

Watab Town Board Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2013

The regular monthly meeting of the Watab Town Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Ed Kacures Jr. All board members were present in addition to the Chair: Supervisors Lloyd Erdmann and Craig Gondeck, Treasurer Eileen Saldana, and Clerk Pat Spence. Audience members were Chris Scheel, Dick Raveling, Bob Raveling, Phillip Nelson, Mark Saldana, and Mary Lepinski.

Following the Pledge to the Flag, the following announcements were made by Supervisor Gondeck: (1) deepest sympathy to the Tony Saldana family; (2) sympathy to the Katka family; (3) and he urged people who live on waterways to be vigilant about potential flooding.

Supervisor Gondeck asked to have use of STS Crews added to the agenda; Clerk Spence asked to add a request by Mark Saldana; and an 80th Street NW issue was also added. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann to approve the agenda with these additions; motion passed.

Reorganization Meeting:

- A. Election of board Chair and Vice-Chair: Supervisor Gondeck nominated Supervisor Kacures as board Chair; motion was seconded by Supervisor Erdmann; he nominated Supervisor Gondeck for vice-chair; motion was seconded by Supervisor Kacures; motion passed approving these appointments.
- B. Adoption of Resolution 2013-4 to Set Dates for Regular Board Meetings: Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann; and motion passed. Two of the meeting dates will be on Mondays due to calendar restrictions for precinct caucuses and the election.
- C. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck to designate the Sauk Rapids Herald as the township's official newspaper for legal notices; motion passed.
- D. Annual review of Data Practices Act and Compliance: Townships outside the metro area are not governed by the Data Practices Act, but the township should have a policy that covers costs of providing information. The Clerk reminded the board that all information with names provided by the City of Rice for emergency calls is confidential, and only the Clerk and Treasurer see the information. The Clerk was asked to bring back a resolution to the board providing for a charge for time at an hourly rate for doing research. Supervisor Gondeck commented on a Clearwater Fire Department issue. Supervisor Erdmann asked for clarification on the Open Meeting Law.
- E. Clerk Spence verified that all annual financial reports had been transmitted electronically to the MN State Auditor prior to March 1.
- F. The Clerk and Treasurer recommended that the town use the same depositories: Falcon National Bank, Bremer Bank, and Edward Jones in Waite Park; motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed approving the recommendation.
- G. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Kacures, and passed to use the town hall door, website, Channel 3, e-mail list, and Pine Stop board as official posting places. Supervisor Gondeck will maintain the Pine Stop site.
- H. Resolution 2013-5 Authorizing Town Work by Board: Supervisor Gondeck made the motion, seconded by Supervisor Kacures, and passed. Clerk Spence was asked to provide the affidavits that are required each time the work is billed.

Minutes were approved for the March 5, 29, and 26 meetings through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck and second by Supervisor Kacures. The board also had reviewed the minutes of the Annual Meeting and a correction was suggested on spelling of Oak Hill. The Treasurer's Report was given by Eileen Saldana: cash balance is \$233,639.36. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann to approve the report, and she was commended her for her work. Motion passed.

Approval was given to pay claims and withdraw funds from appropriate accounts for claims # 5119 through 5142 and electronic transfers for PERA, IRS, and MN Dept. of Revenue totaling \$28,541.22 through a motion by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed.

Mark Saldana, owner of Saldana Concrete in Watab Township, told the board that he has a company who is interested in purchasing five acres next to his business; they would relocate their business to Watab. He would like township approval since the county department of development has requested it. He said that five acres can be split off without creating a plat. Clerk Spence was asked to draw up a document that shows the board's approval through a motion by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck; and passed. The document should note that the driveway for this business will be shared with Saldana Concrete, so there will be no new access onto 105th Street.

Board Chair Ed Kacures called a Public Hearing to Order at 7:30 p.m. to consider Amendments to Ordinance #3: Establishment of Fees for Emergency Services. He called for those wishing to speak in favor of the amendments three times. Mary Lepinski asked a question about taxes and what costs they cover; Mary said she heard a rumor that the township was going to go for fire service to Sauk Rapids. Supervisor Erdmann explained that this was only a thought when the township didn't know if it would get an affordable contract with Rice. He also explained what homeowners' insurance typically covers. Supervisor Gondeck explained that the ordinance was passed in 2006 for the purpose of keeping costs down for the taxpayers. The township can't make a profit on charging for fire services; tax revenue covers the basic contract costs; service charges are for extra billing. Bob Raveling answered Mary's question about why there are bills if the fire department is volunteer; he said that the firefighters receive retirement, and there are equipment, fuel, maintenance, and training costs. Mary also spoke about the wonderful service from the Rice volunteer fire fighters. Supervisor Kacures called for those who wish to speak against the amendments to the Ordinance. Mary Lepinski spoke in opposition because she believes that taxes should cover all the costs. Clerk Spence explained that then the township would have to have a much higher levy of taxes for fire protection. After calling the third time for those who wished to speak in opposition, he closed the Public Hearing.

Old Business:

1. Dry Hydrant system: Supervisor Gondeck will continue research. Sauk Rapids Fire Department has a design. Snow needs to melt before securing locations. Supervisor Erdmann recommended that the fittings be compatible between the hydrants and the fire hoses.
2. Railroad Projects: The Clerk explained that Jon Bogart received a response from Burlington Northern for the cost of the wider planks on Lakewood Shores: it is \$38,912. Clerk Spence was asked to contact Jon about scheduling preconstruction meetings with the board and the contractors. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann for the chair to sign the notice of award and the construction agreement; seconded by Supervisor Gondeck; and motion passed. Supervisor Kacures suggested closing the Lakewood shore crossing during construction; all board members agreed.
3. Snow Plowing: Supervisor Kacures noted that March was the sixth highest amount of snowfall for that month in recorded history. He had the clerk send out letters to people who were plowing snow across the township roads. Dick Raveling felt that the road going north to Pines Edge from his neighborhood was the worst in years and that roads were plowed narrower than in the past. Board members expressed that it was a difficult weather year for snow plowing and sanding, but that they were pleased with the work that was done and good response time from Marsons when concerns were called in.
4. The annual newsletter was reviewed. The board members expressed the need to get it out at least a week earlier next year. The Clerk thanked Supervisor Kacures for coordinating it and Supervisor Gondeck for getting new donors. She also noted that we should use "Current Occupant" or "Resident" on the address labels rather than names, since many of the newsletters could not be delivered.
5. Clerk Spence informed the board that the letter received from the City Clerk of Rice for fire services had not been approved by the City Council. Supervisor Kacures will follow up on this.

6. Follow Up on Transportation Meeting: Supervisor Kacures talked about Rep. Newberger and Claudia Dumont staying after the meeting for further discussion. He was pleased with the input from the residents and there will be follow up with Rep. Newberger as he continues to work on the issues discussed. There is flooding, potholes, and too many stop signs at Pine Stop. Supervisor Kacures said that Rep. Newberger is working on this, and we need to give him time. The board wants to meet with Lee Hanson and Ray Schlichting in the future about another access or frontage road from Oak Hill Estates.
7. Town hall rental promotion: Supervisor Gondeck and Clerk Spence will work on an advertisement this month.
8. Speed study on West Lake Road was received from MNDOT. This study was requested by the town board on September 27, 2011. The signs will be for 30 miles per hour between the intersection of Trunk Highway 10 and the intersection with 115th Street NW. The speed limits are authorized contingent upon curves and hazards being signed with the appropriate advance curve or warning signs, including appropriate speed advisory plate. The roadway described shall be reviewed for traffic control devices impacted by the speed limits before posting the signs. All signs shall be in accordance with the MN Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Supervisor Gondeck has the signs and will get help to install them.

New Business:

1. Amendments to Ordinance 3: Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann and passed unanimously approving the amendments to Ordinance 3. A summary must be published and recorded at Benton County.
2. Dick Raveling spoke about the unsafe conditions for buses on 80th St NW going into Shangri La Valley; he drives school bus and said he can't get the bus out safely. He asked about the potential for filling the ditch. He said that drivers have been complaining for years to the bus company and nothing has been done. The school district will need to be contacted. He has agreement from Claudia Dumont at MNDOT. The board will look at it on their road tour and join Dick on site. All the work would be on Highway 10 right of way.
3. The Watab Township Flood Meeting was scheduled for April 8 at 7:00 p.m. at the town hall. There is at least 24-30 inches of ice near Sartell that isn't breaking up. Benton County will not be providing sand bags as in the past. The town hall will be a location for flood control if necessary. Supervisor Gondeck has distributed flyers in areas that may be affected by flooding. Chair Kacures explained that he would like the clerk to prepare a power point presentation for the flood meeting; she will record the information provided by Jim McDermott.
4. Clerk Spence presented the documents for the summer crack filling and seal coating. Supervisor Gondeck talked about Langola Township using the STS Crew to do the crack filling at \$1,000 per mile. He said that they are very pleased with the results. Clerk Spence explained cash flow issues with doing the crack filling and seal coating at the same time that the railroad crossing projects will be done. The board will review this further at the next meeting. Supervisor Gondeck recommended doing crack filling on experimental sites this summer with the STS crew instead of the regular projects. The board will review during the road tour.
5. Revisions to the 2013 budget: Clerk explained the changes to the three areas of the budget due to the new fire contract with Rice and the savings due to the refunding bonds.
6. Continuing Disclosure Agreement with Ehlers, Inc.: motion made by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck to enter the limited continuing disclosure reporting service with Ehlers; motion passed. The Chair signed the contract.
7. Park dedication report: Clerk Spence read the letter from the County Administrator. Supervisor Gondeck recommended that the township work on trails in Oak Hill Estates since \$80,000 dollars in park

dedication funds were submitted by that development. Clerk Spence was asked to send a letter to the County Administrator recommending a change in the master plan to create trails in Oak Hills Estates.

8. Gas tax distribution: county board will make the decision on the formula for distributing the gas tax. The township board is concerned that the township will receive less money than in the past, and this is an important revenue source for the road and bridge fund.
9. MS4 annual public hearing was scheduled for the beginning of the regular May meeting.
10. The Clerk reviewed all the communications received during the past month. Debbie Sadergaski asked that the next newsletter include an article about keeping dogs on your own property. She reported problems all winter with a couple of large dogs running around the neighborhood. The board will follow up with this. The City of Rice has invited Watab residents to participate in their Clean Up Day on Saturday, April 27 from 9am to 1pm at the City Hall parking lot. Also, Watab is invited to the Hazardous Waste Collection on Saturday, September 28 from 9am to 1pm at the Immaculate Conception Church parking lot in Rice. A resident of Ivy Place thanked the township for good follow up on snow plowing issues.
11. Follow Up from MAT Course: the board chair recommends that it be held at the civic center in St. Cloud so it wouldn't be so crowded. The Clerk and Treasurer commented on the good information they received at the Short Course.
12. Supervisor Report: Supervisor Gondeck asked to have the Benton County Agricultural Society provide the township with a financial statement and how the donation will be used. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck; second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to donate the \$500 recommended by electors at the annual meeting. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Kacures, and passed to donate the \$1,500 as recommended to Rice Recreation for youth participation from Watab. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Kacures, and passed to donate \$1,000 as recommended to the Benton County Historical Society. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Kacures, and passed to donate \$1,000 to the Tri-County Humane Society for providing shelter for Watab stray animals.
13. Supervisor Kacures discussed the responsibilities (division of duty) for board members for the upcoming year; motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Kacures, and passed to approve the following: 1) Supervisor Erdmann as coordinator with all railroad issues; 2) Supervisor Gondeck as board representative to the Greater MN Development Corporation and the Sauk Rapids Fire Department; and 3) Supervisor Kacures as representative to the City of Rice on Fire Contract issues. Humane Society: Gondeck; Kacures; passed.
14. Citizen Issues: Mary Lepinski asked about potential oil spills on the railroad and how they would be handled. The board responded that Emergency Services from Benton County is in charge of this area. Phillip Nelson suggested a food donation at the Watab Clean Up Day or a cash donation for the Rice Area Food Shelf. The board appreciated his suggestion and will incorporate it into the event.
15. The Chair reviewed board tasks for the upcoming month: two flood meetings; 2:30 board of equalization on Thursday; and the road tour date set for April 15th at 7:30 a.m. at town hall. Supervisor Gondeck will also attend the development meeting this month; and he will take pictures of culverts and keep this on file for MS4.

Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Kacures, and passed to adjourn the meeting at 9:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence