



Harsen's Island St. Clair Flats Association

Minutes February 9, 2019

Directors Present: Craig Baloga, Todd Brady, George Covalle, Neva Covalle, Barbara Crown, Jim Laethem, Melanie Most, Dennis Szymanski;

Excused: Patrick Feighan, Jerry Freeman, Donna Halacoglu, Mike Hilla, David Martin, Kathy O'Connor, Harold Stieber, Jerry Thiel, Leonard Verlinden, Lois Whipple, Rosemary Wiczorek;

Guests and Members Present: Artie Bryson, John Lemko, Linda Pavia, Linda Schoonover, Joanne Shirkey.

George Covalle brought the meeting to order at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall at 9:33 am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The January 2019 meeting minutes were presented. **Barbara Crown made the motion to approve the January 2019 meeting minutes, Dennis Szymanski seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, minutes to be placed on file.**

Executive Committee Reports

Treasurer Report: Harold Stieber was not present to provide a Treasurer's Report this month. He will be combining January and February's Treasurer's Reports to present in March. Additionally, he will be breaking up specific funds to which those funds are allocated within the report (e.g. restrooms, etc.). Full copies of the monthly Treasurer's Report are available by contacting Harold at HaroldS@hiscfa.org.

Secretary Report: Neva Covalle did some research on some past membership letter mailings to determine how many people become members versus how many letters are sent out. In 2016 there were 1,105 letters sent out but there ended up being a total of 660 paid members. In 2017, the member list was cleaned up and a total of 884 letters were sent and there were 654 paid members. In 2018, there were 888 sent and 661 paid. For 2019, there will be 819 letters sent out, and Neva is asking for current members to network with their neighbors so that they can hopefully provide any non-members a testimony to our association so that we can increase membership this year. Supervisor Artie Bryson was present and stated that the township assessor will be able to provide new residents' names and addresses to the Association so that the HISCFA can reach out to potential new members. Melanie Most stated that she will populate a list from newly-joined Nextdoor members for Neva to cross-reference to see if there are truly new property owners or simply additional family members simply joining the site.

Neva also collected email addresses and determined that there are 511 "good" email addresses available out of the 661 paid members. If the HISCFA does not have your correct email address on file, please send an email to Neva@hiscfa.org to get on our mailing list. This is important for participating in member surveys (which may include prizes), as well as important Association-related communications.

Barbara Crown reported that she has gotten the renewal letters out to the advertisers active on the signboard as well as advertisers for The Delta News.

Communications: No communications have been received this month.



Government Affairs: A review of the Island emergency/preparedness procedures has taken place. All of the utility companies and government entities are on board with the procedure and will begin staging the Island with the necessary equipment in the next couple of weeks. Reminder notifications have gone out via Facebook and Nextdoor.

Supervisor Bryson discussed that he had attended a flood mitigation meeting, which was attended by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Supervisor Bryson stated that they met and talked to the person responsible for water level forecasting for the Corps and they are saying to expect average rainfall this spring, but to expect the water levels to be around *4 inches higher* than last year. The Army Corps of Engineers are going to be dredging in the South Channel near the shipping channel cutoff and also near the head of Russell Island this summer as routine maintenance. Supervisor Bryson has requested loads of the dredged sand to be made available on Russell Island, Harsens Island, and also the mainland so those spoils can be made available for sandbags. He has ordered 30,000 sandbags which will be made available for residents to pack to protect their properties if the water gets too high. He has also requested more funding to be made available for increased St. Clair County Sheriff patrols on the water this summer.

Supervisor Bryson also mentioned the upcoming FEMA meeting (discussed later under Old Business). He made mention that FEMA has a program going that if your property is currently in a floodplain, FEMA will buy your house at fair market value and will tear it down and that property will never be built upon again. Alternatively, if you want to raise your house a foot above the floodplain, they will pay for 75 percent of that cost (and you will pay 25%), but then you have to sign documents that this property MUST carry flood insurance at all times, even for future owners of that property.

Browne's Field: Dennis Szymanski presented a property map of Browne's Field and discussed the proposed location(s) of a walking path. It is estimated that the entire project can be completed for around \$15,000. The bulk of the labor will be going into properly creating the base of the path so that it is secure with asphalt shavings, so that any kind of a top can be placed on at a later date. Dennis has been networking with people around the Island who have the necessary equipment to accomplish this task. The path will be 8 feet wide, trailing across most of the exterior perimeter of the field, going inside around the perimeter of the pond.

Susan Bryson agreed to chair the committee for the permanent restroom facility at Browne's Field. The committee consisting of Jim Laethem, Dennis Szymanski, Susan Bryson, and George Covalle met this past week to discuss usage and get a general consensus and considerations for the facility going forward. There will be ongoing discussions with this committee in the future.

Melanie Most received a query about a Browne's Field pavilion rental via the Facebook page. She provided Rosemary's contact information. Barbara Crown stated that both she and Rosemary can be on the contact information for future inquiries.

OLD BUSINESS

- *Survey Committee Update:* Barbara Crown stated that she will contact Christina Baloga so that they can sort out the status of the survey. Melanie Most stated she will be able to assist once the status is determined.
- *FEMA Floodplain meeting:* The FEMA Town Hall meeting is scheduled for Tuesday February 26, 2019 at 4:00 pm. There is no official agenda for this meeting yet. Over 1,200 structures will be pulled out of the existing floodplain but they are also looking at wind-blown water which has the possibility to affect a few additional properties. Clay Township currently pays over \$860,000 per year in flood insurance. It is highly encouraged for residents to attend this meeting to show the impact of FEMA's actions. Be seen AND



heard. FEMA is asking for the public's opinions at this meeting, which is more important than simply hearing about the meeting afterwards. Please make every effort to attend if possible.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Road Cleanup*: The schedule is determined by MDOT; the weekends of March 27th or April 13th are potential weekends to accomplish this task. There is currently not a chairperson for this event. According to the state's website, potential pickups will be between April 13-21, 2019. Neva Covalle stated that MDOT would be sending a letter to the Association in April.
- *Vote to fund insurance for emergency airboat*: The HISCFA Executive Committee held a vote on the subject of a rider on Bob Bryson's airboat insurance in order for him to be able to take riders. This vote occurred via email, days prior to today's meeting. After Bob Bryson had reviewed the coverage contained within his insurance policy for his airboat, he found his old rider covering the use of emergency transportation had expired/lapsed and was no longer in force. Via email, the HISCFA Executive Committee voted 4 to 1 to approve \$500 to cover Bob Bryson's insurance rider which covers 10 days over a thirty (30) day period. The Association decided to do this now, as it has done in a handful of other instances in the past (e.g. paying for the airboat fuel and life jackets), to assist with the safety and welfare of our community.

Additional comments from directors or guests:

- ✓ Supervisor Bryson is looking for a couple potential dates to have another Music in the Park series at Browne's Field. It works best for a Friday night, and Barbara Crown provided a few dates that she will email to the township.
- ✓ Melanie Most requested some feedback for the Amazon Smile donations and how much has been donated to the HISCFA. She mentioned that she has been reposting on Facebook and Nextdoor to remind people that this program is available and to please participate as it is of NO COST to anyone and Amazon donates 1% of the cost of your order(s) to the HISCFA.

Next meeting will be Saturday, March 9, 2019 at **9:30 am** at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall.

Neva Covalle made the motion to adjourn; Todd Brady seconded. All in favor; meeting adjourned at 10:13 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Most, Recording Secretary

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