

Harsen's Island St. Clair Flats Association

Minutes March 13, 2021

Directors Present: Deborah Addy, Craig Baloga, Lucy Burby, George Covalle, Steve Gartland, Jim Laethem, Steve Lawrence, Margaret Marchwinski, David Martin, Melanie Most, Jane Mount, Harold Stieber, Dennis Szymanski, Jerry Thiel;

Excused: Susan Bryson, Jerry Freeman, Donna Halacoglu, Kathy O'Connor, Leonard Verlinden, Rosemary Wieczorek, Lois Whipple, Terry Wiggins;

Guests and Members Present: Harold Bain, Lorraine Bain, Patty Bain, Maureen Boury, Artie Bryson, Chuck Button, John Dickson, Shelly Dickson, Kurt Marchwinski, Norman Rhodes, George Rose, Linda Schoonover, Joanne Shirkey, Whitey Simon.

Craig Baloga brought the meeting to order at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall at 9:28 am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The February 2021 meeting minutes were presented. **Jerry Thiel made the motion to approve the February 2021 meeting minutes, David Martin seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, minutes to be placed on file.**

Executive Committee Reports

Treasurer Report: Harold Stieber presented the February 2021 Treasurer's Reports. Harold reported that the balance in the checkbook for February 28, 2021 was \$20,421.40, with total cash on hand being \$87,266.20. Full copies of the monthly Treasurer's Report are available by contacting Harold at HaroldS@hiscfa.org.

David Martin made the motion to approve the February 2021 treasurer's reports, Steve Lawrence seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, reports to be placed on file.

Secretary Report: Margaret Marchwinski is the new Executive Secretary. She introduced herself to the group and is excited to take on this role.

Communications: There were no communications received this month.

Browne's Field: After our last meeting, DTE Energy was at Browne's Field and found that on the one pole coming to the main service, two of the four legs that feed the service had ice that pushed the connectors apart. They were able to resolve the issue easily and full power was restored. The technician noted that this is a relatively common thing to occur. A special crimp was placed on the connector in order to reduce the possibility of this occurring in the future. There has not been much activity at the field lately due to the weather, but activity is expected to pick up as the weather warms up. Craig Baloga also mentioned that the grounds seem to be firming up and the puddles are down. The pole barn has also been cleaned up and organized. Steve Lawrence asked when the pump will be hooked up at Browne's Field, and Craig said now that everything is thawed, he is going to speak with Brian Sears on an appropriate date to finish the install. George Covalle stated that Brian is charging by the hour (around \$40/hour) for

his assistance at the field. Dennis Szymanski expressed his indignation about the fact that he obtained volunteers to work on this task, mostly without any associated costs, but it was essentially pulled out from under him because it wasn't being executed fast enough. The board agreed if the HISCFA is not careful about properly utilizing willing volunteers, connections/offers to volunteer in the future may be lost.

Government Affairs: Craig Baloga read some information provided by Lois Whipple. The State of Michigan has issued Small Business Survival Grants in St. Clair County. Some of the businesses you may recognize who have received this grant are Anchor Bay Indoor Sports, Johnny Lega's, Marine City Fish Co., Riviera Restaurant, The Island Grille, etc. For more information on these grants, please visit: michiganbusiness.org/survival. The International Joint Commission recently published a news article highlighting the fact that Lake Superior and Lake Michigan-Huron water levels are expected to decline. More about this topic can be found at the following link: <https://ijc.org/en/labc/update-lake-superior-outflows-and-expected-conditions-march-2021>. Finally, regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, our local Kroger and Rite Aid locations in Algonac have the vaccine. In order to make an appointment, please call them directly. You can also register with the county health department if you wish to do so. Additionally, Community First will be administering vaccines.

Guest Speaker, Clay Township Supervisor Artie Bryson: Currently the water levels are about 15" lower than last year at this time. There is a grant available for wake enforcement; Supervisor Bryson is not sure if the township is capable of applying for it or whether it has to go through the county. The new St. Clair County Sheriff (Mat King) is going to deputize a few of the Clay Township Police officers in order to utilize the police boat. Without this, the Township doesn't have the authority out on the water unless working under the auspice of deputized officers designated by the sheriff. This same thing was done last year, and it worked out pretty well. This is not a replacement for the marine sheriff, but rather a supplement to them. Truthfully, having just one or two isn't really enough, but it is what it is. Artie talked with the CEO of Community First and they are doing 150-200 vaccinations daily. Linda Schoonover asked whether it would be possible to administer vaccines to homebound persons. Supervisor Bryson stated that he would reach out to St. Clair County to see if they have any plans for this.

Through the COVID relief package that was just issued, Clay Township is receiving about \$878,000. The county itself is getting \$30 million, and county-wide, with all of the entities, totals \$63 million. Not sure of the strings attached yet, but Supervisor Bryson is hearing preliminarily that revenue sharing from the state may be reduced significantly, but he won't know about that officially for about six months. Once the Township is comfortable with using this money, he would recommend to the Board to either lower our operating costs or improve our infrastructure going forward, or even increase our tax base so it would be more of an investment for ourselves rather than blowing it on something that won't give us a return. The county agrees with this philosophy as well. There is a large need in our county to allocate somewhere for large businesses come in and set up a factory, like in the 26 Mile Road corridor. However, there is a lack of water and electricity to support this infrastructure. It may be possible to allocate some of this \$30 million to upgrade the water and electricity at the 26 Mile Rd. corridor for the purpose of creating jobs. He has been lobbying with the county about this, and it would be awesome for some larger corporations to come in and place a factory (or several) there.

Supervisor Bryson will be starting to work on next year's fiscal budget which goes from July to June. He also mentioned there are two rumors being circulated on social media that Clay Township had a \$1M deficit, and also that there is a negative fund balance. Both of these rumors are NOT true; the township is financially stable and the fund balances are healthy. Monday night's Township board meeting will include a discussion about the garbage contracts. There is actually a possibility that rates will be lowered over the next 1-3 years as a result of a lot of negotiations that have been going on. There is a desire to add a second Island cleanup date in the fall, maybe October 2, 2021. Island Cleanup dates will be first weekend in June again as usual.

Supervisor Bryson, the township, and the HISCFA have been working on event dates so there are no conflicts. The township is also working on a medical marijuana ordinance and a short-term rental ordinance.

Supervisor Bryson mentioned that he (along with HISCFA Board Member Lucy Burby) is part of the Algonac-Clay Community Foundation, which began in 2006. After this year, this foundation will have given away a total of \$250,000 which stays completely within Clay Township and Algonac. When the foundation raises money, it keeps the principal, but gives the interest away. Applications for grants are available locally at Northstar Bank in Algonac. The Foundation is giving away \$8,800 to organizations this year. Unfortunately there were no fundraisers this past year due to the pandemic. However, this year there is a golf cart raffle. Tickets are \$20 apiece, or 6 for \$100. The Foundation provide scholarships yearly, as well as grants to local food banks, the library, the Historical Society, school baseball fields, and even the HISCFA has received monies for improving the playground at Browne's Field.

Guest Speaker, Clay Township Fire Chief George Rose: During the month of February, Chief Rose attended two meetings: the HISCFA meeting on Harsen's Island, and St. Clair County Chief's Association where general business was discussed. The ferry to Harsen's Island was shut down for few days in February and the Clay Township fire department executed their Ferry Shut down plan: Station #2 was staffed with fire department personnel along with a Paramedic from Tri-Hospital EMS. The U.S. Coast Guard air station and MedStar Life Flight, along with the Michigan State Police, were all notified of the ferry shut down to assist if we needed air-evacuate anyone off the Island. The fire department assisted the U.S. Post Office by taking the mail by airboat across to the Island along with supplies for the Sans Souci Market (milk, bread, fresh vegetables, and canned goods). We also took prescriptions across for the residents. Chief Rose would like to thank the fire department personnel for stepping up during the shutdown. He mentioned that he received a notice from West Shore Fire Equipment that our new fire engines could be completed by April 23, 2021, and the new Airboat will be completed by the end of March / beginning of April. He submitted applications for two AFG Grants to purchase new AEDs (automatic external defibrillators). This will replace our old AEDs and we will be compatible with Tri-Hospital EMS. Total cost of the grant request was \$34,154.10. This will also bring them online so their status can be remotely monitored by the fire department. Chief Rose also submitted a regional AFG Grant for our area fire departments (Clay, Marine City, Ira Twp., and Algonac) for new portable radios. This will replace our old ones, and will all be compatible and up-to-date, with the total cost of the grant request being \$609,988.29. A CPR class is being planned after George submits requests for new equipment to support this. The Island fire station was manned all 28 days in February, 24 hours a day. The plan for March is to be manned in the same manner.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- *Browne's Field Restrooms / Fundraiser:* Last month George Covalle asked Dennis Szymanski to put together a very rough estimate for what it would cost to complete the updates needed to support permanent restrooms at Browne's Field. Dennis came back with a rough estimate of around \$90,000 to complete the task. Rattee estimated around \$25,000 for the septic system and tile field work at Browne's Field to support this endeavor. This brings the total to around \$115,000. Harold Stieber reported that there is nearly \$40,000 dedicated to this project currently, which brings it to a shortfall of \$75,000. Donations and grants will need to make up the rest of the \$75,000 in order to get this done. Jane Mount has volunteered to work on obtaining grants for this purpose, and the other task will be to push for donations to support this project. Building prices are skyrocketing, and material shortages are also driving up the costs. Jane mentioned that there are some potential places to go for grants. Primarily the Ralph C. Wilson Foundation seems to be a great first start. She already began the work to apply for the information for these active lifestyle grants. Supervisor Bryson asked Jane to connect with him to potentially get a contact with the St. Clair County Community Foundation since they already have a great track record working together. Additionally, the

walking path has about \$10,000 set aside for this project, and using asphalt millings was estimated at a final cost of approximately \$15,000. The potential lead on the grant could also possibly include this project.

- *Annual Membership Letter:* Margaret Marchwinski has been working with Barbara Crown and Christine Baloga to finalize the 2021 Membership Letter and application form, and they will be mailed next week (mailed directly by the printer). Posts were placed on Facebook and Nextdoor to generate an awareness of the mailing. There have been several new membership requests (from current non-members) and a few address updates. We will also finally be transitioning to the Wild Apricot database which will assist with the management of membership going forward. It is hoped that the new website will go live in the next month or so. There will be a calendar available to keep track of events, and users can submit membership payments, in addition to a variety of other things that has been highlighted over the past few months.
- *Water Station:* A new light was installed to replace the old, broken one. There will also be some routine maintenance on the door so that it will magnetically lock automatically (properly) when it is closed. Harold Stieber indicated that Todd Brady is waiting on the HISCFA to tell him when we are ready for him to initiate the work needed to be done at the water station for the Wi-Fi update to move away from the quarter system. Discussion about Todd's proposal took place in October 2020. There will also need to have some wood replaced and some painting to update the exterior. Craig Baloga will be setting up a committee meeting to go through where we're at and what the next steps are to get things done at the water station. Dennis Szymanski brought up some history about discussions surrounding moving the water station to Browne's Field permanently and would like to know why that notion was completely abandoned if the HISCFA continues to spend money for upkeep on the current water station. Dennis has pulled the financials of the water station for the past ten years or so and some years' costs are much higher than others. It would be cheaper and more streamlined if it was all under one roof, at Browne's Field at the pavilion along with the restrooms. Craig Baloga agreed that we should revisit this topic. Dennis reiterated that it wouldn't be much more of an additional cost to accomplish this. Harold asked whether he remembered correctly that a larger water line would need to be in place to accommodate the water usage for such a facility. Jim Laethem and Dennis confirmed that the water line coming to the field is adequate to support a combined facility.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Committee Membership and Nominations:* Craig Baloga sent out an email to directors to remind them to update their status on committees and make sure that all committees are adequately covered with strong teams. This is so that status updates can be reported out at Board meetings as opposed to hashing out details during the Board meetings. Now that HITA is reactivated, Craig is not sure that the HISCFA needs a transportation committee because it seems redundant. HITA is leading their own charge, and there is a Park-and-Ride that HISCFA maintains and keeps in good order (and there might be a few other issues), but the HISCFA doesn't really need to have a committee to cover transportation topics. Perhaps this committee can remain, but Craig suggests that it be renamed to more appropriately describe what the committee does for the Association.
- *Summer Event Calendar:* As mentioned earlier, Craig Baloga and Supervisor Bryson have worked out a rough draft with Cindy Babisz to ensure there is no overlap or conflicts with events between the organizations.
- *Walking Path (next steps):* As mentioned earlier, this will be included in a grant proposal to be written by Jane Mount.
- *Car Show Update:* Jerry Thiel and Craig Baloga had a meeting two weeks ago to discuss what needs to be done in order to get the ball rolling on executing this event. July 17, 2021 will be the date for the car show. Jerry stressed that it is absolutely critical to get volunteers for this event in order for it to be successful.

There will be another meeting this afternoon to continue these discussions and identify next steps. Jerry indicated that he needs someone to handle the car show's Facebook page (and social media) to adequately promote this event. Jerry also estimates that around 26-30 people are needed on-site at the event in order to manage it. Additionally, on March 20, 2021 at the Lions Hall at 2pm, Craig will be holding a meeting for prospective volunteers to help with this event. Jerry will send Melanie Most a list of things that prospective volunteers will need to assist with so that people might be more willing to get engaged sooner if there are some expectations set up front.

Additional comments from directors or guests:

- ✓ April 17, 2021 will be the target for the Adopt-a-Highway Road Cleanup for the HISCFA portion of M-154, which begins at the former Weaver's Market and goes to the Bates Cut water station. The backup date for this will be April 24, 2021 if weather is not good for the April 17 date. These dates are set by MDOT and cannot be changed, since MDOT has to coordinate the pickup of the trash the following week.
- ✓ Tonight is daylight savings, so remember to change the batteries in your smoke detectors along with changing your clocks ahead. If you have difficulty getting on a ladder to change the batteries, please call the fire department and Fire Chief Rose will send someone out to your house to help.
- ✓ Patty Bain was present at the meeting and wanted to mention that she is hoping to open The Island Grind in Sans Souci on April 1, 2021. They will be offering espresso drinks, drip coffee, and some pastries. Upon opening it will be carry-out only (no restrooms).

Next meeting will be Saturday, April 10, 2021 at **9:30 am** at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall.

Jerry Thiel made the motion to adjourn; Steve Lawrence seconded. All in favor; meeting adjourned at 10:52 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Most, Recording Secretary

MelanieM@hiscfa.org

APPENDIX

Fire Department Incident Reports for Harsen's Island (February 2021)

Clay Township Fire & EMS

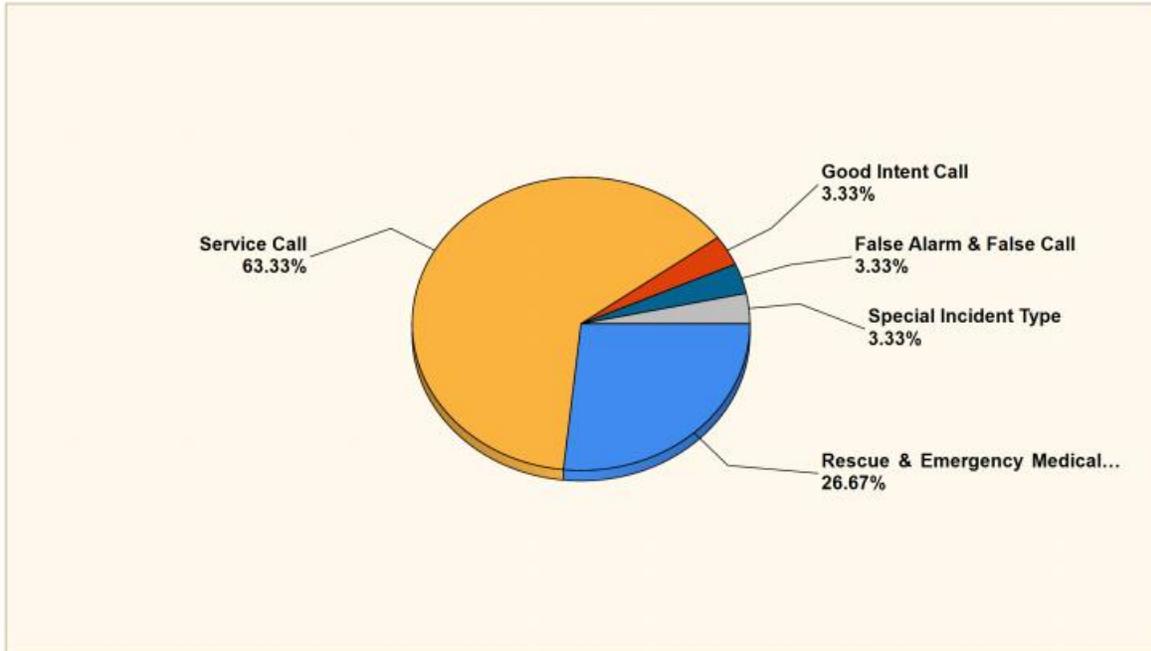
Clay Township, MI

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Breakdown by Major Incident Types for Date Range

Zone(s): 3 - HARSENS ISLAND | Start Date: 02/01/2021 | End Date: 02/28/2021



MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	8	26.67%
Service Call	19	63.33%
Good Intent Call	1	3.33%
False Alarm & False Call	1	3.33%
Special Incident Type	1	3.33%
TOTAL	30	100%

Detailed Breakdown by Incident Type		
INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
320 - Emergency medical service, other	3	10%
321 - EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	5	16.67%
550 - Public service assistance, other	1	3.33%
553 - Public service	3	10%
554 - Assist invalid	5	16.67%
571 - Cover assignment, standby, moveup	10	33.33%
611 - Dispatched & cancelled en route	1	3.33%
746 - Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO	1	3.33%
900 - Special type of incident, other	1	3.33%
TOTAL INCIDENTS:	30	100%