

**Minutes of Watab Town Board Meeting
February 5, 2013**

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

Following the Pledge to the Flag, these announcements were made by Supervisor Gondeck: Sympathy to the Duane Johnson family; low income senior citizens who want taxes done free can do so at Whitney Senior Center; appreciation to Chris Appert of Apperts and John Lindholm of Custom Caseworks who recently sold their businesses for all the employment they provided.

The agenda was approved on motion by Supervisor Gondeck and second by Supervisor Kacures with the addition of update on dry hydrant system for fire protection and outcomes of Watab Clean Up Day to Old Business and the following items to New Business: township group life insurance policy review; board of appeals and equity training; fire ordinance charge for emergency services; review of town hall rental policy; and date for local board of review. The motion passed.

Minutes were approved for January 8, 15, 28, and 29 through a motion by Supervisor Erdmann and second by Supervisor Gondeck; motion passed.

Treasurer Saldana reported that this month's bank statements have not arrived. She reported unaudited cash balances of \$290,946.84. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann and seconded by Supervisor Gondeck to approve her report; motion passed.

Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann and seconded by Supervisor Gondeck to pay the presented claims number 5077 through 5091 and electronic transfers for PERA and IRS in the total amount of \$52,284.30 and authority of the Treasurer to withdraw money from the appropriate accounts for payment motion passed. The claims included two larger amounts for one-third of the snow-plowing contract payment to Marsons, Inc. and the Falcon National Bank payment for the road project loan.

Old Business:

1. The board reviewed bond proposals and information from Ehlers and PFM, and Clerk Spence was asked to set up a meeting with Todd Hagen from Ehlers for next Tuesday evening or the following Tuesday at 7pm.
2. Clerk Spence provided the board feedback on the letter sent to Fire Wardens; comments were received from Rita Hammerel and Al Schlein. She also learned that the Hulls are no longer Fire Wardens.
3. Approval of the Fire Contract with the City of Rice: Supervisor Kacures provided the board members copies of what was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of the City of Rice last evening. Yesterday afternoon, the City Attorney for Rice emailed Marie and Darcey and suggested an additional sentence suggested by Allen Voigt: "8a. The basis of this fee is \$24,500 based on the NTC and \$14,000 an average annual cost for emergency calls." Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann to authorize the Chair and Clerk to sign the contract with Rice; seconded by Supervisor Gondeck and passed with Supervisor Kacures opposed. Supervisor Gondeck thanked the board for perseverance through the past year and commended Supervisor Kacures for his many hours of work on it. Supervisor Kacures opposed the contract based on the 2.6% being in the contract language, but he does agree with the lump-sum amount for this year. The contract is retroactive to January 1, 2012 and payment the same for that year.
4. Township Computer: Pat reported that she has been reviewing options. She will review this with the board Chair and was given authority to purchase what is needed.
5. Computer Training: The Clerk and Treasurer reported that they are enrolled for two separate computer courses at MRC in St. Cloud.
6. Annual Newsletter Articles: Supervisor Erdmann was asked to e-mail his articles to Supervisor Kacures. Supervisor Gondeck proposed having a contact list in the newsletter, which the board felt would be beneficial. The Clerk will prepare the contact list for Supervisor Gondeck's review.

7. Approval of the 5year road plan was given through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck and second by Supervisor Erdmann with changes to Sanbur Trail for fog sealing (if possible). This will be proposed at the Annual Meeting for discussion and feedback. Motion passed.
8. 2013 budget and levy projections: Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Kacures to approve the 2013 budget and present the levy proposal at the annual meeting. Motion passed. The levy proposal total for 2014 is \$395,000. (Historical amounts are \$375,000 in 2013, \$400,000 in 2012, \$400,000 in 2011, and \$355,000 in 2010). Supervisor Gondeck stated that he was now opposed to the levy recommendations prepared by the board at the work session on January 29th because of the increased levy for the school district and hard economic times for so many residents. He believes that \$10,000 could be reduced to the General and Road and Bridge Funds.
9. Liens on Personal Property: since the last meeting, the township was informed that we cannot place liens on mobile homes according to County Attorney's opinion.
10. Signage Request: Supervisor Gondeck made the request to purchase two *Road Work Ahead* Signs to mount on the flashing light stands. Cost is \$170. Motion was made by Supervisor Kacures, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann; and motion passed.
11. Watab Clean Up Day: Supervisor Gondeck reported that the board cleaned up a lot on West Lake Road that was in foreclosure on Watab Clean Up Day, and since that time the lot has sold. This is the second lot that has sold because of Watab Clean Up Day improvements to the property.
12. Dry Hydrant System: Supervisor Gondeck met with Tony Hommerding, Sauk Rapids Fire Chief about a dry hydrant system for the Sauk Rapids service area. He showed the board a photo of such a system. If the township installs them, Sauk Rapids Fire Department is totally supportive and will maintain them. There are specifications that would need to be followed, and they would assist. Such a system would help reduce people's property insurance rates if they are within a mile of the hydrant. Supervisor Gondeck was asked by the board to contact DNR about necessary permits.

New Business:

1. Supervisor Gondeck reported that there were two difficult issues with building permits during the past month. He commended Nancy Scott, Building Inspector, for her communication with the board and her work with the contractor on resolving the issues.
2. Review of the Snow Plowing: The board feels that Marson Contractors are doing a good job with the snow plowing and ice control. Their response has been good to any complaints.
3. Set Agenda for Annual Meeting: sirens, 5 year road plan, dry hydrant system, tax districts for emergency response, and the bond proposal for refinancing township debt will be added.
4. Approval of Resolution 2013-1: Appointment of Election Judges: Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to approve the resolution as presented and authorize the appropriate signatures.
5. Approval of Resolution 2013-2: Absentee Ballot Board: Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to authorize the establishment of the Absentee Ballot Board, as required by state law for the township election.
6. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann and seconded by Supervisor Gondeck to receive the Wellhead Protection Plan from the City of Sauk Rapids. The motion passed.
7. MS4 Annual Public Hearing will be advertised for the April meeting.
8. Items for discussion at Benton County Association of Township Meeting: number of judges required for township annual elections and lack of funds to our MNDOT district for roads. The town board is very concerned about access to Highway 10 when the stop lights are removed in Rice.
9. Township Life Insurance: Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck to increase to the Gold Plan with the Minnesota Benefit Association with \$15,000 of life insurance rather than \$10,000. Motion was seconded by Supervisor Erdmann; motion passed.

10. Board of Appeal and Equity Training. The Clerk reviewed the report from the County Assessor and noted the schedule of training. Supervisor Kacures needs to take the training this year.
11. Fire Ordinance Charge for Services: add to next Tuesday's meeting
12. Review Town Hall Rental Policy: the Clerk was asked to change the policy so that a key is not given out to the Renter and an additional \$25 rental fee would be assessed if the Renter wants to come in an extra time for setup. Supervisor Gondeck also reminded the board of the need to keep blinds closed when the renter is not present because of potential for vandalism and theft.
13. Local Board of Review: this is set for April 4 at 2:30 p.m. Clerk Spence must publish a legal notice for this.
14. Correspondence: email was received from Jon Olson with information that the Benton County Department of Development is requiring an after-the-fact variance for the septic system installed last summer. He received the easement from the township and permit from the county to install the system. The board did not feel he should be required to get a variance, and if so that there should be no charge since it was the county's error. The Clerk was asked to send letters to the Benton County Agricultural Society and Tri-county Humane Society to attend the annual meeting and make their donation requests.
15. Supervisor Reports: Supervisor Gondeck has a request from residents on Fifth Avenue to have two trees removed on the southeast corner that are obstructing vision to County Road 33. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann to speak to John and Janet Haus about removing trees on the township right of way that block the sight line at the intersection of County Rd 33 and 5th Avenue; these trees are adjacent to their property. Motion passed. Supervisor Gondeck reported that \$30,000 would be adequate funding for one outdoor warning siren, and that it would be powered by solar energy. He and the Clerk are to work on grant applications. He also reported on the Economic Board: the German plant has 7 current employees, will hire 3 in February, and remainder of hiring will occur in March. Two businesses are interested in locating in Watab; Verso has been sold to a demolition company who will get it ready for resale. It is devastating to the community. There is currently no power being produced from the dam. Concern was expressed about control of the dam in the future and its impact on Little Rock Lake.
16. Citizen's Feedback: there were no comments.
17. February Work Plan: Supervisor Gondeck will be meeting with the development corporation; there will be a special meeting next Tuesday with Todd Hagen from Ehlers; the Benton County Association of Townships meeting is February 21 at 7:30pm at Mr. Jim's in Foley; Supervisor Gondeck will check on DNR permits required for installation of a dry hydrant system; and he will also see what factors are used to determine fire contract charges in other townships that have large trailer parks.
18. Review of railroad crossing project: Supervisor Erdmann reported that Jon Bogart will get signed easements for the stock piles on the railroad crossing projects.

Motion was made to adjourn at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Pat Spence, Clerk