

**Minutes of the Watab Township Annual Meeting
March 11, 2008**

The Annual Meeting of Watab Township was called to order at 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 11, 2008 at the Watab Town Hall by Clerk Pat Spence. The following residents were present: John Saldana, Jr., Don Landwehr, Craig Gondeck, Lloyd Erdmann, Sandy Rajkowski, Paul and Shelly Jacobs, Jeff Hanson, Mark Hanson, Ron Hommerding, Cheryl Motl, Ken Motl, Geno Beniek, Barb Beniek, Jana Gondeck, George Mastey, Taunya Mastey, John Olson, Jeanine Kern, Cliff Weitgenant, Jerry Post, Phyllis Post, Rosie Johnson, Duane Johnson, Bob Erickson, Ralph & Marion Berger, Walter Jansen, Earl Harden, Bruce Christofferson, Ed Kacures, Lloyd Hammerel, Rita Hammerel, Donald Hammerel, JoAnn Baumgart, Ben Dockendorf, Joan Spiczka, Gail Kiekow, Harvey Kiekow, Jake Robak, Douglas J. Boser, Allen Saldana, Sandra Saldana, Lori Schlien, Allen Schlien, Jerry Kostreba, Rob Jacobs, Paul Schwinghammer, Craig Gondeck, Earl Tuttle, Maureen Graber, Donna Rothstein, Renee Zeleny, Brian Schoenherr, Delroy Rothstein, Brittany Molski, Duane Popp, Joyce Saldana, Victor Saldana, and Pat Spence. (Two signatures were illegible).

Following the Pledge to the Flag, the Clerk called for nominations for a Moderator. Ed Kacures and Don Landwehr were nominated. Ed Kacures was elected on a show of hands. Ed Kacures presided at the meeting. He noted that additions could be made to the agenda. Craig Gondeck said that Nancy Scott cannot be present because of a death in the family; he requested that Maureen Graber report on MS4 in place of the building inspector report. The minutes of the 2007 annual meeting were approved as written on a motion by Lloyd Hammerl and second by Rosie Johnson. The Clerk gave the financial report for the year. Geno Beniek asked for clarification of the Reker escrow account; the Clerk stated that placing \$5,000 in escrow is a new requirement for developments to cover township expenses related to the development. Supervisor Lloyd Erdmann thanked Pat Spence and Eileen Saldana for carefully investing the township funds. Clerk Spence stated that Ken Schulte of Edward Jones has been helpful with our investments.

Bob Erickson gave the road report for the past year. Major work that will need to be done in the future are Hanson Road—east of Seekers going from County Road 4 through Hanson's property to 85th Street and 5th Avenue. The frontage road will benefit the township and the property owners and will be paid for by the State of MN. Eventually the state wants it to extend to County Road 13, where there would be a new interchange. Then, there would be a new service road to replace Indian Road. This could be twenty to thirty years in the future. What we need to do is get a plan from county road 4 to county road 13 before we proceed. The state has allocated \$325,000 for the project. The new road will open up development for the township, so Bob feels it is a win-win for the township. A question was asked about who it will benefit. The state wants to close accesses for safety getting onto the highway. This road will help cut off the traffic coming onto Hwy 10. Supervisor Gondeck said that the developer would cover all the costs not paid by the state. Supervisor Erdmann added that once the frontage road is in place, you don't have future relocation costs if there are buildings that need to be removed. In the spring, the board goes out and checks all the roads to see what needs to be done. Fifth Avenue will need to be done in the future, so funds are being set aside for bigger projects. If you want any road work done, Bob indicated that citizens should contact the Supervisors. A question was asked about any improvements planned for shoulders or bike paths for safety for walkers or bikers. None are currently planned but can be requested.

The next item of business was to set the levy for taxes payable in 2009. The Clerk displayed the 2007 year-end balances and the projected budget set by the board for 2008 income and expenses to set the framework for the discussion on the town levy. The board recommended \$20,000 for the Revenue Fund. A motion was made by Craig Gondeck, seconded by Paul Schwinghammer and passed unanimously to set the Revenue levy at \$20,000. The board recommended \$145,000 for the Road and Bridge Fund. After some discussion about the need to build a healthy fund for future projects and the increased cost of building materials, a motion was made by Maureen Graber, seconded by Doug Boser and passed setting the Road and Bridge levy at \$200,000. The board recommended \$75,000 for the Fire Fund. A motion was made by Rosie Johnson, seconded by Maureen Graber and passed setting the Fire Fund levy at \$75,000. The board recommended \$25,000 for the Building Fund. A motion was made by Jerry Kostreba, seconded by Geno Beniek and passed setting the Building Fund levy at \$25,000.

Bruce Christofferson, President of Little Rock Lake Association, gave a report and request for a donation of \$2,000 for the effort to clean the lake. Through private donations and grants, the lake association clean up fund is at \$8,012. The \$8,000 was not spent yet because DNR did a spot check and cancelled the treatment last summer; then the algae problem hit. DNR identified on the north end of the lake that there wasn't the necessary amount of curly leaf pond weed to spray 57 acres. Geno Beniek asked if that might happen again. Bruce said that it will depend on weather conditions. Paul Schwinghammer asked what the landowners are doing around the lake to reduce pollutants going into

the lake. Bruce said that they promoted no-phosphate fertilizer on lawns; educating landowners on not mowing to the lakeshore; and that DNR issues individual permits for spraying the curly leaf pond weed. He asked if any of the funds would be used for education. Bruce said it would be used totally for spraying. Their general fund goes for education. They work with the 4th graders at Rice Elementary School on an education project and the students create t-shirt designs. The lake association has also passed out books on checking and maintaining septic systems. Phyllis Post also added that their website has educational information. Jerry Kostreba asked if there is a study on the watershed. The Total Maximum Daily Load study should show where the pollutants are entering the watershed. Paul Schwinghammer said that because we are an MS4, the township has to help educate citizens on water protection. Maureen Graber made the motion to donate \$2,000 to the Little Rock Lake Association, seconded by Cliff Weitgenant, and the motion passed.

Watab Township Website Report was given by the website designer, Joan Spiczka. She reported that there 22,091 hits to our website and 9,468 page views. People stated that Joan does a great job. Geno Beniek would like to see the total number of eligible voters in the township and the number of people voting. www.watabtownship.com is the address for Watab's website and it is linked to the county website and others. Maureen Graber told Joan Spiczka that we will be adding MS4 to the website. She reported that this past year we hired SEH for software to monitor complaints on storm water runoff. The township is under a permit and within six months there will be an ordinance passed to enforce the permit.

Traci Balder gave the Assessor's Report. She will come to everyone's property within five years or when a building permit is pulled. If you have a fire or anything that damages your house, you should contact the county to have the value changed on your property. Her handout information will be included on the township website.

Supervisor Gondeck gave a report on the past year. A plat manual was approved, developer agreement was signed with Paradise, MS4 work by Paul, Maureen and Brad; History Day honored the Plaziak family who gave significant funds to keep history day going; citizens should think of donating historical items for our history room; the town board adopted a citizen complaint form; the board is looking into creating a data base on septic systems and funding to do it; Craig thanked Jason Fleming, Sauk Rapids Fire Department, for the inspections he makes in the township; he thanked the firemen from both Rice and Sauk Rapids departments for their work; Watab Clean Up Day—150 people came through and we secured funding for another clean up day in September; thanked Joan Spiczka for her work on website; Traci Balder; Bob Erickson road consultant for his work on the road policy; every road in Watab Township will have its own file with work updates; thanked George Mastey for snowplowing; Nancy Scott building inspector. All are part of the Watab Township team and he invited a round of applause. He thanked everyone for their interest in Watab Township.

Citizen advice was requested on the proposed zoning change for a used car lot on property owned by Martin Golembeski. Bob Erickson said that the highway department plans a future interchange at this intersection and Pirates Cove has already had to leave their corner vacant; so this owner may have to leave their corner vacant. Lori Schlien lives on Jasmine Loop and is opposed to the rezoning. Don Landwehr asked if the chair could ask if anyone is interested in speaking in favor of the used car lot. Rand Schaper, 8605 River Road, spoke in favor of the lot, because it's on Hwy 10. Strictly from a planning view, he thinks that one day everything on Highway 10 will be commercial. Don Landwehr made a motion to oppose the proposed changes; seconded by Craig Gondeck; the motion passed with two opposed.

There was discussion on future zoning and planning and parks: Lloyd Erdmann stated that on some issues, Benton County takes action that does not follow the wishes of the board or citizens. Watab could start its own Planning and Zoning Department. He asked if others thought that this would be beneficial. Currently, there is a park dedication fee of \$600 per lot in a new development. Watab Township has no input on how the money is spent; the decision is made by the county. Maureen Graber asked how the county decides the money is spent. Jerry Kostreba asked about the choice of the developer to build a park or donate the \$600; Lloyd said that the county always chooses the money. Barb Beniek said that the citizens would need more information before giving their input. She recommended that we talk to other townships and cities to get cost benefits. Paul Schwinghammer said that there is a lot of liability with owning small parks.

Clerk Pat Spence reported the preliminary election results. Ed Kacures, Jr. received 126 votes for a three-year term as Supervisor; Brad McIntosh, incumbent, received 54 votes; for a two-year term as Town Clerk, Pat Spence received 161 votes; write-ins were for George Bush-1; Hilary Clinton- 1; and Bill Clinton – 1. The Electors preferred the Sauk Rapids Herald as the official newspaper, and they also preferred the same posting places: Channel 3, the township website and the town hall posting board. The next annual meeting and election was scheduled for the same hours used in 2008 on the second Tuesday in March 2009.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence