

**Watab Town Board Meeting
March 1, 2011**

The regular monthly meeting of the Watab Town Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice-Chair Craig Gondeck. Supervisor Ed Kacures Jr. was excused due to travel. Board members present were Supervisors Gondeck and Lloyd Erdmann, Treasurer Eileen Saldana, and Clerk Pat Spence. Audience members were Commissioner Joe Wollak, Allen Saldana, Kevin Reiter, and Bob Raveling.

Supervisor Gondeck extended sympathy to the Fred Mazcek family and to Theodore and Karla Baca on the death of their daughter. A flood meeting report, town hall heating, and report on the Falcon Bank road project loan were added to the agenda. Minutes of the February meeting were approved through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck and second by Supervisor Erdmann. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck and seconded by Supervisor Erdmann to approve the Treasurer's Report.

Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann and seconded by Supervisor Gondeck to approve the monthly bills as presented and to withdraw the funds from the appropriate accounts; Clerk Spence reported errors on the billing statement from All Spec Services and recommended withholding that check until the permits and checks could be reconciled. The motion to approve the payment of bills and withdrawal of funds included that stipulation. Motion passed to pay claims 4533-4589.

Clerk Spence reported that Chairman Kacures has the newsletter at the printer. She thanked him for his leadership and work in getting the newsletter to print. It will be mailed in the next few days.

Benton County Commissioner Joe Wollak reported on recent county work. A large highway safety project will be completed by 2014 with the addition of an interchange at U.S. Highway 10 and County Road 2 at Rice; cost is \$14.5 million. This year, approximately 2.8 miles of County Road 78 will be improved. The county board has adopted a 0% levy increase for next year. They are going to mediation regarding severance pay for custodial employees who are being dismissed so that the county can contract these services to an outside company. The Department of Development is refining the land use comprehensive plan. There will be a public hearing on March 3rd at 7pm at the courthouse on Ordinance 455, ordinance on lot sizes and storage building sizes. He asked the board for input on this ordinance. Supervisor Erdmann will try to attend the county meeting. The board asked Commissioner Wollak to support changes, so that storage building sizes could be increased. This would help eliminate multiple storage buildings on a lot. The board gave Commissioner Wollak specific recommendations to refer to the Planning Commission through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck and second by Supervisor Erdmann. There will be another public hearing on this at 9am on April 5th. Clerk Spence informed Commissioner Wollak about the letter sent to the board from County Administrator Montey Headley. He was requesting that the board sign a resolution allowing Benton County to use the park dedication money from Watab developments anywhere in the county. Commissioner Wollak said that he was not informed about this request; neither he nor the board members support this proposal, so the Clerk was asked to send a letter to Mr. Headley informing him of the decision. Supervisor Gondeck told Commissioner Wollak that there has not been good response from the county staff to requests for information from our attorney.

The board reviewed documents for the annual meeting and made some changes, which the Clerk will incorporate. Additions to the agenda include a report by Building Inspector Nancy Scott, Assessor Traci Balder, report on Watab Clean Up Day, Potential Flooding, and RR Crossing approaches.

The annual Minnesota Association of Townships Annual Training is on Monday, March 21st at the Holiday Inn in St. Cloud; all board members are to attend.

Communications included a message from Chelle Benson regarding the February meeting minutes, which the Clerk read to the board: "As I read through your minutes there was a misunderstanding that should be corrected, the portion of the minutes are shown below. The

Department of Development did not use the wrong map- the sign person at Public Works used the wrong map, it came to the attention of DOD from a citizen of Watab calling asking about the sign change. I called Ron Janson and he stated that he was doing some corrective work- he was using a map generated through public works not the 911 map, Mater Street Address Guide (MSAG) nor did he check with anyone in my Department before he started this process. After discussion with Bob Kozel we confirmed that several signs were incorrectly changed in more than one Township. DOD has since clarified the correct 911 road names and asked Public Works to correct their errors. The board said that the minutes reflected what they had been told by Bob Kozel. There were also communications reviewed on future sign reflectivity expenses and a letter from ISO regarding building inspection review. Supervisor Gondeck checked with a few insurance companies, who feel that this is not necessary. The board determined not to enter this process, which would be a township expense. Supervisor Gondeck will let Nancy Scott, building inspector, know that we won't be involved in this program.

Supervisor Reports:

1. Supervisor Gondeck reported that Benton Co. Economic Development had a meeting. Ten town homes are proposed for Rice; they have requested TIF financing, which this board does not believe is a good use. There are also some prospective businesses for Rice; St. Cloud Economic Development is reorganizing. Economic development activity is increasing.
2. Rice Fire Board Meeting: Supervisor Erdmann said that the City of Rice has changed their views on the Fire Contract, and it seems they want to work with us. Plan is to start negotiating on a new contract this summer. Mayor wants a lump sum base amount and so much for fire and medical calls. Clerk Spence reported that most calls for the Rice Fire Department are medical calls, and many of the fees are not collectable since they are made to Rockwood Estates. Since no property taxes are paid by the individuals, the township cannot pass the \$250 fee onto their taxes. Most of these fees are not being paid, which Clerk Spence said is unfair to the taxpayers, especially those in the southern 2/3 of the township who are not serviced by the Rice Fire Department. She also said that residents in the northern 1/3 sections are billed for both the ambulance and the first responders. Sauk Rapids Fire Department does not provide emergency services for medical calls; it is provided by Gold Cross. Supervisor Gondeck will contact Rockwood Estates management about the potential for billing for medical calls on lot rent ; he will also inquire with other local units of government about their procedures. Clerk Spence asked the board to give Supervisor Kacures authority to work with the Rice City Manager on corrections to the financial reports; motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann and seconded by Supervisor Gondeck giving this authority; motion passed. The board applauded Supervisor Kacures for his work on the Rice Fire Department budget.
3. Supervisor Gondeck said that the Benton Co. Assn' of Townships meeting was not well attended by representatives from Benton County. There were only five dept. heads and 3 county commissioners. The administrator also did not attend. Supervisor Erdmann said that Kari Thorsten, new Auditor-Treasurer will look into collection of the gravel tax. Sheriff Brad Bennett said that there's a problem with kids selling their parents' prescription drugs; they should be turned back to the pharmacy if they won't be used. Don't let children have access to your medicine.
4. Supervisor Gondeck attended the Little Rock Lake Association Meeting. He said he applauds Guy Spence for the direction he's giving and the 15 members who attended the meeting. Allen Saldana said there's lots of movement in the water now with creek water coming into the lake. Kevin Reiter said that he and his kids picked up lots of trash on the lake.
5. Supervisor Gondeck is on the county Water Quality Board: they are discussing feed lots and working on the water plan.

6. The Supervisors discussed the Flood Meeting. They believe that Jim McDermott should be looking at the flood gauge at Blanchard Dam rather than the 10th Street Dam in St. Cloud. Supervisor Erdmann said that would be comparable to driving while looking out the rear view mirror, since the water comes into our area from the north. We could be more proactive in preventing flooding. He also added that people need to use common sense about protecting property from flooding: if you're going to use sand bags, run a couple of pumps; if you have a basement, let it fill up with water, or the basement walls will cave in. If you're flooding often, build up your foundation, or raise your lot. The county is projecting levels of flooding as in 1987. Benton Co. will provide 500 free sand bags per household; after that residents will purchase sand bags, but residents have to pick them up at Allen Saldana's gravel pit. Town hall will be the command center. Contact Supervisor Gondeck, who is working with Jim McDermott, on Watab Township flooding problems.
7. Bank Loan Issue: Clerk Spence had requested a loan amortization schedule from Falcon Bank for the road loan; she was mailed a statement for payment in full in ten years, which would make the payments \$104,000. This was not the agreement made with the bank. It was originally an 18-year loan with 4.5% for the first ten years, balloon payment at the end of ten years to be renegotiated. Supervisor Gondeck was thanked for helping resolve the loan term issue. The loan payments will be \$64,715.40, paid in full in 2028, with interest rate of 4.5%.
8. Town Hall Heating: Supervisor Erdmann talked to a Brockway Township supervisor. Their electric bill is about \$100 per month; ours is \$500. He recommends that we look at our zones to make it more efficient. He'll have Joe Lyons look at it this month. We need to reduce our energy consumption.

Citizen's Issues: none.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm. through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck and seconded by Supervisor Erdmann. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Spence, Clerk