

Watab Town Board Meeting Minutes: February 3, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of the Watab Town Board was held at the town hall on Tuesday, February 3, 2015. Chair Ed Kacures Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All board members were present: Treasurer Eileen Saldana, Clerk Pat Spence, Supervisor Craig Gondeck, Supervisor Lloyd Erdmann, and Supervisor Ed Kacures Jr. Audience members were: Jerry and Char Lage, Traci Balder, John Olson, Kevin Reiter, Paul Jacobs, Bob Raveling, Allen Saldana, and David and Jodell Kessler.

Following the Pledge to the Flag, Chair Kacures called for approval of the agenda. Supervisor Gondeck requested the following additions: snowplowing private developments, a donation for the Frost Road Quiet Zone, UPM purchase, and the West Lake Road parking issue. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed with the above-named additions. Approval of the minutes of the January 6th, 20th, and 27th meetings was given through a motion by Supervisor Erdmann and second by Supervisor Gondeck; motion passed. Eileen Saldana gave the Treasurer's report with \$400,745.46 balance. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to accept her report. There were no citizens' issues.

Clerk Spence explained the benefits of membership in the Central MN Water Education Alliance and how it helps fulfill the township's education requirements for the MS4 permit. A motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to renew membership in the Central Minnesota Water Education Alliance for 2015; motion passed. Approval to pay the monthly bills and withdraw the necessary funds to pay claims number 5665 through 5681 and electronic transfers for IRS and PERA totaling \$31,602.87 was given through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and motion passed. Clerk Spence informed the board of an invoice sent the township for railroad ties for the Lakewood Shore Crossing. The invoice states that work was done between June and December of 2014. She has inquired about the purpose of the bill since the quiet zone work was completed in 2013, and the township has not requested any further work at that crossing.

The Annual Appraiser's Report was given by Traci Balder from Balder Appraisal Services. She also distributed a written report which is on file at the town hall. During the past two years, she stated that she has physically examined 465 parcels. In 2013, there were sixty-three building permits, including 11 new homes built in Watab. In 2014, there were one hundred and one building permits, including 16 new homes built in Watab. She added that Watab will see increased values for payable 2016 (removing 10% depressed discount). Land will also increase due to sales data. Clerk Spence reported that over six and a half million dollars of construction occurred in Watab in 2014. After Traci's report, she talked about the need for economic development in Watab Township to increase commercial properties and stated that she would like to be part of it. The board thanked her for a very professional report.

Old Business:

1. Annual Newsletter: Supervisor Kacures reported that he has been in communication with the printing company and the newsletter designer. The board approved the agenda for the annual meeting with the addition of a Crack Filling Road Report. Supervisor Gondeck recommended printing the newsletter on cheaper paper to save money.

Supervisor Kacures expressed concern about the professional quality of the newsletter and making it interesting for residents. He will check with the printer on cost comparisons for the two types of paper.

2. Supervisor Erdmann is working on the written annual road report for the annual meeting. It will include work completed in 2014 and proposed work for 2015.
3. Response to David and Jodell Kessler's request for a refund for their plan review: Clerk Spence was asked to read the letter from the Kesslers to the board and the letter of response from Nancy Scott, Building Inspector. After considerable discussion with Mr. and Mrs. Kessler, Supervisor Erdmann made a motion to deny any refund based on the Building Inspector's letter and the Kessler's input; motion was seconded by Supervisor Gondeck, and it passed unanimously. Board members added their support for Nancy as the township building inspector and commented on the large volume of work during 2014 with no other complaints.
4. Frost Road Quiet Zone: There will be a meeting with transportation officials at the crossing on February 18 at 11am. A motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck and seconded by Supervisor Erdmann to solicit bids for the Frost Road crossing after approval is granted by transportation officials. Supervisor Gondeck presented a \$2,000 donation for the Frost Road Crossing project from Bob and Jane Behrendt. The motion passed, which also included grateful acceptance of their generous donation.
5. Seal coating and Crack Filling: Supervisor Gondeck said that Jasmine Loop is too far damaged for crack filling work. Clerk Spence said that an estimate for sealcoating and fog sealing is \$20,000 per mile. 2015 projects that are planned are sealcoating and fog sealing of 15th Avenue NW, Hemlock Road, and 5th Avenue. It was noted that Golf Haven Estates roads also need crack filling. Supervisor Gondeck requested authority to purchase five pallets of crack filling compound; motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to order it from Konrad at the state price.
6. Letter of response from Rice regarding the fire contract: Clerk Spence referred to the copy of the letter, which stated that the city council denied the request to offer a contract without first responder service for medical calls. Supervisor Gondeck said that his personal view is that we have been arguing about a contract for too long; he made a motion to sign the contract and get on with business; Supervisor Erdmann agreed adding that the township has no negotiating power, but that he wants a two-year contract with Rice as the township has with Sauk Rapids. Supervisor Kacures said that he would also like to see a two-year contract. Clerk Spence reviewed information from the township attorney discussing the potential for taking the issues to mediation. Board members stated that no matter what the township requests of the City of Rice, the majority of the council refuses to negotiate. Supervisor Erdmann offered an amendment to Supervisor Gondeck's motion to ask for a two year contract based on the 2013 NTC, as offered in the 2015 contract; the amendment was seconded by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed. The vote on the amended motion passed with Supervisors Gondeck and Erdmann voting in favor and Supervisor Kacures opposed. The clerk was asked to hand deliver the letter of request for a two-year contract to city hall. Supervisor Gondeck feels that the township should be more aggressive in bill collecting and gave an example

of a process that involves the court system and sheriff's department. The Clerk responded that this will significantly increase cost in her time. Jerry Lage asked if we could work more diligently to get bills collected according to Craig's input. Clerk Spence will put a summary of calls each month on the township website and look further into the process outlined by Supervisor Gondeck.

7. Clerk Spence gave an update on the January and February MS4 work plan. The board set February 16th as a date to meet with Wayne Cymbaluk on remaining issues.
8. Clerk Spence was asked to send Traci Balder an email with the illicit discharge article for the newsletter; she offered to assist in identifying problems that she sees while carrying out her work in the township.
9. Resolution on Snow Plowing Developments: Supervisor Gondeck would like the township to introduce a resolution at the Benton County Association of Township meeting that for developments where there are five or more homes paying taxes the township should plow snow in the development. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck to have the Clerk prepare Resolution 2015-3 for the upcoming meeting requesting a change in the law; second by Supervisor Erdmann; and motion passed.
10. Donation of Quiet Zone: Supervisor Gondeck presented a check from Bob and Jane Behrendt for \$2,020 (\$2,000 for the Frost Road Quiet Zone and \$20 for the newsletter). The board voted unanimously to accept the donation and to have the Clerk send a thank you letter to them.
11. UPM purchase: A motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to authorize Allen Saldana to order 10 tons of UPM mix for repairing potholes in the township. Also, a motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Kacures, and passed to have Saldana Excavating and Aggregate continue doing the road repairs as in the past.
12. West Lake Road parking issue: Supervisor Gondeck said that his idea is to put an orange snow fence where the residents are parking illegally. This was tabled until he can meet with Sheriff; he was asked to discuss signage for the location near the bridge.

New Business:

1. Lake Andrew Development has not complied with requests from MPCA for corrections with the wastewater treatment. They will be meeting with Scott Jarnot. The township is copied on the letter between MPCA and Scott Jarnot.
2. Donation Criteria: the board is to accept by resolution donations to the township for specific purposes. As in the past, all donations are committed to the purpose for which they are received and placed in appropriate accounts.
3. Garbage Hauler: Paul Schwinghammer, Watab resident, would like to see the township pursue a single hauler for garbage and would serve on a committee. This was tabled due to strong opposition in the past. If residents wish to have such a program, it should be brought up at the annual meeting.
4. Establishment of Watab Township Economic Development Board: Supervisor Erdmann said that since Benton County has fallen behind, Watab should set up its own non-profit organization and wants to further discuss it at the March board meeting and annual

meeting. Supervisor Gondeck added that Watab needs to ask for changes in the county comprehensive plan.

5. Early Warning Siren #2: Supervisor Gondeck reported that the contractor says cost is increased about thirteen percent since the installation of our first siren. Estimated cost is \$32,695. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Kacures to have Clerk Spence and Supervisor Gondeck work on a budget and grants for the second siren. Motion passed.
6. Backup Generator for the Town Hall: Supervisor Gondeck suggested that we go out with a request for proposals to companies that install generators. He was asked to research this and come back with more information at the next meeting.
7. Resolution 2015-2: Appointment of Election Judges was approved with the addition of Sandy Rau as a substitute judge. The motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed.
8. Approval of the 2015 and 2016 budgets: After review of changes to the budgets, motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to approve the budgets as presented.
9. Levy recommendations for the Annual Meeting were approved through a motion by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed as follows: (1) General Fund: \$90,000; (2) Road and Bridge Fund: \$190,000; (3) Fire District I: \$42,000; (4) Fire District II: \$32,000; (5) Town Hall Debt Service: \$20,000; and (6) Road Project Debt Service: \$56,000 for a total of \$430,000.
10. Central Minnesota Water Education Association minutes and annual report were placed on file.
11. Monthly Communications. The board requested that a letter be sent to the county board members and Monty Headley from our township that the park dedication fee go to park development in the development where it originated.
12. Communications: Geno Beniek sent an email requesting that Sanbur Trail be repaired where there is snowplowing damage. An email was received from Ehlers that they have filed the audited financial stamen of the township with the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board under the requirements for bond issues. The township will be invoiced for this service. Board of Review will be held on April 2nd at 2:30pm at the town hall. Amy McBeth emailed the township a response regarding the proposed crossover by BNSF in the township: "It is one of three in the corridor to help improve efficiency of rail traffic in the area. It should not result in much change in terms of operations or more starting or stopping of trains. The purpose is to improve fluidity."
13. Supervisor Reports: Supervisor Gondeck said that the Greater MN Economic Development Board is looking into providing airline service to the oil fields; it would be provided by Cloud Jet with a nine-passenger plane. The board is getting commitments from businesses. Supervisor Gondeck said that many township businesses are interested. Flight costs would be around \$1,000. He also spoke about the funding and service issues for the St. Cloud Airport
14. February Work Plan: There will be special meetings of the board on the 16th, 18th and 19th.

15. Citizen's Input: Paul Jacobs suggested cutting back on the quality of the newsletter paper; he agreed with the board on the fire contract; he questioned the plowing of the private roads in developments; i.e. who would be responsible for the damage? The board responded that the township doesn't want the final layer of black top applied until all the construction is completed and problems show up before the final wear course. Allen Saldana suggested checking if the town hall septic tank is frozen; if so pump it.

The meeting adjourned at 9:56pm.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence