

## **Watab Town Board Special Meeting Minutes – January 20, 2014**

The Watab Town Board Meeting was called to order for the purpose of reviewing the 2014 draft budget and planning for 2014 at 7:00 p.m. on January 20, 2014 at the Watab Town Hall. Board members present included Supervisors: Ed Kacures Jr., Lloyd Erdmann, and Craig Gondeck, and Clerk Pat Spence. Treasurer Eileen Saldana was excused.

The board reviewed the draft budget. Significant changes from past budgets are that the township now has separate debt accounts for the debt on road projects and the town hall building debt. Tax levies fund those accounts, so there will no longer be tax revenue going into the Building Fund and a lesser amount into the Road and Bridge Fund. This change is requested by the State Auditor and County Auditor. Levy amounts to fund the debt payments will go to the appropriate debt accounts.

The board needs to learn the amounts for the Sauk Rapids and Rice Fire Contracts prior to completing the budget. The board also requested that the Clerk contact Chris Byrd and Jon Bogart regarding the County Road 79 Quiet Zone project to learn if Omann Brothers are being released by the county board from their bond, since they did not complete the project in 2013.

Chair Kacures explained his desire to do planning for railroad crossing projects on 95<sup>th</sup> St. and 105<sup>th</sup> St. this year. Clerk Spence said that funds to do so would need to come from the Road and Bridge investment fund, which has a current balance of \$108,595.01. There are about \$60,000 in fixed costs from the Road and Bridge Fund each year for snow plowing, signs, ditch mowing, MS4 contract, tree trimming, and town board wages.

Clerk Spence reminded the board of the importance of maintaining a balance equal to the General Fund expenditures for the budget year per the State Auditor. This also helps the township keep an A rating from Standard and Poor.

The board discussed the following ideas for the 2015 levy recommendations: General: \$80,000 (currently \$75,000); Road and Bridge: \$170,000 (currently \$163,702); Fire: \$70,000 (same); Debt Fund on Building: \$25,000 (same); and Debt Service Fund for Road Projects: \$63,000 (currently \$61,298). These are very preliminary and will have further review prior to discussion at the annual meeting. The Clerk will check the potential impact of an increase in the 2015 levy on homeowners with the Benton County Assessor or Auditor. Also, the board will discuss this further at the Board of Audit meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup> after the budget is revised and projections are made for the 2015 budget year.

The board then discussed the contracts that are due for renewal in 2014: snow plowing, ditch mowing, Sauk Rapids fire protection, engineer, and building inspector.

The board also discussed the January 8<sup>th</sup> email from Representative Newberger and their disappointment in his decision. After much discussion, they requested that Clerk Spence email him not to go ahead with legislation for acceleration lanes but rather for an interchange at County Road 4 with frontage roads running north to 85<sup>th</sup> Street on both sides of the highway. The board feels that this best represents the input from residents and Claudia Dumont at MNDOT. If Representative Newberger does not have support for this, the board is asking him for funding for the frontage roads. The board will continue to work on the issue.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence