

Watab Town Board Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2014

A special meeting of Watab was called to order at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of meeting with Representative Jim Newberger regarding legislation he is drafting for Highway 10 access in the 2014 state transportation bonding bill. Representative Newberger phoned Supervisor Gondeck this afternoon to say he won't be able to attend the meeting. Board members present were Treasurer Eileen Saldana, Clerk Pat Spence, Supervisor Craig Gondeck and Supervisor Ed Kacures Jr. Audience members were Jeff Ganz, Tom Henkemeyer, Mark Rice, John Olson, Sandy Rau, Jim Rau, Nancy Kronlund, Pat Hedlund, Buzz Cripe, Mary Cripe, Renee Zeleny, Allen Saldana, Julie Johnson, Kevin Reiter, Paul Jacobs, Brian Erdmann, and Bob Raveling. Supervisor Kacures called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. followed by the Pledge to the Flag.

Chair Kacures asked for input from residents about their ideas to improve access to Highway 10 through the township with the thought that their ideas would be passed on to Representative Newberger:

1. Buzz Cripe, 410 85th Street NW on the corner of Highway 10: Buzz said that he was told 11 years ago by MNDOT not to make any improvements to his home because he was in Phase IV of frontage roads along the west side of the highway, and his home would be removed in a short time. These plans have since been removed from the plans. He believes that Watab's problems exist because people traveling through the area think that they are on an interstate, and it is not built to those standards with all the accesses. Acceleration lanes won't work because there are only two lanes of highway that are often filled with bumper to bumper traffic. How can you merge into that heavy traffic especially when it's backed up? Frontage roads are the only thing that can help his neighborhood. The original frontage road planned by the front of his home was to go south. Also, he recommends that the traffic counts by MNDOT should include the traffic speeds; people are driving interstate speeds. Mary Cripe stated that she recently learned that for 336 miles in this district, there are only 9 highway patrol assigned and only 7 are active. They need more highway patrol funding. That leaves an average of two patrols per night. People in their neighborhood have said that their solution to highway 10 access is buying cars with V-8 engines.
2. Julie Johnson, 140 75th St NE: She would like frontage roads to run along the highway rather than backage roads as previously presented by MNDOT. She doesn't want a backage road going through her back yard, and she doesn't want to lose the frontage for their business: K Johnson Construction.
3. Pat Hedlund, 8530 1st Ave NE: She believes that so many people don't know that Rep. Newberger is working on this legislation. This is a very serious issue for safety of residents.
4. Jim Rau, 8871 Burton Place NW: He asked how many people live in the township and suggested that the township send a letter inviting people to the meetings. He has long waits of up to ten minutes to get on the highway to do it safely.
5. Nancy Kronlund, 8705 1st Ave NE: She lives in Oak Hill Estates and said that Craig Hanson put a note in all mailboxes in Oak Hill and Golf Haven Estates advising them of this meeting, and very few people are here tonight. She recommended putting something on the website to get feedback from township residents.
6. Buzz Cripe: He reiterated that he doesn't believe acceleration lanes would help everyone who needs to get on the highway. The question was asked about number of accidents at this intersection of 85th Street and Highway 10. There are serious issues of people coming from the west side of highway 10 and watching for the traffic that is coming out directly across from the east side, such as from Oak Hill Estates. 85th Street on the west side of Highway 10 doesn't line up with the Oak Hill access on the east side, so there is a blind spot. There have been many accidents at this intersection. It is the most heavily populated intersection at all times of day and night trying to access there. This intersection should be closed and frontage roads bring the traffic to an interchange.
7. Julie Johnson asked about the process for getting funding. Clerk Spence responded that Senator Brown and Representative Newberger were drafting legislation for the 2014 transportation bonding bill. Rep. Newberger is also a member of the Transportation Committee in the House. Rep. Newberger recommended having video clips of the access problems that can be played at committee hearings. This is potentially a year for a higher bonding bill, so Watab is trying to get funds. Rep. Newberger has said that he is working with Claudia Dumont at MNDOT to gain her support.

8. Renee Zeleny, 10382 West Lake Road: She stressed that Watab residents need to get involved in solving this problem. There is a lack of information at MNDOT, and Renee would help with development of a survey to garner citizen input. She feels that highway transportation planning people should be at all meetings when this issue is discussed. The township could put articles in the St. Cloud Times. She personally said that she doesn't have trouble crossing the traffic going south, but she has trouble seeing what lanes the cars are in when she gets in the median. She would like to see an acceleration lane on 105th Street going south, because she can tell better in her rear view mirror what lane the cars are in.
9. Buzz Cripe: He said that the overpass in Rice will cause Watab increased traffic backups.
10. John Olson, 10293 Ferry Point: He believes that Watab needs to push for getting the three interchanges and frontage roads now, because if we go piecemeal it may never be done; we have a window now with the bonding bill, so let's push for the best solution for the township. Averages of traffic counts don't get at the volumes for smaller periods of time such as rush hour. It would be interesting to see if the accidents are associated with the higher volumes of traffic. It would be great if MNDOT could be more specific with the traffic counts.
11. Jim Rau said again that rush hour traffic makes it very difficult for them to get on the highway safely.

It was recommended that Representative Newberger be invited to a special meeting as soon as he has a draft of the legislation. The special meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chair Ed Kacures Jr. All board members were present. Approval of the agenda was made through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck with the additions of: Crack Seal Update, Wacosa Contract Renewal, and SCORE Grant application for Adopt a Highway, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed. Approval of the minutes of the December 3 and 16 meeting was given through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed. Eileen Saldana gave the Treasurer's Report was given with a cash balance of \$264,288.32 in checking accounts. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to accept her report.

Traci Balder was unable to attend the meeting to give her annual Assessor's Report due to illness.

Old Business:

1. Rice Fire Contract: Supervisor Kacures attended the Rice City Council meeting on December 23rd to present our signed contract; this was the contract that was prepared by City Councilman Al Voigt and the city attorney and given to Supervisor Craig Gondeck by the City Clerk. It had a 2.35% NTC and no cap on fire calls with a per call rate. At the meeting, Councilman Voigt said that the contract had in the past was a mistake, because it was for only 40 calls and we're now at 47. Supervisor Kacures explained to him that we have other such lump sum contracts and asked if Watab would have been given a refund if there were less than 40 calls. Councilman Voigt then said that the contract Rice had presented Watab for 2014 was a mistake, and that the Net Tax Capacity rate should have been 2.6%. This was the contract that he had the City Attorney prepare, and the City Clerk told Supervisor Gondeck that all the township rates would be the same. Mayor Rogholt was supportive of Watab's signed contract at the 2.35%, but he suggested a compromise of 2.45% NTC and asked Supervisor Kacures if he would support that. Supervisor Kacures said that he would need to bring it back to the town board. Since nothing was going to be resolved and the township had been dealing with this since early September, Supervisor Kacures asked if this proposal was turned down, if Watab could have a three month extension on the 2013 contract with ten calls included. This was accepted. Then, Councilman Voigt proposed a motion for a contract with Watab that has 2.6% NTC; this motion was seconded when Supervisor Kacures interrupted asking for a vote on the contract that Watab had signed first before entertaining this motion. That contract failed to pass with a 3-2 vote. Then Councilman Voigt's motion was voted on, which passed on a 3-2 vote. Clerk Spence was asked to contact Mayor Dale Rogholt asking when he will be meeting with the City Council and other town boards about the budget before we negotiate a new contract. Clerk Spence read the Addendum that Watab proposes to the contract and also reviewed the levy certification amounts for 2012 and 2014 as received from the County Auditor's Office.
2. Clerk Spence reported that she spoke with the County Engineer regarding the County Road 79 crossing project with Watab's recommendation that Omann Brothers not be released from their bond and held responsible for the difference in contract costs. She also suggested getting quotes rather than bids to save dollars and expedite

the project for early spring. The decision will be made by the county board. Clerk Spence offered to be present for their meeting.

3. Design for West Lake Court Improvements: Supervisor Erdmann was reminded to complete the design for a cul de sac by the February meeting. Supervisor Gondeck presented a photo of the current snow pile in the center of the cul de sac.
4. Annual Newsletter: Supervisor Gondeck recommended that the Clerk send letters out to businesses requesting donations. He has submitted articles on Adopt a Highway, Outdoor Warning Siren, Watab Clean Up Day, and the Dry Hydrant System. Supervisor Erdmann will write an article about the railroad crossing projects and two projects for 2014. Supervisor Kacures will do the cover page on the ballot question regarding Fire Districts. Clerk Spence will do the Financial Report, Agenda, Fees for Emergency Services, Access to Highway 10, SWPPP Permit, Refinance of Debt, FEMA Grant for Storm Damage, Snow Plowing Rules, and the Election. All articles should be complete by February 3rd. Lloyd's Contracting and Craig's Bicycle Shop will give donations.
5. Report on Parking Lot Lighting: Supervisor Gondeck reported that all are installed at a cost of \$3,300. There should be quite a cost savings in electrical usage.
6. Revisions to SWPPP Permit: Clerk Spence reported that they were completed on December 28th and submitted to MPCA. The agency will inform us of the date of posting for public input.
7. Tree-Trimming on Lakewood Shores: Supervisor Gondeck had two quotes. Supervisor Erdmann made a motion to table these quotes until Allen Saldana and Brian Erdmann have the opportunity to give a quote, since they made a verbal complaint at the meeting about not being included. This was seconded by Supervisor Kacures, and passed. Supervisor Gondeck will ask them for quotes and submit them for consideration at the February meeting. Supervisor Gondeck will also get a tree agreement signed by each resident where a tree will be trimmed.
8. Report on MS4 violation: no report was received from David Schwinghammer. A question was raised about a complaint on a pit opened by Brian Erdmann. There was discussion about protocol on informing the resident before contacting the inspector.
9. Resolution of Bulding Permit Issues: the town board commended Nancy Scott on her handling of the Ernie Wollak building permit violation. Clerk Spence was asked to contact Nancy to determine if she recommends collecting the extra building permit fee.

New Business:

1. Joint Powers agreement between State of Minnesota and Watab Township: A motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck and seconded by Supervisor Erdmann to allow the chair and clerk to sign the Joint Powers Agreement for the Little Rock Lake Dry Hydrant; motion passed. The Clerk is to apply for the shoreline alteration permits from Benton County.
2. Resolution in Support of Transportation Finance Bill: Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck to adopt the Resolution in Support of a Comprehensive Omnibus Transportation Finance Bill and to allow the chair and clerk to sign the resolution ; motion passed. The Clerk will forward it to the Minnesota Association of Township Office.
3. The 2014 Annual Election and Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 11. At last year's annual meeting the electors unanimously approved a 2014 Ballot Question regarding the establishment of two fire districts in the township. This means that each district would be taxed for the cost of the contract for the service they receive rather than for the cumulative amount. Supervisor Erdmann made a motion for the adoption of Resolution 2014-1: Establishment of Fire Districts, seconded by Supervisor Kacures. Motion passed. This will be voted on by residents at the March 11th election.
4. Board members were asked to help promote the availability of the 2014 MBA Scholarship Program.
5. Project completion was certified for the FEMA grant, and funds were received during December.
6. Local Board of Review for Watab has been set by the County Assessor for Thursday, April 3 at 2:30 p.m. at the town hall.
7. Board Planning Meeting and Budget: will be held on January 20th at 7:00 p.m.
8. Board of Review to audit the township accounts was set for January 28th at 7:00 p.m.
9. Snow Plowing Issues: Supervisors Erdmann and Gondeck reviewed eight mailbox complaints. Another resident complained because of snow bladed across her driveway. There have been many concerns about ice, but with the extremely cold weather, the salt/sand mix doesn't work. Supervisor Gondeck was asked to contact Marson

Contractors to go out and belly blade if it gets warm this weekend. Residents gave positive feedback on the plowing.

10. Benton County Association of Townships meeting will be held at Mr. Jim's in Foley on Thursday, February 20 at 7:30 p.m. The township received a letter of request for donations from Wacosa. Clerk Spence reviewed other communications.
 11. Supervisor Reports: Supervisor Gondeck presented the contract renewal with Wacosa for cleaning the town hall; they are not requesting an increase. A motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to renew the contract.
 12. Supervisor Gondeck presented a \$1,750 grant application for the Adopt a Road program. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Kacures to approve the application and have Supervisor Gondeck sign it and submit it to the county board. Motion passed.
 13. Supervisor Gondeck reported that the Development Board had a good meeting. Governor Dayton has a new program for a no-interest loan for businesses up to \$250,000. The building south of the paper mill was sold to Edmund Trailer Company. There is a lot of development activity.
 14. The board discussed signs that have been damaged: stop sign near Ray Thompson's and the T-intersection sign on West Lake Road. Mark Ebnet gave permission for us to place stop signs on the 911 signs in the future; this will save township funds.
 15. Crack filling: STS Crew could go out in February or March to provide the labor using materials obtained by the county through the state bid. Supervisor Gondeck reported that Langola Township has been well satisfied with their work. A motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Kacures and passed to purchase three pallets of crack fill material at \$1,300 a pallet to do work on the town hall parking lot, Hemlock Road, and 15th Avenue NW.
 16. Citizen's Feedback Issues: Paul Jacobs said that he would like to see a better map posted of Watab that clearly shows the sections of Watab for the fire district vote; this could also be included in the newsletter.
 17. Work plan for January: get quotes for tree trimming on Lakewood Shore; Supervisor Gondeck was given authorization to attend a January meeting in Rice on the rail spur study; Supervisor Erdmann will design the cul de sac for West Lake Court, newsletter articles will be prepared, and other routine work.
 18. The next meeting will be on Monday, February 3, since the 4th is Precinct Caucus night.
- Motion was made to adjourn by Supervisor Kacures and seconded by Supervisor Erdmann; motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence