

Vermillion Township
Hastings Public Schools/ ISD 200
Public Hearing Meeting Minutes
June 20, 2024

Attendance:

Supervisor Chairman Larry Ring
Supervisor Jeramy Ladzun
Supervisor Jason Anderson
Treasurer Nick Rueger
Clerk Cynthia Ladzun

Chairman Ring opened the public hearing at 7:00 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Clerk Cynthia Ladzun read the public notice.

Sal Bagley from Wold Architects and Engineers works with ISD 200 on their facilities and planning efforts and had the following representatives from the school district as well as a representative from the county in attendance:

Tammy Champa, Superintendent
Jennifer Siebenaler, Intern working with the Superintendent
Jennifer Seubert, Director of Finance & Operations
Joe Beattie, Retired Biology Teacher
Paul Baker, Principal, Pinecrest Elementary
Scott Addyman, Assistant Principal, Hastings Middle School
Scott Doran, Principal, Hastings High School
Al Singer, Dakota County Real Estate Manager

Bagley explained the school district's request to construct a gravel parking lot as well as the placement of an interpretive sign on the property. The intent of the parking lot is to provide safe access for students arriving at the property via school bus and it will offer parking spaces for community members wishing to visit the site. The intent of the interpretive sign would be to show the history and significance of the natural wetland found on this property.

Singer made note that Dakota County controls the permanent natural area conservation easement that is on the parcel. This easement prevents buildings and lights from being constructed on the land.

Beattie provided a summary of how the property came to the school district that started with the Marshall family, then to the Stoffel family, then to Tecla Karpen's Estate who bought the land and donated it to the school district.

Students would visit the site for some of the listed educational purposes at the following grade levels:
Elementary – Look at birds and animals in their natural environment.
Middle - Safety and respect for nature, wildlife interaction, plants and weather patterns.

High School - Field and wildlife biology as well as art opportunities.

Clerk Cynthia Ladzun read the comments that were received prior to the meeting.

Items of discussion during the meeting were:

- *The maximum weight for vehicles traveling on the road is 9,000 lbs
- *Who's responsible for policing the area when not being used by the school district
- *Concerns of additional traffic and trash being left behind
- *Possible environmental impact to the wildlife in the area
- *What happens if someone hunts on the land
- *Concerns that a building, lights or bathrooms will eventually be constructed
- *Traffic is not currently a problem on the road so why is a parking lot needed
- *Bird watchers can sometimes create an increase of vehicle travel on the road
- *Leave no trace is lost when the gravel hits the land

Ring noted that the Board will review at the next monthly meeting for further discussion.

Adjourn:

Ladzun motioned to adjourn the public hearing at 8:12 pm. Anderson seconded the motion; all were in favor and the motion carried.

Cynthia Ladzun
Vermillion Township Clerk