

Watab Township

Special Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 22, 2020

105th Street NW Quiet Crossing Meeting with BNSF Officials

Meeting was called to order at the Railroad Crossing of 105th Street NW, Rice, MN at 2pm by Julie Johnson, Chair Watab Township.

In attendance:

Watab Township Officials: Julie Johnson, Steve Wollak, Todd Waytashek, Supervisors

Wes Davis, Bogart & Pederson, Township Road Engineer

Tom Domres & Dale Davidson, Federal Railroad Administration

Paul DeLarosa, MNDOT Railroad

Dan Peltier, Ryan Skarhus, Matt Carner, BNSF

Rick Campbell, Alfred, Benesch Co.

The meeting was held on site as the initial step & required meeting for the proposed Quiet Crossing at 105th Street NW, Rice, MN. Design requirements were discussed. Minimum height for the center median is 6 inches. BNSF would like to see 8 inches to account for overlays, snowplow damage, other issues. The grade on the east side of the railroad tracks needs to be addressed. A better grade as it approaches the rail road tracks is needed.

Dan Peltier, BNSF. For design purposes the masts need to be at the proper distance. The concrete planks will need to match this distance as well. They may not be the correct size. It appears the masts are in the correct position and if they are not the correct length, the current arms can be adjusted. The need to move them is yet to be determined, but there appears to be adequate space/wire length. The house (RR mechanical building) is current so no cost expected there as well. 14' width for drive lanes required. 100' median required (50' on either side of crossing). BNSF requires a current traffic count. Todd Waytashek to locate the information that was gathered two years ago and email to Engineer and Dan Peltier.

Township officials noted that the design is 12' lanes with a 3' paved shoulder so that should meet specifications. Steve Wollak will check with the local farmers for width and height of agricultural vehicles to make sure there is clearance. Signage in the median was discussed using the fold down flappers so that it is an agricultural crossing. BNSF officials noted it is the height of the median that was most strict. If the flappers (center median warning signs) break it is township officials job to replace asap (48 hours?). Township officials talked of having a stock supply for replacements. Tubular markers range in height from 24-48".

The FRA (Federal Railroad Administration) has the final approval on the Quiet Zone.

Next steps:

Township officials to review and finalize design plan with Township Engineer.

Julie Johnson will locate BNSF Easement to Watab Township and email to both Dan Peltier, BNSF and Township Engineer.

Todd Waytashek to locate traffic counts and email to Engineer and Dan Peltier, BNSF.

Steve Wollak to call local farmers for tractor width and height and report back to board.

Notice of Intent to Proceed: Julie Johnson to complete the forms and submit with final design.

Dan Peltier, BNSF to provide Estimate of Cost to Township.

Final agreement to be signed and permit to work on BNSF property to be issued after approval.

Dan Peltier noted that when calling Gopher State One Call for locates they do not mark BNSF utilities. Township/Engineer need to call BNSF officials for locates in the railroad crossing area.

Notice of Commencement (?) – When crossing is complete this document must be filed with BNSF officials. This picks the date for trains to stop blowing whistle. It takes roughly 35-40 days for this to happen. Note: All train conductors have the right to blow the whistle if deemed necessary, even at quiet crossings.

Motion to adjourn at 2:52 pm by Julie Johnson, 2nd by Steve Wollak. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by

Julie Johnson, Chair
Watab Township