

Minutes of Watab Township Emergency Services Committee on August 29, 2017

The Watab Emergency Services Committee was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Town Board Chair Craig Gondeck. Those present were Craig Gondeck, Todd Waytashek, Bob Raveling, Dick Raveling, Ed Kacures, Lloyd Erdmann, John Olson, Maureen Graber, Pat Spence, and Troy Heck.

Following the Pledge to the Flag, Todd Waytashek gave a slide review of the August 19th tour of Palmer Township Fire Hall. It is a substation for the Clear Lake Fire Department.

Sheriff Heck was invited to see if he has interest in space in the proposed Watab Fire Hall. He stated that he could use space here for an emergency service center, a space for deputies to work when they are in the western part of the county, and that it would be a great location for their boats. He would need to get funding from Benton County. The next step for him would be to have a conversation with the Sherburne County Sheriff about his use of the Palmer Fire Hall, do some planning with his deputies, and then meet again with the Emergency Services Committee about his interest in proceeding.

Todd thanked Craig for setting up the interesting tours with Baldwin and Palmer Fire Departments.

Craig stated that he had spoken with the builder for the Princeton Fire Hall, who says that he can build a steel building for us for \$35 to \$40 per square foot. A concrete building would cost about \$115 per square foot. Also, Tony Hommerding has offered to assist the township with startup grants that are available.

The committee reviewed the draft of startup costs and operating budget prepared by John Olson, Craig Gondeck, Maureen Graber, and Pat Spence. Discussion included verifying the number and type of portable radios needed, what budget amount will be needed for training and recruiting personnel, and adding a contingency amount of 10% for each category of the budget. Craig will work with Maureen on an equipment/cost list for startup. The size of the building the committee is using as a model is 74 feet x 76 feet. There was also discussion about the pros and cons of drive-through overhead doors. Troy Heck said that many fire chiefs like the drive through. Lloyd Erdmann said that drive through doors make the building less structurally sound. This will need further discussion.

The committee evaluated the location for the fire hall with Troy Heck and then agreed on the town hall site. Choke points were considered.

The next point of discussion was how and when to present the information the committee has been studying to the residents of the township. Dick Raveling suggested presenting three options: barebones, mid-range, and top-of-the-line. Lloyd said he favors presenting a high-quality building that is expandable, present scenarios at a public hearing, and send out a mailing before the public hearing that gives the information. The committee members liked the idea of

sending out a mailing that gives the information about a proposed fire hall so that residents receive it about two weeks before a public meeting, where the committee solicits reactions and input from the residents. It would also be a good opportunity to learn if there are interested parties in being firefighters. Advertising for the public meeting would also be important: radio spots, newspaper ad, a newsletter, website, and emails.

Troy Heck was asked if he would want the township to provide water rescue. He said it would be important for the township to provide a boat that can go out on thin ice and cold-water rescue equipment. He said that water rescue doesn't happen often in the county.

Troy was also asked if he would like key or code access to the town hall building for deputy use when they are in the area. He will research it and be back in touch.

Craig was asked to invite the builder of the Princeton Fire Hall to the next meeting. Ed asked if anyone had contacted Kevin Johnson about reuse of the DelWin Ballroom concrete panels; Craig will do so.

The next committee meeting was set for September 19th at 6:30pm. The Public Informational Meeting was set for November 14th at 7:00 p.m.

The committee adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence