



## Harsen's Island St. Clair Flats Association

### Minutes October 14, 2017

**Directors Present:** Craig Baloga, Todd Brady, Susan Bryson, Neva Covalle, Barbara Crown, Patrick Feighan, Jerry Freeman, Donna Halacoglu, David Martin, Melanie Most, Kathy O'Connor, Denne Osgood, Dennis Szymanski, Jerry Thiel, Lois Whipple;

**Excused:** Mike Hilla, Art Koster, Jim Laethem, Harold Stieber, Leonard Verlinden, Rosemary Wieczorek;

**Guests and Members Present:** Christine Baloga, Dave Carruthers, George Covalle, Linda Schoonover.

Denne Osgood brought the meeting to order at the Lions Hall at 9:00 am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The September 2017 meeting minutes were presented. **Patrick Feighan made the motion to approve the October meeting minutes, Barbara Crown seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, minutes to be placed on file.**

#### Executive Committee Reports

**Treasurer Report:** Denne Osgood presented the treasurer's reports for September 2017. Denne reported that the balance in the checkbook for September 30, 2017 was \$30,646.97, with total cash on hand being \$53,613.12. The final copy of the Field Day report was issued and the net profit for this event totaled \$6,692.93. Additionally, the annual Bonfire and Pig Roast report is nearly complete and the net profit for this event is around \$1,000. Full copies of the monthly Treasurer's Report are available by contacting Harold at stiebha@gmail.com.

**Patrick Feighan made the motion to approve the September 2017 treasurer's report, Barbara Crown seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, reports to be placed on file.**

**Secretary Report:** Neva Covalle reported there are a total of four new members as of last month.

Communications: There was no correspondence received this month.

Government Affairs: Patrick Feighan spoke to Fire Chief George Rose regarding the expiration of the Clay Township Fire Department's SAFER Grant. They were unable to get an extension after the 9/26/2017 ending date. Going forward, the fire station on Harsen's Island will be staffed by two firemen at all times, and one or both will be Basic Life Support (BLS) certified or better. Additionally, a motion was passed for the Fire Department to spec out new vehicle to replace the existing Ford Excursion utility vehicle (stationed on Harsen's) which is nearing the end of its use life.

Clay Township is pursuing the purchase of a 9.5-acre parcel of land on Harsen's Island, in conjunction with a grant, for the intent of having a small recreation area with direct public access to the Krispin Drain. This property is adjacent to the Krispin Drain and also accessible by M-154 geographically near the Schoolhouse Grille.



Browne's Field: Things are winding down at Browne's Field. The leaking drains at the main water station were repaired and replaced. The lighting fixtures have also been repaired and replaced. The coin box was emptied and the coins will be deposited in the bank. At the end of November, the Bates Cut water station will be shut down for the season. Barbara Crown has a local contact for grant writing, and she will reach out to her contact to see whether they have any insight into the best way to approach getting a grant for the walking path around the field.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- *Great Lakes Islands Coalition*: Harold Stieber went to this event over September 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> and provided a full report which can be found in the **Appendix** of this document. The HISCFA has appointed Harold to follow up with this Coalition for next year to be a part of this again to continue to serve our Harsen's Island community. Next year's event will be held on Madeline Island, Wisconsin.
- *Fall Bonfire and Pig Roast*: Everyone felt that this year's event was the best one yet, and there was plenty to eat and drink. All responses received were positive and everyone is looking forward to next year's event.
- *Sportsman's Swap Meet & Duck Calling Contest*: There were about a dozen vendors that showed up for this event, and the turnout was fair. Members from the Association were present for this event and had a table with information about the Association with the intent of gaining new members. Other comments about the event included perhaps having a children's archery station for next year, as well as people bringing hunting dogs for sale. Participants particularly loved using the pond at Browne's Field for the retrieval demonstration.
- *Bates Cut Water Station*: As Patrick Feighan mentioned earlier, the Bates Cut Water Station will be closed down at the end of November. In the spring, a sign will be placed at that water station alerting users about the HISCFA's intent to permanently close down that station. The verbiage for this sign has not yet been determined; a proposed date for the end of service has not been established either. A committee exists, but there are still several details that will need to be determined for a course of action.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- *Christmas Party*: George and Barbara Crown have generously offered to use the Sans Souci Landing for this event. Barbara is talking to a few potential caterers to have this event catered for the HISCFA Board Members. The date for this event is December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017.
- *Pavilion Rental Coordinators*: Rosemary Wiczorek has asked for some additional support for rentals, and Barbara Crown has agreed to assist with rentals going forward. Additionally Rosemary could not attend today's meeting because she was helping prepare the pavilion for a last-minute rental at the time of this meeting.

Additional comments from directors or guests:

- ✓ Neva Covalle suggested installing some permanent lighting in the pavilion. Neva agreed to look into getting pricing and a layout for future consideration.
- ✓ Christine Baloga asked about the potholes at the apron of the Browne's Field parking lot. The driveway and parking area is routinely maintained, but those potholes seem to resurface year after year.



- ✓ Melanie Most would like to publish a few facts about the HISCFA from time-to-time on the Association's Facebook page and Nextdoor. Melanie asked that the members on the board please provide her with information that she can post on behalf of the Association.
- ✓ As a note of interest, there are 1147 homesteads on Harsen's Island.

Next meeting will be Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at **9:00 am** at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall.

**Patrick Feighan made the motion to adjourn; Neva Covalle seconded. All in favor; meeting adjourned at 9:40 am.**

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Most, Recording Secretary



## **APPENDIX**

2017 Islands Summit Summary



## **2017 Islands Summit: Laying the Foundation for a Great Lakes Island Coalition**

Event Hosts: The Beaver Island Community

Central Michigan University Biological Station

Beaver Island, Michigan

September 25-26, 2017

### **Objective:**

To assemble community leaders/champions from unbridged, year-round, Great Lakes island communities to review the need for the establishment of a collaboration between them for the purpose of facilitating a dialogue wherein challenges and solutions to island issues are presented and discussed. The effort is being modeled after the Island Institute ([The Island Institute](#)), an organization based in Portland, Maine that coordinates efforts between Maine island communities.

### **Day 1:**

The morning session featured opening remarks by Beaver Island, State of Michigan and The Island Institute representatives. This was followed by “My Island in 5 Minutes” overviews by all attendee island communities. In attendance were 72 participants from 11 Great Lakes islands. You can view each presentation using the attached hyperlink. My 5 minutes of fame is on clip 14.

<http://beaverislandnews.com/2017%20September%2025%20Island%20Summit%20Presentations.html>

The afternoon session featured three field trips of the Beaver Island Community (Natural Resources, Cultural and Governmental/Infrastructure). Due to time constraints, attendees were limited to one of the field trips. I chose the Infrastructure tour and visited the island airport, waste management facility, electric plant, library, fire hall, medical center, library and community center where we were able to discourse with the various Beaver Island representatives about their particular institutions.

### **Day 2:**

The morning session broke the attendee communities into small groups for the purpose of identifying links between islands including common challenges and opportunities. The groups focused on 10 topics (Energy, Education, Transportation, Medical, Tourism, Housing, Small Business, Environment, Governance and Infrastructure) and were allowed 10 minutes per topic in which they presented challenges and solutions among the group members after which they broke up and formed new groups on a new topic. Obviously, all topics didn't pertain to each



island, so the attendees were allowed to choose the topics relevant to their community. A huge challenge to our island is to communicate to part-time islanders the necessity to participate in island issues (via membership in the HISCFA) so that changes to our island don't happen by default instead of by design.

The afternoon session shared the results of the breakout morning groups with the full contingent for the purpose not necessarily of solving everyone's issues, but primarily to determine the benefits obtained from inter-island communication and collaboration based on the earlier breakout sessions. The data presented was voluminous and will be compiled by the State as indicated in my comments below.

### Summary:

The Great Lakes contain the largest, most diverse collection of freshwater islands in the world. Of the 32,000 islands in the Great Lakes, nearly twenty continue to host communities of people, typically a mix of year-round residents, seasonal transplants, and transient visitors. With no permanent connection to the mainland, they are literally defined and shaped by water. They are the quintessential "**Great Lakes coastal community.**"

While present-day island communities are uniquely distinct from one another in character, traditions, and personality, they share in common a number of complex, inter-related **challenges**. These include access to services and quality education, supporting a diversified economy, and managing natural, cultural, and historical resources across public and private boundaries. Underlying these challenges is the fact that island demographics are changing at great speed and dimension (size, age, seasonality, ownership, economic status, etc.). For these small and remote places, the relative impact of a rapidly changing society can be enormous.

Further, awareness and understanding of "island life" is limited among many mainland decision-makers, such as governments, private organizations, and the general public. In a world driven by information, there are few, if any, programs or data sets specific to most Great Lakes islands – either individually or as a collective – by which to accurately inform management decisions and drive strategic actions related to social, economic, environmental, and other challenges.

Luckily, these challenges are hurdles, not unmovable barriers. In fact, some island communities have already independently developed their own "island solutions to island challenges." Interestingly, island communities are finding they often have more in common with one another than to their adjacent mainland. Thus, there is great value in islanders learning from other islanders about **best practices** that work, as well as those that don't.

Major impediments to more systematically implementing more solutions on more islands are a **lack of capacity** and **limited access to information**. To help address these needs, a new collaboration – the "**Great Lakes Islands Coalition**" – is forming between multiple island communities with support from off-island partner organizations. Currently under development, it



will be built off existing models of island collaboration in place elsewhere, but will be tailored to meet the unique needs of the Great Lakes region.

A Coalition will foster broader island-to-island coordination and dialogue, including regular sharing of tools and ideas. Participating islands will benefit from access to timely and accurate information, technical experts, and decision-makers. Ultimately, any implementation would occur on individual islands at their own discretion and pace. By coming together, island voices would be elevated and amplified, resulting in greater awareness and understanding on the mainland.

Great Lakes islands are uniquely poised to turn their challenges into **opportunities**. This first convention of Great Lakes island communities will help define their common needs and establish the foundation for a Coalition.

## Comments:

A summary of this event is being drafted by the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes (OGL) <http://www.michigan.gov/deqogl> and should be available by the end of October. The event was held in conjunction with and much support from Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin. <http://www.northland.edu/great-lakes-islands>

Please see the article below from Bridge Magazine providing a commentary on the Summit. <http://www.bridgemi.com/quest-commentary/fighting-maintain-life-michigans-island-communities>

The conference was an encouraging statement on what the power of inter-island communication will be able to accomplish. When polled, the attendee island groups overwhelmingly supported the solidification of the foundation of the Great Lakes Island Coalition that was established here. The overall sentiment was a renewed conviction that we can accomplish things as a group that we can't do individually.

Subsequent topical meetings will be held throughout the coming year most likely on a webinar basis coordinated by the OGL so that those groups with interest in a particular topic would be able to participate without involving groups to which the topic is not relevant.

An annual gathering of all island groups is being planned for this same time next year on Madeline Island, Wisconsin.

Outstanding regards to the residents of Beaver Island for all the hospitality and assistance rendered to the visitors at this organizing event. It was greatly appreciated by all.