



Harsen's Island St. Clair Flats Association

Minutes September 9, 2023

Directors Present: Craig Baloga, Lucy Burby, Steve Gartland, Steve Lawrence, David Martin, Melanie Most, Linda Schoonover, Harold Stieber, Dennis Szymanski, Leonard Verlinden, Lois Whipple;

Excused: Margaret Marchwinski;

Unexcused: Susan Bryson, Jerry Freeman, Kathy O'Connor, Terry Wiggins;

Guests and Members Present: Artie Bryson, Kari Cook, Gordon Couture, Sue DeLange, John Dickson, Jan Evans, Roger Favrow, Sandy Favrow, Kathy Harrison, Jane Mount, Jane Muscat, Cher Neumann, Karen Nihranz, Spencer Phinney, Carol Robb, George Rose, Mark Williams, Stacy Williams.

Craig Baloga brought the meeting to order at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall at 9:07 am with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The August 2023 meeting minutes were presented. **Dave Martin made the motion to approve the August 2023 meeting minutes, Steve Lawrence seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, minutes to be placed on file.**

Executive Committee Reports

Treasurer Report: Harold Stieber presented the August 2023 Treasurer's Reports. Harold reported that the balance in the checkbook for August 31, 2023 was \$39,704.80 with total cash on hand being \$110,849.20. Full copies of the monthly Treasurer's Report are available by contacting Harold Stieber at HaroldS@hiscfa.org.

Dave Martin made the motion to approve the August 2023 treasurer's reports, Linda Schoonover seconded to approve; all in favor, motion carried, reports to be placed on file.

Secretary Report: 2023 Membership Status: In 2023, the Association added 25 new members and 11 members renewed their dues that were lapsed from 2022 – a gain of 36 members. However, 76 members that were active in 2022 did not renew their membership in 2023. This resulted in an active membership decline of 40 members. These numbers do not include any Old Club members. To date, the active HISCFA membership is 683. This number reflects 515 active members and 168 Old Club members.

The Delta News: The total cost of design and layout, printshop fees and postage for The Delta News totaled \$15,778.65. A total of 800 copies were ordered to cover the number of active members and advertisers. Revenue received from advertising totaled \$9,305.00 resulting in a net expense of \$6,473.65 to the Association. A total of 313 copies were distributed to members during the months of July and August, 2023; 411 copies were sent to active members and advertisers in the mail. Three copies have been sold to an active member that wanted extra copies. There are 47 extra copies.



Communications: Since the August, 2023 meeting, Margaret has taken/made a few phone calls and has responded to numerous emails from members regarding lapsed memberships, Browne's Field questions (rental and pickleball courts), delivery/pick up of The Delta News and questions about the 2023 election ballot (mainly how many can a member vote for). Margaret has also received a number of 2023 election ballots from active members through her hiscfa.org email address.

Browne's Field: Dennis Szymanski mentioned that the Island Cleanup took place recently and there was a good turnout for that event. He is meeting with a contractor at Browne's Field later today about planning for the walking path. A new door was obtained to replace the damaged barn entry door. As a reminder, the Harsens Island Militia will be playing Snoopy's in a charity softball game tomorrow starting at noon-ish at Browne's Field.

Government Affairs: Lois Whipple reported about water levels and flows which she obtained from the International Joint Commission's website www.ijc.org. Lois also shared information about the State of Michigan's home heating credit which can be read here: <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/inside-mdhhs/newsroom/2023/09/08/home-heating>

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- *Walking Path Quotations*: Harold Stieber asked Dennis Szymanski whether there was an official committee for this endeavor. There were several former members that are no longer on the Island, so a new committee must be formed officially in order to take advantage of some funds. Harold has come across some funding sources to pay for it, so he wants to be instrumental in determining how the funds will be spent and by when. Dennis Szymanski volunteered to head this committee going forward, which will meet directly after this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- *2023 Director Ballots*: Craig Baloga received additional ballots today which did not change the outcome of the results. Craig read the results of the voting and the following members have been elected as Directors beginning 2024. Craig Baloga, Fred Cardinali, Gordon Couture, Jerry Freeman, Steve Lawrence, Dennis Szymanski, Lois Whipple, Stacy Williams, and Jim Stieber. **David Martin made a motion to appoint the aforementioned members as HISCFA Directors beginning 2024; Leonard Verlinden seconded. All in favor; motion carried.** Due to the election of several new Directors at this time, there is an imbalance in Directorship. **Harold Stieber made a motion to rebalance the directors evenly over the three-year terms.** Some of these newly-appointed directors will be reduced to one- or two-year terms. The Executive Board will determine which directors will have shorter initial terms in order to better balance the intervals, and the Executive Board will report the results of that discussion during the October meeting. **Linda Schoonover seconded. All in favor; motion carried.**
- *St. Clair County Quilt Trail*: The mission of the St. Clair County Quilt Trail (SCCQT) is to develop a quilt trail that builds community, increases tourism, and supports economic development in St. Clair County through partnerships commemorating our community, businesses, and local government. They are building their project by stitching a story of our community. A quilt trail is a series of painted wood blocks which are hung or free-standing along a route, which occur all over the United States. Each block has a QR code adjacent to it, which tells tourists the history of the area. For example, there is a quilt block located on the wooden fence adjacent to the ferry landing on the mainland. There are currently 46 quilt trails in North



America: 43 in the US, and 3 in Canada. Michigan alone currently has 21 trails in 28 counties. The SCCQT was given a grant from the Algonac-Clay Community Foundation among other sources. They will be building a marketing plan for Harsen's Island through their website and Facebook page. Additional information about the SCCQT can be found on their website <http://www.sccqt.org>.

Guest Speaker, Clay Township Supervisor Artie Bryson: Supervisor Bryson mentioned that there was a quilt show during Clay Days and a fantastic presentation about how quilts ended up being big signs with hidden meanings in the designs to direct people north during the Underground Railroad. Another point of interest is that HGTV will be coming to Clay Township to showcase a house located in The Colony. They will be filming on-site in the next few weeks. During the HISCFA Bonfire & BBQ on Saturday next weekend, the musical act On The Rockz will be playing (music is free for everyone to enjoy). Cleanup weekend was very successful: several gallons of chemicals and oil were removed from the Island. Unfortunately, someone reported the burn pile to EGLE and the Township received a call from EGLE about it. It's possible the Township will not be able to do the burn pile anymore because of the reported "incident." Apparently EGLE would prefer to take these items to the landfill, but Supervisor Bryson argued that he thought the object was not to fill the landfill so much. He's attempting to negotiate with them to continue burning and then taking the ashes to the landfill, but he's awaiting their response.

Recently Supervisor Bryson met with EGLE about the proposed Algaewheel plant, and the Township is currently in the process of wetland mitigation on Harsen's Island to get that going. First it is needed to get the discharge permit on the site (which tells exactly what will be allowed), and until that permit comes, the plan can't get too granular. EGLE stated it was going to be an approximately 8-month lead-time to get the permit, but supervisor Bryson is hoping to push that along to shorten that timeframe. The Nature Park proposal is being resurrected; the re-application process will be started soon. The Old Club is hoping to get the OK to get the 6 burned-down cottages rebuilt on the boardwalk soon. The local EGLE personnel didn't have any issues with it, but the EGLE staff in Lansing shot it down - these issues are being worked through. The Old Club will likely take EGLE to court and Supervisor Bryson is trying to talk some sense into the Lansing folks. Supervisor Bryson suggested building a shaded fish habitat underneath where the homes will be rebuilt, which will be a win-win for all parties involved. This will be presented to the hierarchy in EGLE and they will be invited to the site so they can visualize the proposal.

Regarding the recent uptick in noise on Muscamoot Bay, the Township doesn't have authority to enforce the noise ordinance past the seawall. The Sheriff deputies can't enforce township ordinances, but they can enforce County and State ordinances/laws. They can also write disturbing the peace and noise citations on the water under State law, but they haven't. Supervisor Bryson has not yet received a 'good' answer from the Sheriff or the head of the Marine Patrol as to why they are so unwilling to do those things. The Sheriff's department only has a boat out at certain hours, and it doesn't seem to coincide with the noisy times, or there are not enough boats on the water for them to arrive at the noise when it gets toned out. Clay Township hasn't placed their police boat in the water for the past few years because they can't enforce the noise issues so there's no reason to take it out. Karen Nihranz requested Supervisor Bryson to ask about the status of the Middle Channel top coat, and Artie mentioned he would inquire.

Guest Speaker, Clay Township Fire Chief George Rose: During the month of August, Chief Rose attended three meetings: the St Clair Flats Association, St. Clair County Fire Chief's Association and one teleconference meeting with the Coast Guard and other agencies involved with the Raft Off event 2023.



The Clay Township Fire Department (CTFD) responded to 3 minor medical responses at Raft Off this year (one laceration and 2 heavily intoxicated individuals), which turned out to be fewer incidents than last year's event. Reports of high attendance this year compared to last year, and more activity with three float planes and two helicopters flying in the area, along with many boats. Chief Rose would like to thank the men and women of the CTFD for their service on that day and Clay Township Dispatch for their hard work. Chief Rose would also like to thank Mr. Todd Chartier for the use of his property for our staging area during that event.

The Fire Department did a static display at Brown's Field: handed out hats, backpacks, coloring books, and drink bottles. At the end of the day the fire department discharged water and wet the kids down. The CTFD also assisted at the backpack giveaway at the Clay Township park with a fire truck display. They handed out hats, coloring books, and stickers to the kids, and gave tours of a fire truck.

A new firefighter has been brought on: Daniel Paruszkiewicz. He has Fire-1, Fire-2, State Certified EMT, and his full-time job is currently with Superior Ambulance. He was recently featured on the CTFD Facebook page.

Chief Rose would also like to thank the people of Harsen's Island for attending the pancake breakfast during Labor Day weekend. It was very successful, and a report will be presented at the next HISCFA meeting for how much money was raised. As a point of note, the money raised during this event stays on Harsen's Island - it is used for supplies and equipment that is strictly for the Island.

Additional comments from directors or guests:

- ✓ Steve Gartland recognized Melanie Most for her outstanding work with The Flyer this year, and mentioned that a wonderful article was written about her Blue Water Woman magazine (a free magazine distributed in the Blue Water area), and she also appeared on the cover. The magazine can also be read electronically here: https://issuu.com/pjsamar/docs/blue_water_woman--summer_2023--digital
- ✓ Harold Stieber discussed guidelines on spending limits that need to be pre-approved. The limit is currently \$500 and above requires pre-approval from the board. **Harold Stieber made a motion to establish that any expenses under \$1,000 does not require board approval if it is included in a budget, and if over \$1,000 requires discussion and a motion at a meeting. There would be an exclusion for emergency situations, but then the costs must be brought back to the next meeting for approval; Steve Lawrence seconded. All in favor; motion carried.**
- ✓ Steve Lawrence and Kathy Harrison requested an update on the two juveniles who defaced Browne's Field. The court advised the HISCFA not to have the juveniles be involved with physically replacing the lights that they ripped down. HISCFA President Craig Baloga did not attend any subsequent court dates, but concluded that it was determined that those juveniles need to be separated and must perform community service and reimburse the HISCFA for the cost of the lights. Steve Lawrence volunteered to procure moisture-resistant replacement lighting to put up this week, prior to Saturday's BBQ event.
- ✓ The newly-elected directors will appoint the new Executive Board anytime before the conclusion of the January meeting. Candidates will need to be solicited for the open Executive Board positions and make them available to the Directors for appointment.
- ✓ Linda Schoonover asked whether there is a budget for advertising so that the HISCFA could provide a donation/advertise for the Harsen's Island Halloween Party in October. Harold indicated a budget is present for advertising opportunities. **Linda Schoonover made a motion to donate \$100 to the Harsen's Island Halloween Party at Stewart Farm so that the HISCFA logo can be placed on their large banner. David Martin seconded. All in favor; motion carried.**



- ✓ Supervisor Bryson entertained a motion to the HISCFA for the purchase of a 6' x 6' quilt block to be displayed on the large red barn for \$750 at Cecil R. Browne's Field. **Linda Schoonover made the motion to approve the aforementioned statement; seconded by Steve Lawrence. All in favor; motion carried.**
- ✓ Jane Mount announced the Lioness Lions will be having their Craft & Vendor Show on Sunday October 8th, 2023. They have filled the inside of the building with vendors this year, as well as expanding outdoors to have vendors in tents and under the pavilion. Jane had flyers to pass out at the meeting for information about the event if anyone is interested, and it will be posted on social media and around town.
- ✓ Karen Nihranz inquired about whether the costs associated with printing The Delta News were typical this year over previous years. Some discussion took place about how membership dues and advertising help offset the cost of printing, but the expenses this year are on par from previous years.

Next meeting will be Saturday, October 14, 2023 at **9:00 am** at the Harsen's Island Lions Hall.

David Martin made the motion to adjourn; Leonard Verlinden seconded. All in favor; meeting adjourned at 10:27 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Most, Recording Secretary

MelanieM@hiscfa.org



APPENDIX

Fire Department Incident Reports for Harsen's Island (August 2023)



Clay Township Fire & EMS

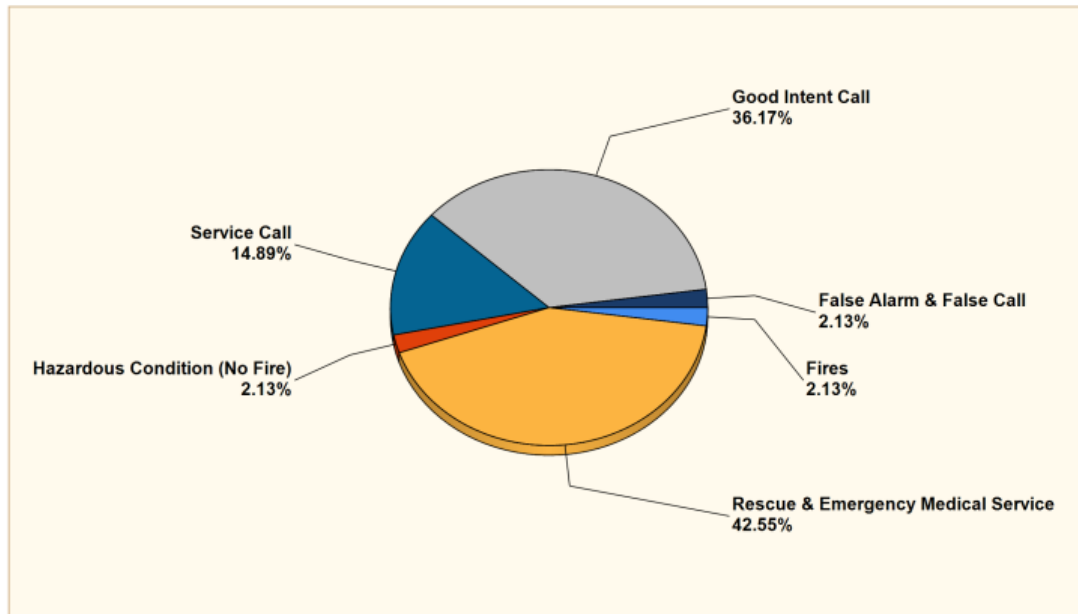
Clay Township, MI

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Breakdown by Major Incident Types for Date Range

Zone(s): 3 - HARSENS ISLAND | Start Date: 08/01/2023 | End Date: 08/31/2023



MAJOR INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
Fires	1	2.13%
Rescue & Emergency Medical Service	20	42.55%
Hazardous Condition (No Fire)	1	2.13%
Service Call	7	14.89%
Good Intent Call	17	36.17%
False Alarm & False Call	1	2.13%
TOTAL	47	100%

Detailed Breakdown by Incident Type		
INCIDENT TYPE	# INCIDENTS	% of TOTAL
143 - Grass fire	1	2.13%
311 - Medical assist, assist EMS crew	4	8.51%
321 - EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury	14	29.79%
342 - Search for person in water	1	2.13%
365 - Watercraft rescue	1	2.13%
444 - Power line down	1	2.13%
500 - Service Call, other	4	8.51%
551 - Assist police or other governmental agency	1	2.13%
554 - Assist invalid	1	2.13%
571 - Cover assignment, standby, moveup	1	2.13%
611 - Dispatched & cancelled en route	5	10.64%
622 - No incident found on arrival at dispatch address	1	2.13%
631 - Authorized controlled burning	11	23.4%
700 - False alarm or false call, other	1	2.13%
TOTAL INCIDENTS:	47	100%