

**Watab Town Board Meeting Minutes**  
**October 2, 2007**

The regular monthly meeting of the Watab Town Board was held on Tuesday, October 2, 2007 at the Watab Town Hall. Board members present were Chair Craig Gondeck, Supervisor Lloyd Erdmann, Treasurer Eileen Saldana and Clerk Pat Spence. Supervisor Brad McIntosh was absent. The Chair made two announcements: first, that we would observe a moment of silence in respect to Woody Anderson and secondly, that we congratulate Ralph Berger on his retirement from the Benton County Sheriff's Department after 15 years of service. Those in the audience were: Ralph Berger, Rosie Johnson, Walter Jansen, Earl Harden, Donna Rothstein, Allen Saldana, Chad Erdmann, Brian Erdmann, Ronald C. Hommerding, Ed Kacures, Maureen Graber and George and Taunya Mastey.

Approval of the minutes was given on a motion by Supervisor Erdmann and second by Supervisor Gondeck with the following change on the September 7 minutes: in the sixth paragraph down "They borrowed approximately 15 cubic yards of topsoil to use for landscaping from the pond area." The motion passed.

A motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck and seconded by Supervisor Erdmann to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion passed.

There were no citizen's issues.

Approval for payment of the bills was given for all presented bills listed on the claims list plus payment to Saldana Excavating for \$3,141.26 and payment to Supervisor Erdmann for his claim. The motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann and passed.

**Old Business:**

1. Lake Andrew Development Follow Up: Brian Erdmann has a meeting coming up Thursday on the addition of the second road exit. Paul Schwinghammer took care of the erosion control issue with one phone call to Scott Jarnot, who corrected the problem.
2. Snowplowing Damage Bill Consideration: Supervisor Erdmann said that all the shrubs damaged by snow plowing were on the township road right of way. Supervisor Gondeck said that townships are not responsible for damage done by contractors. He read from the snowplowing contract with George Mastey. The contract said that complaints must be filed with the contractor. Supervisor Gondeck will send the bill back to Don Girtz Construction with a copy of the contract paragraph, and will recommend that he take up the issue with MTD Excavating.
3. Road Report: Bob Erickson recommends that the minimum maintenance road should be left as it is to keep it as a walking trail. He suggested withholding \$2,000 for the Plaziak Road patching project and to have the contractor redo the patch. The Clerk and Treasurer were directed to pay MTD Excavating \$1,400 for the road work. The above recommendations were passed on a motion by Supervisor Erdmann and a second by Supervisor Gondeck.

**New Business:**

1. Watab Clean Up Day Report: the first year, 63 people participated; last year, 116 people participated; this year, 150 people came. There is more traffic coming to Clean Up Day, but less garbage is coming. The clerk commented on the express lane and how well it was organized. We have a \$10,000 grant to cover expenses. If costs are higher, we will bill to other government jurisdictions.
2. Benton County Association Meeting Report: Supervisor Gondeck, Deputy Clerk Maureen Graber and Treasurer Eileen Saldana attended the September 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.
3. Snow Plowing Report & Recommendations: Bob Erickson said that we need to try to be more efficient in our expenditure for snow plowing. He provided a written report that included comparisons with three other townships. The township names were kept confidential. Bob recommends that we create a policy on plowing based on the number of inches of snow fall. We also need to evaluate the type of equipment and its efficiency for a given snow fall. Don't double up on the roadways and run the routes efficiently. Another consideration is

the standard for cleaning the roads. He recommends that the board meet soon in a special meeting to make decisions on these standards. Rosie Johnson reported that plowing was done south of her home where no one lived. Supervisor Erdmann said that the Cove development paid for that area. Supervisor Erdmann added that we need to consider what the taxpayers want as a standard. Bob Erickson said that we need to understand the efficiency of the equipment for certain roads. Brian Erdmann recommended that we bid out the job at a per mile cost per year. That is something the board can consider when the contract comes up. George Mastey said that he had one call last winter with a complaint about ice; he feels he has done a great job of keeping the township roads clean of ice and snow. Supervisor Gondeck said that the electors allocated \$25,000 additional money for road construction and repair at the last annual meeting, and the board needs to have a plan so that the money is available for that purpose and is not used for snowplowing. George Mastey said he believes people demand clean roads. Taunya Mastey suggested that the board ask the citizens if they are satisfied with the snow plowing. Supervisor Erdmann asked for an update on Benton County snow plowing costs. It costs the county \$500 per mile for all road maintenance. Supervisor Erdmann agreed that there should be a special meeting to discuss policy guidelines as recommended by Bob Erickson. Bob then recommended that Supervisor Erdmann call Benton County Highway Department and find out in writing what their cost is per mile for snow plowing. Chair Gondeck will call a special meeting. Ron Hommerding suggested that we look at county parameters for plowing from Sherburne, Benton, and Stearns Counties. Donna Rothstein said she believes that this will never be solved because people have different standards for roads. Ed Kacures requested that the special meeting be held in the evening to make it convenient for residents to attend.

4. Chair Gondeck reported on his road survey on road right of ways. He asked for permission to apply for a grant to cover the cost of the road study. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann and seconded by Supervisor Gondeck to apply for the grant. The Chair commended the town board in the 1970's for insisting on the 66-foot road right of way. All this information can be entered into a computer data base. Bob Erickson said that he is going to a meeting tomorrow that is hosted by Rinke Noonan Law Firm on legal issues on roads.
5. Chair Gondeck reported on the Little Rock Lake issue. He said that he had a citizen complaint saying that Little Rock Lake was declared a disaster area. This is a rumor. It has not and will not be declared a disaster area because the condition is temporary. So far, home sales are not down. Once we get on the impaired waterways, we may be eligible for a grant to do a sewer study. Little Rock Lake is on the fast track to determine causes of the pollution.
6. Chair Gondeck recommended that a Resolution be passed allowing Supervisor Erdmann to install the town hall irrigation system. He tabled this until Supervisor McIntosh is present since Supervisor Erdmann cannot vote on the resolution.
7. The Rice Fire Department has proposed a 29% increase in their budget request for 2008. Their capital outlay set aside is for future equipment. Supervisor Erdmann said that he is not in favor for giving Rice more than the contract calls for (3% for uncontrollable costs) unless it can be justified. Supervisor Gondeck said that a large part of the budget increase is to add two more firemen, their equipment, and for increased training costs. It costs \$12,000 to outfit two firemen. The Mayor has said that he will be going through the budget with the Rice City Council. Supervisor Erdmann said that the township needs to know how the money will be spent, because the public expects accountability. Also, Chair Gondeck said that there is not money set aside for a new fire truck. The Clerk noted that we currently have a \$3,400 balance in our fire fund. We would need to have a special annual meeting to increase the levy for 2008 to meet this requested increase by the City of Rice. Chair Gondeck will invite the Fire Chief to a special meeting on this issue.
8. Supervisor Erdmann recommended that county road 55 from Gordon Bridge north be improved to Rice by widening and resurfacing. This needs to be submitted to the county engineer by October 8<sup>th</sup>. His motion was seconded by Supervisor Gondeck and passed. County Road 78 from county road 1 to county road 13 should also be widened and resurfaced. The motion for this recommendation was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann and passed. Ed Kacures asked about bridges in the township. We have one bridge, Sucker Creek Bridge, which is inspected annually by the county.

Citizens Complaints: Chair Gondeck met on a complaint regarding the building inspector; the complaint has been dropped because she had verification of her inspections. In the future, the contractor will be asked to sign a card noting that the Building Inspector did an inspection. There was a water quality complaint along county road 13 that the water was yellow; there have been no problems. Another complaint came from a resident saying that 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue is too narrow

and trucks are going off the road into the ditch. The Chair asked that we set up a file on each road. The septic system update on Sharon Place has been resolved. Supervisor Erdmann will take care of the concern by Nicole & Rich Friedrich on Indian Road about the need for a culvert.

Rosie Johnson talked about the increase in accidents after the curve has been removed near her home on River Road.

Maureen Graber said that our SWPPP is in public comment period until October 28. From that date, we will have six months to have our ordinance in place. Maureen has 10 copies of the plan for use by the public. Supervisor Erdmann commended Maureen on her work on this. Chad Erdmann commented that he did the clean up at Lake Andrew Development.

Ed Kacures asked about repayment from Don Zieglmeier. The chair reported that we have received \$250, and he hopes to collect more money from him.

Clerk Spence read a letter from Joan Neyssen explaining comments she made at the county township officer meeting. Brian Erdmann asked about attendance of a township officer who doesn't come to town board meetings and asked what the township has as recourse. There is none. The Clerk read a letter from Bob Helland regarding his mailbox issue. He is requesting a variance. Supervisor Erdmann noted that he will need to abstain from voting on this, because he is doing work for Bob Helland on a new home.

History Day Update: Supervisor Gondeck said that it was an excellent day and that there was a column in the Benton County News complimenting the township for hosting it.

Ron Hommerding reported on the storm water pond issue. He said that the board asked him to get quotes on filling the pond. 3,000 yards of fill are needed to fill it. Five companies submitted quotes to Ron: Ray Thompson--\$ 16350; Rice 16380 Wollak 18,910, Burski 23125, MTD \$26,250. The board decided not to fill the pond because of lack of funds for this purpose, and the township had already paid out funds to create the pond.

Two paving quotes were submitted for the hall parking lot: Rice Contracting at \$4900 and Certified Aggregate Products at \$5175. Supervisor Gondeck recommended that the board table this, because Supervisor Erdmann said at the last meeting that all board members need to be present to vote on this. Ron Hommerding said that this project has been approved by the engineer. He added that the pond was built as a borrow pit for the fill that was needed by the hall. Chair Gondeck said that there was a donor for the fill: Ernie Wollak, and that he had made Ron Hommerding aware of Ernie's offer. Ed Kacures said he feels that this is mismanagement. Class 5 is classified the same as a bituminous surface for runoff issues. The washout will have to be corrected. George Mastey still has a budget for seeding and shaping. He has been paid but hasn't completed the seeding because of the rain. He says the erosion will be the same if the parking lot is increased with more bituminous or not. Lloyd said that he feels there is a need for larger parking area because of the large turnout for the lake association meeting. Heavy rains are going to make the erosion of the gravel increase. Supervisor Erdmann said that he wants Supervisor McIntosh present to make a decision. He then made a motion to pave the portion of the parking lot that is now graveled and to accept all the quotes. The Clerk recommended that the money for the parking lot come from the Road & Bridge Fund to keep the necessary balance to make the bond payment and interest payment on February 1, 2007 from the Building Fund. George Mastey still has to shape the pond and seed. The decision was made not to seed earlier in the summer because of the drought by Lloyd, Ron & George. George said that the pond has doubled in size. Ed Kacures asked when would have been a good time to seed the pond. He said, "We are in a losing battle because of all the heavy rains now. It should have been done earlier." Lloyd said that it probably should have been reseeded about a month ago. The Clerk read an e-mail from Chuck Wocken stating that the Soil & Water Conservation would possibly create a rain garden. Supervisor Erdmann made a motion to accept the blacktop quote from Certified Aggregate Products for \$5,175.00 for the blacktop, because it was for a 2.5 inch base, and striping is included in the quote. He also added that MPCA should put in writing that they won't accept our storm water pond because it didn't follow the permit. He requested that Maureen Graber call MPCA and get this in writing. Brian Erdmann said that under the MS4 permit the pond has to be maintained until completed and there should not be any additional cost to the taxpayers for the reshaping. He added that you can't sign off on the SWPPP plan until there is vegetation growing. There will also have to be rip rap in the far corner. This will be a change order. Supervisor Erdmann amended

his motion to include that the money come from the road and bridge fund. He said that this would take care of the washouts. The dike on the south end of the property will be taken care of at no additional cost to the township. All storm water runoff has to be on our own property. Ron Hommerding will continue supervising the project until it is done. Because George Mastey holds the SWPPP permit, Supervisor Erdmann added to his motion that for \$400 or less, George complete the rip rap and be paid up to \$300 for two loads of class 5. This motion was seconded by Supervisor Gondeck and passed. The meeting adjourned at 9:50pm.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Spence