

Approved – Harsens Island Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting held March 28, 2021 at Brown’s Field

Meeting called to order at 3:00PM by Skip Tornow.

Roll Call	Harold Bain	present
	Margie Baldwin	present
	Gary Beaulac	present
	Dennis Szymanski	present
	Wayne (Skip) Tornow	present

Approval of the agenda – Agenda reviewed by Tornow. Suggestion made by Szymanski that a sign-in sheet be provided for those in attendance. Additionally e-mail addresses and phone numbers were requested to facilitate communication. Szymanski also requested that speakers from the audience in the public comments section identify themselves along with their addresses.

Approval of minutes from August 16, 2020 meeting – Motion by Bain to approve – second by Beaulac. Motion approved 5-0.

Treasures Report – report by Beaulac – (attached)

Old Business

Communication Report – Tornow updated progress on establishing a HITA website. Site is established and final modifications are in process. Once completed the web address will be communicated to the public. Tornow pointed out that all official documents (meeting minutes, meeting announcements, updates, etc) will be located at this HITA website along with the Blog Site. Notification of the existence of new information may be posted on Nextdoor , however the actual documents will not.

Updates on Meetings with Officials

- Baldwin reported that her investigation into whether or not donations to HITA are allowable under law. She found that they are allowable but may not be tax deductible.
- Baldwin reported that numerous introductory meetings have been held with various state and local officials. The initial goals were to get HITA recognized and its needs known. Officials included Dave VanDeBush, Senator Dan Lowers, Representative Gary Eisen, MDOT, Blue Water Transit Authority, and the Ambassador Bridge Company. An outcome of these initial meetings has been determining key individuals in each organization who are willing to help us.
- Paul Opsommer, Ambassador Bridge Company, was in attendance and introduced to the committee. Paper copies of the “Harsens Island Bridge Project” were made available after the meeting. This presentation will also be posted on the Website and Blog Site.
- Questions were asked by the various agencies as to what funding is needed for. Funding needs include Grant Writing, Computer–Printer– In-Focus projector, Phone, Postage, Printing, and Legal Advice.
- Baldwin reported that she will be speaking at the Clay Township Trustee’s Meeting on April 5th.

New Business

Audit – An annual audit is required of HITA. Filing of a tax return is not. We will work with Clay Twp to insure this is completed and reported within the specified timeframe.

Public Comments – Comments were limited to 3 minutes. Following are some of the comments

- A request was made for the address at which donations to HITA could be sent. That address is: HITA – PO Box 28007 – Harsens Island, MI 48028
- Artie Bryson, Clay Twp Supervisor, stated that he had requested \$50K for HITA from the state for the upcoming budget year.
- Questions were raised regarding long ferry wait times. Dave Bryson addressed those in attendance. He indicated that COVID has impacted his available deck hands. He has been attempting to hire additional crew but has met with limited success. He plans on running two boats on Friday – Saturday – Sundays.
- Paul Obsommer, Ambassador Bridge Authority, was questioned by the board as to what the timeframe would be before we knew if a bridge was feasible or not. Paul indicated discussions are underway with the various governmental agencies. However, requests to these agencies are backed up due to Covid.

Motion to adjourn by Baldwin at 3:20PM, seconded by Beaulac