

## Minutes of Emergency Services Committee on September 19, 2017

Craig Gondeck, Watab Town Board Chairman, call the Emergency Services Committee to order at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 19, 2017 at the Watab Town Hall. Committee members present were Maureen Graber, John Olson, Craig, Lloyd Erdmann, Todd Waytashek, Bob Raveling, Ed Kacures, Jason Krueger, and Pat Spence. Chair Gondeck turned the meeting over to Committee Chairman Todd Waytashek.

The committee was expecting Al Keller, builder of the Princeton Fire Department and owner of Lumber One in St. Cloud, to give a presentation on the costs for that building; but he did not attend.

Information shared includes:

- DNR doesn't share in costs for dry hydrants, but they will contribute up to 50% for connections to irrigation equipment. Craig said that this is popular in Haven Township.
- Todd has contacted a builder of concrete tip-up buildings and will meet with him soon for estimates on a 74 x 76 fire hall with four overhead doors, plumbing system to fill trucks, and office space. Both Lloyd and Todd said they prefer concrete construction if we can afford it.
- Craig met with Jim Fischer, St. Fire Marshall's Office, about grants for starting up departments. Currently, none are available, but that can change.
- Maureen suggested that we get information from Chain of Lakes Architect on the cost breakdown for their building. Todd will call on this.
- John Olson said that a 74 x 76-foot building has 5,624 square feet. At \$40/square foot for a steel building, the cost would be \$225,000. At \$115/square foot for a concrete building, the cost would be \$646,760.
- Lloyd explained how we could have a storm shelter in either type of building.
- Pat asked how the committee feels about constructing a Green Building; discussion ensued on rebates/grants/costs. Lloyd will check with a geothermal contractor for more information.
- Craig met with the Foley Fire Chief. He knew of a recent purchase of a used, certified fire truck for \$5,000. He says there will be no problem getting good, used equipment at reasonable prices. Doug Harden also has contacts through DNR for equipment. Todd said that Watab can also look at used military equipment.
- Craig brought up consideration for recruiting a Fire Chief. Most committee members agreed that we aren't ready for that yet.

The committee will put together a newsletter to go out to residents by the first week of November. It will include:

- Background on why the committee has been studying alternative delivery of emergency services: the WHY?
- A summary of the committee's study results

- Three alternatives for a fire hall: good, better, and best.
- Current & projected costs for maintaining the status quo with Rice and Sauk Rapids contracts versus owning our own department

Other discussion was:

- Lloyd emphasized that the first few years will be more expensive, but eventually the cost will even out (after the bonds are paid for the building). He also said that he favors having control over the township's destiny. John said that we know that costs won't go down with the current contracts, and we will continue to have a high amount of unpaid calls.
- Jason talked about how to approach the voters through the newsletter and the meeting and advocated for graphs that show projected costs and will get the voters' support.
- Craig was reminded to check with Kevin Johnson on potential for used concrete panels from DelWin Ballroom.
- Lloyd recommended the township be the General Contractor for construction; he will check on someone who might provide oversight. It would save 10 to 15% in cost.
- Craig will check again with Al Keller on building plans and costs for Princeton Fire Department.
- Pat and Maureen will work on a draft for the newsletter. They will need firmer building and equipment estimates from Todd. Pat will check on the tax base for Chain of Lakes Department service area. Include the potential interest of the Sheriff and Gold Cross in space in Watab's Fire Hall. List all benefits.
- The committee discussed distribution of the newsletter. Should it be sent to taxpayers or all residents.

The next committee meeting will be on October 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence