



Harsen's Island St. Clair Flats Association

Minutes June 13, 2020

Directors Present: Craig Baloga, Lucy Burby, George Covalle, Neva Covalle, Jerry Freeman, Jim Laethem, David Martin, Melanie Most, Harold Stieber, Dennis Szymanski, Jerry Thiel, Leonard Verlinden, Lois Whipple;

Excused: Susan Bryson, Barbara Crown, Donna Halacoglu, Kathy O'Connor, Rosemary Wieczorek;

Guests and Members Present: Harold Bain, Patty Bain, Artie Bryson, Mary Lorence, Arlene Mikolowski, Harry Mikolowski, Sr., Cindy Pilato, George Rose, Linda Schoonover, Joanne Shirkey, Skip Tornow.

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

The May 2020 meeting minutes were presented. **David Martin made the motion to approve the May 2020 meeting minutes, Neva Covalle seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, minutes to be placed on file.**

Executive Committee Reports

Treasurer Report: Harold Stieber presented the May 2020 Treasurer's Reports. Harold reported that the balance in the checkbook for May 31, 2020 was \$39,406.24, with total cash on hand being \$94,345.96. 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 May 2020 treasurer's reports, Leonard Verlinden seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, reports to be placed on file.

Secretary Report: Neva Covalle reported that 300 reminder notices were sent out a week ago, and 42 have returned. There are currently 520 members this year, which is only down approximately 75 from last year. Harold Stieber noted that he billed The Old Club but the check has not yet been received from them. It was noted that The Old Club membership is down considerably this year.

Communications: No communications have been received this month.

Browne's Field: Dennis Szymanski stated that the 420-pound catch basin has been delivered to the field. A hole will be dug with a machine and the catch basin will be carefully rolled and dropped into place. Then the pipes will be laid for the pump, and finally the electrical will be run once everything is in place. Dennis Szymanski stated that he and Rodney Jessup are waiting to sink the barrel until Glenn Templeton can assist with his recently-repaired trencher. The water is down at the Field and is finally under control.

Last month, George Covalle mentioned he would bring a sketch of Browne's Field with the intended location of the walking path, and also new trees and benches to be placed along the path. George presented that sketch to the meeting attendees, and a photo of that sketch can be seen in the Appendix of this document. David Martin suggested to bring this in front of the Field Committee for further discussion.



Government Affairs: Craig Baloga indicated that he attended the Clay Township Board meeting on June 1st, and introduced a majority of the items discussed by Supervisor Bryson in the below paragraph. As of June 8th, restaurants, museums and parks have opened throughout the state, and the Clay Township Splash Pad is officially open as well.

Guest Speaker, Clay Township Supervisor Artie Bryson: There's a total of \$50,000 available for increased wake enforcement for Clay Township: \$25,000 came from the DDA, and the other \$25,000 came from both the general fund and the police budget from a realization in a savings in fuel and insurance from which this unspent money was allocated. The police are trying to be on the water 3-4 days every week, but staffing is currently an issue (e.g. officers would like to not have to work the weekend all the time). There's a new head of the marine patrol appointed, and they've been out aggressively enforcing the wake law. There have been some complaints about people saying they never see the police boat(s) on the water. To put it into perspective: there are about 45 miles of roads in the township with three cars out there, but 140 miles of shoreline in the township and there are only one or two boats available at a time. The resources just aren't there, but we do what we can. There are a total of three active cases of COVID-19 in the township at the moment. There are 159,000+ people in the county, and as of a couple of days ago only about 48 active cases total. Of those active cases there are zero people in the hospital. County-wide we are looking pretty good. Music in the Park has returned, but it was challenging with the local and state health departments (and even with the Michigan State Police) to discuss the logistics about hosting these events. Circles were drawn on the grass to allocate seating areas to promote social distancing, and signs were placed as reminders to keep away from others. The DDA is doing a grant, and money can only be spent within the district (the Island is geographically located outside of the district and is therefore not eligible for any of those monies). The grant is \$3,000 as a way to assist with local businesses to make their business safe including personal protective equipment (PPE) sneeze guards, hand sanitizers, masks, etc. The idea behind it is to keep employees safe, and also keep patrons safe since they are mostly township residents. The Pickerel Tournament fireworks have been cancelled this year, and no word on whether there will be any other public fireworks displays in the area.

Guest Speaker, Clay Township Fire Chief George Rose: Chief Rose reported that during the month of May he attended two meetings: the HISCFA board meeting by teleconference, and the U.S. Coast Guard to plan out for Jobbie Noonan.

Due to COVID-19 residents are requesting the fire and police departments to do birthday parades for their children, and the department has had numerous requests. The Clay Township Fire Department has also participated in the parade for the Algonac High School Seniors' 2020 graduation. Emergency calls are starting to peak; we are about 17 calls down from last year. Chief Rose stated that he would like to thank Brian Sears, Brian Ceto, and Matt Gabriel for the successful CPR save to which they responded recently. Fire Boat #1 and Fire Boat #2 are currently in the water. New motors were ordered for Fire Boat #2 and should be received in about 3 weeks. A new flagpole has been purchased, and the septic system will be worked on for the Island station.

OLD BUSINESS

- *HITA Update:* Harold Bain stated that the HITA attempted to have a meeting prior to the pandemic but the group was unsuccessful. The group decided not to hold any meetings during the pandemic as well. A public meeting will hopefully be scheduled in the very near future. He has had a lot of time to go over the HITA



paperwork, and he will be camping out in Lansing quite a bit so he can get some things figured out. Details will be forthcoming. Officers need to be selected at the public meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Field Day:* Cindy Pilato discussed the current state of Field Day preparations. Cindy has had an opportunity to speak with the volunteers, and the general consensus was that they basically said they would all figure out a way to make it happen if Cindy wants to make it happen. However, the planning needs to take place way in advance, and given the current state of the pandemic, the decision was made to cancel the event for this year. There is no control over the participants and having them adhere to social distancing guidelines, and making the event safe enough for all participants is going to be too difficult to overcome. Cindy stated that she (personally) will not be chairing this event because it can't be done in a safe-enough manner, but if someone else thinks that they can kick off this event responsibly, they are more than welcome to do it. Cindy also pointed out that the biggest money-maker for Field Day is the Silent Auction, and since the Bonfire and Pig Roast is still on, perhaps the Silent Auction can take place during the Pig Roast. This was an incredibly difficult decision, but Cindy feels this is the right decision. David Martin suggested to still sell the raffle tickets and announce the winners at the Pig Roast as well. Melanie Most suggested to conduct a Facebook Live video instead of announcing the winners at any sort of formal event, to allow for adequate time to sell the raffle tickets. Raffle tickets can also be sold at the Music in the Park events and pull the winners at a later date. George Covalle pointed out that the loss of both the Car Show and Field Day reduces the HISCFA's income by about \$11,000 this year.
- *Fundraising Idea (Food Trucks):* Melanie Most presented an idea brought to her attention by HISCFA member Gerry Victory. Gerry summarized his points to share at the meeting today, and they are as follows:

With the closing of the Sans Souci Bar on Harsens Island, the choices of dining or takeout food options for islanders, especially with the increased population in the summer, has become extremely limited. Food trucks provide high quality, diverse, & mobile availability of food options to locales that utilize their service. The popularity of this option has dramatically expanded over the past several years to groups and neighborhoods everywhere.

The thought of bringing food trucks to Harsens Island I'm sure is not new. The thought of a sponsored food truck event by an organization on Harsens Island bears some investigation. This event would provide a new array of food options for islanders and would more than likely be widely attended by everyone, especially on summer weekends. HISCFA is an ideal organization to investigate sponsoring this event due to its unique mission of supporting island residents and issues and the availability of an ideal venue, Browne's Field, to host and support the event. In the COVID-19 era we are currently in, Browne's Field offers parking for the trucks, easy access to the field and parking for the public, as well as the pavilion area for proper distancing between patrons.

Structuring for a HISCFA fundraising event requires a further understanding of the operation economics of the food truck business and structuring the event so that all stakeholders have adequate incentive to provide for success.

The following are several key items that would need to be answered to allow firm planning to proceed:

-Interest by islanders to sponsor/attend an event. Melanie Most has suggested an online survey to gauge community interest and perhaps provide leads on local businesses/trucks

-HISCFA goals for a 1 day/weekend fundraising event

-Availability of food truck vendors. This may be a severely limiting factor due to current food truck demand.

-Revenue minimums required by vendors to attend such an event

-Upfront HISCFA funds required to setup & sponsor this event (advertising, vendor scheduling, Browne's Field infrastructure, etc.)

Again, this is just a raw idea of something new to try to generate interest in the island and provide a potential fundraising opportunity for HISCFA to continue its Island support mission.



Supervisor Bryson stated that doing something like this on the mainland has been investigated in the past. He warned that if something like this were to take place on the Island, that the HISCFA should get the Island restaurants involved to participate too, since we might be taking business away from them and they are the ones that pay taxes here and support our events. Supervisor Bryson stated that he has a list of food trucks located a short distance away from our Township and there's even one person with a food truck located within the Township. Neva Covalle stated she has also done some research on food trucks in the past, and she has discovered that they are desperate to find venues to actually sell. In the past, the HISCFA hasn't been able to guarantee them an income, and we can't charge them just to come. It is really only goodwill for the community, and not a money-making endeavor.

Additional comments from directors or guests:

- ✓ Skip Tornow asked about the status of the Bates Cut water station, and Dennis Szymanski indicated that the pump has been repaired and has been fully operational for a few weeks now.
- ✓ Mary Lorence wanted to address the ongoing issue of garbage strewn about the road in the The Flats. There are several instances with the same few offenders not taking responsibility of their trash that animals are picking apart, dragging into the water, and remaining along the public road week after week, with new trash being placed on top of old trash. This trash consists of personal hygiene items, diapers, etc. that end up going into the surrounding waters. Supervisor Bryson stated that this has been a problem for years, and what it comes down to is that people need to be responsible for picking up their own trash. He stated that it would be possible to do a mailing to those people if Mary could help identify at which addresses the issues take place.

Next meeting will be on Saturday, July 11, 2020 at **9:00 am** at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall.

Jerry Thiel made the motion to adjourn; David Martin seconded. All in favor; meeting adjourned at 9:54 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Most, Recording Secretary

MelanieM@hiscfa.org



APPENDIX

Fire Department Incident Reports for Harsen's Island (May)



Clay Township Fire & EMS

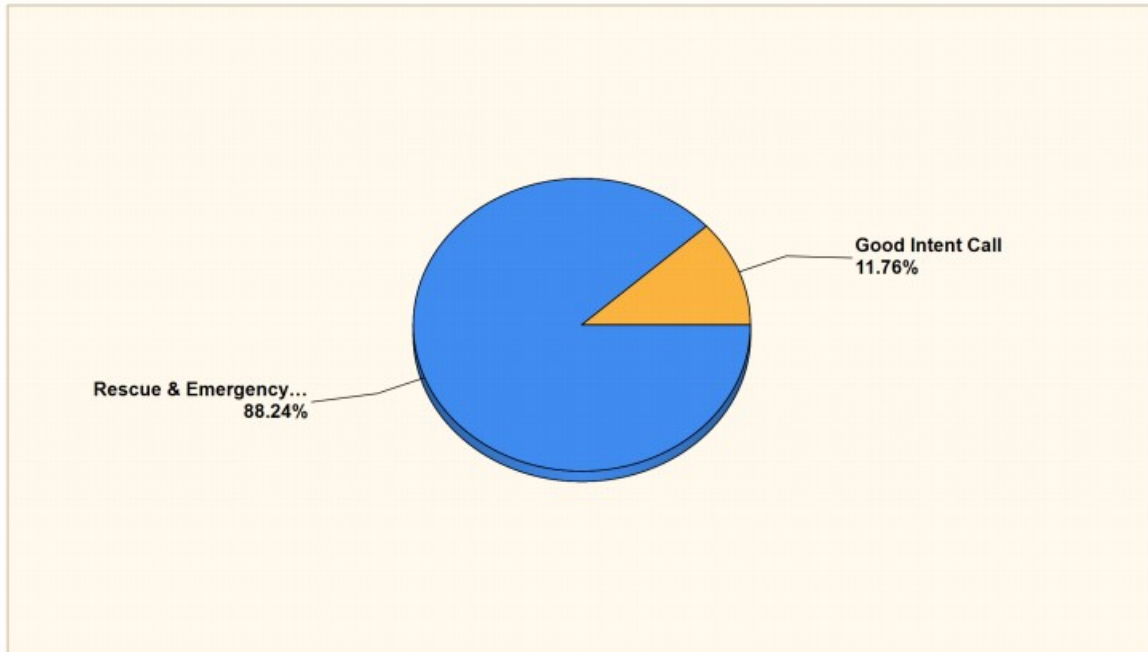
Clay Township, MI

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Breakdown by Major Incident Types for Date Range

Zone(s): 3 - HARSENS ISLAND | Start Date: 05/01/2020 | End Date: 05/31/2020

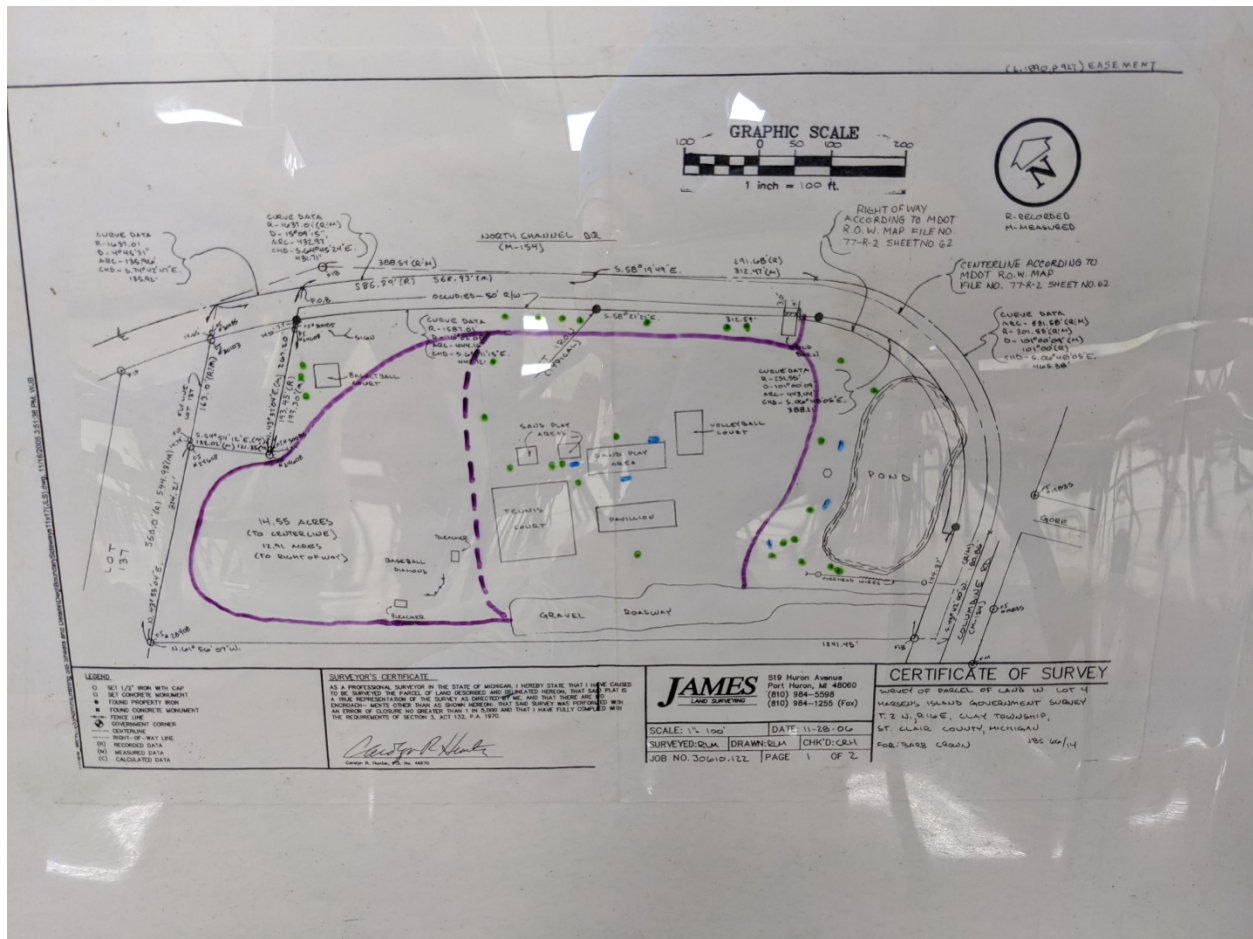


MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	15	88.24%
Good Intent Call	2	11.76%
TOTAL	17	100.00%

Detailed Breakdown by Incident Type		
INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
311 - Medical assist, assist EMS crew	1	5.88%
321 - EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	9	52.94%
381 - Rescue or EMS standby	5	29.41%
631 - Authorized controlled burning	1	5.88%
661 - EMS call, party transported by non-fire agency	1	5.88%
TOTAL INCIDENTS:	17	99.99%



Sketch of Browne's Field potential walking path and markers for trees / benches



Legend:

Purple = proposed path location

Blue = proposed bench location

Green = proposed tree location

Outer route is approximately 1,900 feet; inner route is about 1,500 feet.