

January 3, 2017 Watab Town Board Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Watab Town Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Craig Gondeck. Other Supervisors present were Todd Waytashek and Lloyd Erdmann as well as Treasurer Eileen Saldana and Clerk Pat Spence. Audience members were: Nancy Scott, Josh Dahl, Nick Dahl, Michael Ringwelski, Ed Kacures, Maureen Graber, Sandra Saldana, Ray Thompson, and Anna Saldana. Following the Pledge to the Flag, two additions were made to the agenda through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck and second by Supervisor Erdmann: Jon Bogart on 95th Street easements and renewal of the Wacosa contract. The minutes of the regular December meeting were approved as printed through a motion by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Waytashek, and passed. The Treasurer's Report was approved for an account balance of \$572,406.65 through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Waytashek, and passed. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to approve Claims #6260 through 6281 (including payment to All Spec Services) and electronic transfers to PERA and IRS totaling \$85,606.07 and to withdraw the funds from the appropriate accounts. Permission was also given to pay the Quarterly State Building Permit surcharge.

Nancy Scott, Building Official, was present to give a report on how building permit fees are set. She covered the fee schedule from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry which she uses for both residential and commercial properties; she is currently using the 2015 Building Valuation Data, and she provided the fee schedule to the board. Nancy explained that she believes using that schedule helps to ensure equitable treatment for applicants. Each jurisdiction can establish its own rates. She also described the process she uses. After asking the applicant what he or she believes the value of the home/business to be, she reviews the square footage of the building. On commercial properties, she reduces the value by fifteen per cent. Supervisor Erdmann asked how her rates compare with other jurisdictions such as Benton County's and surrounding cities. Nancy will report back to the board with this information. She was also asked how many times she visits a property during construction; she responded that there is a minimum of five visits and as many as ten. The total of building permits in Watab this year was \$8,054,500. Sixty-two building permits were issued, including eighteen new single family homes.

Oak Hill Golf Course: New owner's representatives, Josh Dahl, Nick Dahl, and Mike Ringwelski, were present to introduce themselves and to apply for a liquor license. They also discussed some of their future plans, which include modifying the front nine holes of the course. Supervisor Erdmann talked about the board's desire to have a frontage road across their property along Highway 10, which would connect to Indian Road. When Jim Dahl, the owner, returns to the area in March, the board will meet with him and Claudia Dumont from MNDOT. A motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to support their application for a liquor license.

Old Business included the following:

- A. A motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to approve Resolution 2017-1: Authorization to Write-Off Certain Unpaid Emergency Calls, totaling \$10,830.00. Clerk Spence explained that these calls were either to rental properties or are uncollectable because the recipient of the service is deceased, and there is no estate. Supervisor Gondeck asked the board for permission to put the information in the newspaper, and there was discussion from Maureen Graber and Sandra Saldana speaking against doing so. A motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Waytashek, and passed to refrain from putting anything in the newspaper about this.
- B. Rice Fire Contract: Clerk Spence said that she phoned the Rice Mayor Dale Rogholt to learn if a contract extension had been granted, and she asked him what the next step should be for the negotiations. He recommended a meeting at the town hall where the same information that had been presented to him and the Fire Chief be presented to the entire City Council. A tentative date of Monday, January 9th at 7:00 p.m. was set for the meeting.
- C. 105th Street damage: Supervisor Gondeck moved to table the issue of heavy farm equipment breaking off a piece of tar on 105th Street and also on Lakewood Shore Road until spring when he can meet the property owner at the sites.
- D. Jon Bogart reported to the board that he wants to have the 95th Street project bids sent out in February for a March award. With some of the changes he made to the drainage, he explained that his estimate has increased to \$321, 140.00. He has modified some drainage on the north-west end with a storm drain and added some curbing. Ray Thompson arrived and was upset that this item wasn't on the agenda. He said he is opposed to the project and went over all his concerns. The board told him that the project was voted on at the March Annual Meeting, and the citizens wanted the board to go ahead with it. Clerk Spence said that the board would need to work on the permanent and temporary easements during the month of January and need the paperwork from Jon. Supervisor Erdmann suggested some changes on the drainage that could reduce the cost; he will meet with Jon as soon as possible. Clerk Spence will get the easements from Jon's office as soon as they are complete within a couple of days. The board agreed on Supervisor Erdmann's suggested changes and that the project should be bid in February.
- E. Clerk Spence gave a report on the Benton County funding for the SCORE Grants. The township received \$9,839.69 for Watab Cleanup Day and \$1,895.55 for Adopt a Highway. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to accept the grants with thanks to the SCORE committee and Benton County Board of Commissioners.

- F. Clerk Pat Spence gave a brief report on the meeting that was held on December 13th with Supervisor Gondeck, Mike Couri (township attorney), Matt Loven (Rockwood Estates attorney), and a representative of Rockwood Estates corporate office. The meeting was held in St. Michael. Kevin Wright, owner of Rockwood Estates was not able to attend, so no decisions were made. Rockwood Estates representatives agree that there is a very serious issue with the cost of providing First Responder services to the mobile home court, and they also agree that the service is duplicative of the ambulance service. The desired outcome is that the City of Rice will no longer force First Responder Services on the township.
- G. Plat Storage Rack Update: Supervisor Gondeck has received two quotes for building the cabinet. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann to award the project to Gene Kubat to make the cabinet at a cost of \$403, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed. Ed Kacures recommended that the board use a steel cabinet instead, but the board doesn't feel that there is room for such a cabinet.
- H. Clerk Spence reported that the Assistant County Attorney has not completed work on the Subdivision Plat language; she will check with the Township Attorney for an update.
- I. Supervisor Gondeck reported that he will work during January to close out and transfer six Land Disturbance Permits.
- J. Clerk Spence said that Brian Koester, County Assessor, has changed the meeting time for the Watab Board of Equalization to April 11th at 2:30 p.m. He was not willing to make it an evening meeting, because he said that for entities with large populations like Watab the meeting can go to late at night. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Waytashek and passed to accept the change in date. Supervisor Gondeck was opposed, because he believes that an evening meeting would accommodate more of the Watab residents' schedules.
- K. The only entity that has responded to date on the Quiet Zone Notice of Intent is Amtrak, which gave its approval.
- L. A proposal from Supervisor Gondeck to apply for grants for an additional Outdoor Warning Siren was tabled until the board's budget meeting. Ray Thompson, Director for Benton Telephone, explained that unclaimed capitol credit funds were for smaller projects. The board would need to apply through the Benton Telecommunications Foundation for a grant for an Outdoor Warning Siren. Clerk Spence reminded the board that the township would need matching funds to support the project.

New Business included the following:

- A. Snow Plowing Update: Kevin Reiter said that the school bus will no longer go up the hill to his home because of the ice. Clerk Spence said that she had a call from the Benton

County Sheriff's Department that a car slid off the road in Bayview Court. There has been good response from Marson Construction when they are called.

- B. Annual Newsletter: Board members were asked to meet with Clerk Spence this month to work on their articles for the newsletter. A new board photograph will be taken before the budget meeting.
- C. A motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to set January 17th as a budget planning meeting and January 24th as Board of Audit.
- D. Proposal for Watab Pride Award: Supervisor Gondeck suggested an annual award be considered for a resident who goes beyond the call of duty to renovate a property and improve the appearance of a neighborhood. He said that there would be a private donor for the award. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to create the Annual Watab Pride Award.
- E. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to apply for SCORE grants for 2017 Cleanup Day at \$17,500 and Adopt a Highway at \$3,000.
- F. Supervisor Gondeck said that he has received permission to have a Watab Town Hall Sign attached to the County Road 79 sign on Highway 10. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to purchase the sign.
- G. The board discussed the Emergency Response Guide from Sheriff Heck. It will be available as a handout for the Annual Meeting.
- H. Supervisor Gondeck said that there is a Rice Area Crime Report Facebook Page, where anyone can add suspicious activity that they see in Watab Township.
- I. Supervisor Gondeck received board approval to seek a Brownfield Grant for township sites that need redevelopment.
- J. Clerk Spence reminded the board of the filing period for the Treasurer and Supervisor Position, which is from January 3rd through the 17th at 5:00 p.m.
- K. Clerk Spence reviewed the communications received during the past month. Supervisor Erdmann said that he received a letter from the Benton County Soil and Water District with information on the new water plan. Supervisor Gondeck made a motion that the township send a letter to the County Administrator and County Board requesting that they name a Watab resident to the Planning Commission and future Park Board; motion was seconded by Supervisor Waytashek, and passed. Supervisor Gondeck also reported on the Greater St. Cloud Development meeting.

- L. During January, the board will work on the easements for 95th Street, the annual newsletter, budget, conduct Board of Audit, and Supervisor Gondeck will attend a FEMA meeting. Clerk Spence said she will complete the 1099's, W-2's, budget proposal, Workers' Compensation Annual Audit, the Board of Audit report and edit the newsletter.

- M. A motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Waytashek, and passed to approve the renewal of the Wacosa contract for cleaning the town hall at no rate increase.

Citizen's Issues: Ray Thompson asked where the franchise tax goes. Clerk Spence said that it is currently going into the General Fund. Sandra Saldana spoke to the board about utilizing the expertise of John Uphoff, the new director of Benton Economic Partnership, for any business expansion needs in the township.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence