by the fact that this letter has been sitting on the governor's desk for a month but the governor's people are stating that they are following procedure and it will be handled in due time. Possibly in October, Supervisor Bryson would like to call a town hall meeting on the Island to discuss the high water situation and emergency preparedness for the winter.



Many people took advantage of the water diversion tubes this year, and there are no plans to get any more sand at the moment, until the Emergency Action letter is signed by the governor.

**Guest Speaker, Clay Township Fire Chief George Rose:** Chief Rose spoke about obtaining quotes for a new mini-pumper for Harsen's Island, and they are also getting an emergency warning system (tornado warning) for the island. There are now three new firefighters on the staff, and they are looking at getting coverage for three to four days a week. Some firefighters are taking paramedics classes so that drops down the number of available staff. As a result of the pancake breakfast over Labor Day weekend, there was approximately \$2,700 net profit from this event, and Chief Rose wanted to thank the Islanders for their support.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- *Investments:* Harold Stieber has taken the initiative to project/anticipate some estimated receipts and disbursements for the coming year. These have been broken down into three categories: basic expenses, contingency, and what can possibly be invested. The question remains: how much can the HISCFA take out of its checking account without affecting the Association's long-term viability. Lois Whipple suggests that the board make a recommendation on this mutual fund option, ensuring that the Association is not cut short. Melanie Most made a suggestion to collect the data and provide the entire HISCFA Board of Directors with a report in order to be better educated and have a meaningful discussion at the Annual Meeting next month.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- *Annual Meeting:* October 12, 2019 has been set as the date for this year's Annual Meeting. The only person who has dropped off the Board of Directors is Mike Hilla. George Covalle asked that members take a look at our board's weaknesses and find someone that is able to fill the gaps when it comes to new board members. Look at the important things that we do and the people who are doing these things. The Association needs to have backup for those people. As time goes on, no one is getting any younger and things can happen. Craig Baloga has agreed to fill in as the Vice President of the HISCFA in place of Pat Feighan for the Executive Board. A ballot will be prepared and the results will be read at the Annual Meeting.
- *Pig Roast and Bonfire:* This fifth annual event is taking place this evening, with food provided by McFat's of Fair Haven, and live music provided by Renegade. Susan Bryson is still looking for assistance with this event. There are going to be a few items to raffle items this year as well, as well as a 50/50 raffle.
- *Annual Letter / The Delta News Mailings:* There were some discussions about possibly including the Field Day raffle tickets in the same mailing as the Annual Letter, or perhaps combining the Annual Letter with The Delta News. Combining mailings will cut down on postal costs in the future and should be considered.
- *Benches & trees at Browne's Field:* Some suggestions were made to come up with a map/drawing of Browne's Field and the proposed walking path so that when a donation is made for benches or trees, people can identify where on the field they would like their donation to be placed.



Additional comments from directors or guests:

- ✓ Dennis Szymanski mentioned there is a Harsen's Island Militia (H.I.M.) charity baseball game against the team from Snoopy's Bar at Browne's Field at 12:00 noon tomorrow, Sunday, September 15, 2019. This game will benefit the Blue Water Humane Society.

Next meeting will be the *ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING* on Saturday, October 12, 2019 at **9:00 am** at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall.

**Jerry Thiel made the motion to adjourn; Leonard Verlinden seconded. All in favor; meeting adjourned at 10:08 am.**

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Most, Recording Secretary

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