

Minutes of Watab Town Board Special Meeting April 12, 2007

A special meeting of Watab Town Board was called to order at 8:10am on Thursday, April 12, 2007 by Chair Craig Gondeck. The meeting was called on April 3rd to deal with two agenda items: town hall demolition and MS4. Board members present were Chair Gondeck, Supervisor Lloyd Erdmann, and Clerk Pat Spence. Audience members present were: Brian Erdmann, Bob Erickson, George Mastey, Ron Hommerding, Gerald Hovde, Paul Ripplinger, and Rick Buss. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the board dealt with the two items of business:

1. **Contract with MTD Excavating on town hall demolition:** Ron Hommerding said that he now has George Mastey's insurance certificate and other necessary information, and everything is now in order. Ron will verify the procedures with the asbestos inspector. He recommends if there is asbestos involved that we get quotes on the asbestos removal. George Mastey said that the inspector will have all building materials in the old town hall tested. Vermiculite was found yesterday during the inspection, and it needs to be taken care of in the same manner as asbestos. George said that his letter from Ron Hommerding said that he was to arrange for the asbestos abatement with a contractor, and he has done that. We won't know the exact cost until the reports are back from the testing company. The Chair asked George why it took so long to get this done when Supervisor Erdmann was appointed to work with him five weeks ago. He said that he was unaware of an exact timetable. Bob Erickson asked how we will address the cost. Ron said that he will review the costs and award the contract. Ron will get the quotes. He said that his letter to George should not have said that George should arrange for the abatement contractor. Ron will call the contractor whom George has arranged and ask him to send the quote to him after the inspection report is returned. Paul Ripplinger asked if someone could document a procedure for George to make the process clearer.
2. **MS4 Ordinance:** We are required by MPCA to administer our own storm water runoff in the township. The county is required to administer storm water runoff for their properties (county roads and facilities). Paul Schwinghammer said that MPCA says any ditch is a storm water conveyance. Local municipalities can be the most restrictive entity. Stearns County has four people that go out and do inspections. Chair Gondeck stated that Chelle Benson told those present at the township officer's meeting that Benton County Highway Department is in charge of MS4 for the county. There is confusion because Brad McIntosh had a tour with someone from Chelle's office who has some authority, and they reported violations to the MPCA. Chair Gondeck made it clear that our supervisor went on this tour without board authority; he also stated that he believes that it is in the best interest of the township to work with developers. If we see a violation, we should contact them first and give them an opportunity to rectify the problem. Supervisor Erdmann and Paul Schwinghammer agreed. Gerald Hovde feels the township

and county could hold the public hearing together and co-sponsor educational efforts for contractors. One agency could handle the permits so there wouldn't be duplication. We have to establish a complaint line where people can call in their complaints and then there is township follow up. The county uses a poster with a 1-800 number. Lloyd sees a problem with Planning and Zoning getting involved. MPDES permits are also required by contractors. Paul said that the simplest thing to do is ask the contractor for their paperwork. If they have the proper paperwork, they are doing the inspections and you don't need to be out walking around.

Paul recommends that the county look at the documentation on the inspections and review the plats for proper drainage. He clarified that the Wetland Conversation Act deals with wetlands and drainage. MPDES deals with developments, which is a permitting process. There is no permit for MS4 for new developments. The county will do semi-annual inspections. MPDES inspections have to be done constantly. Paul said there should be a cooperative effort with the county because they have the staff. The State of MN issues MPDES permits and Watab needs to review the reports.

A licensed engineer is required to review plans for drainage. If we write an ordinance, it needs to specify that. The township would need to hire a township engineer to review the grades and drainage. Bob Erickson recommends a chain of authority developed through a round table discussion. Larger cities have at least one full-time person and then they job out. The question is what the township should do. The township could job out our plan to another jurisdiction. We don't need to do it ourselves. Paul likes what Sartell is doing and suggested we might piggy back on what they are doing.

Paul suggested that if anyone wants to be educated, they should go to the MPCA website and read the SWIP's from other jurisdictions. It will show who is responsible for what. We will need to educate contractors to do the right thing rather than using the approach of giving tickets.

Paul welcomes the idea to be part of the discussions so that we can streamline our process. He said that audits will start by MPCA to see that MS4 plans are being enforced. They'll want to see our ordinances and documentation.

Lloyd said that we need to safeguard the taxpayers' dollars so that the county and township are not duplicating efforts. He repeated that the Town of Watab is required to have a plan and ordinances in place. Chair Gondeck said that he favors contracting out the work at this time rather than hiring staff. Brian Erdmann reminded the board that the township is responsible for the storm water run off from the township roads and right of ways.

The special meeting adjourned at 10:05am.