

**WATAB TOWN BOARD MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 4, 2012**

The regular monthly meeting of the Watab Township Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Ed Kacures Jr. All board members were present. Audience members present were: Wendy Erdmann, Jon Bogart, Paul Jacobs, Maureen Graber, Kevin Reiter, Kevin Foster, Allen Saldana, and Mike Puhalla.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was said by all. Announcements were made by Supervisor Gondeck: 1) deepest sympathy to the family of Pat Ogg, who was killed in a motorcycle accident; 2) thoughts and prayers to all the veterans coming home with Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome; 3) get well wishes to Rosie Johnson; and 4) concerns for all the former Verso employees who are without jobs as we celebrate Labor Day weekend.

Approval of the agenda for the meeting as written was made through motion by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed. Minutes of the August meeting were approved as written through a motion by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed. The Treasurer's Report was given by Treasurer Eileen Saldana with the July 31 checking account balances. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Kacures, and passed for approval of her report. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to pay monthly claims as presented for claims #4913 through 4939 and electronic checking transfers for IRS, PERA, and MN Department of Revenue. Claims totaled \$48,630.99.

Old Business included:

1. Quiet Zones for Railroad Crossings: Jon Bogart, Town Engineer, reported that he is still trying to coordinate between the county and township for the County Road 79 crossing. The county attorney is drafting a new agreement, which was to have been ready for this meeting. It is scheduled to be presented to the county board at the September 14 meeting. Jon is also waiting for an estimate of costs for widening the railroad ties from BNSF. The board reviewed the letter received from BNSF during the past week. Jon will assist the Clerk in preparing a response as soon as possible.
2. Bid Opening for Lakewood Shore RD NW improvements and quiet zone: three bids were opened at 7:30 p.m. They were from Knife River Corporation at \$154,680.40; Rice Contracting and Development Services at \$193,650.55; and Hardrives, Inc. at \$169,765.76. Jon will review the bid documents for accuracy and the contract will be awarded to Knife River, the low bidder, as soon as all official agreements are made with BNSF. When all issues are settled, a special meeting of the board will be called with Knife River representatives to sign a contract.
3. Summer Road Work: it is 98% complete. The township is waiting for the West Lake Road speed study final approval before installation is made of speed limit signs. This is at the recommendation of MNDOT. A response should come within three weeks. Supervisor Gondeck has installed all needed signs except on Fifth Avenue, where some have been stolen. He reported that there is a new issue with Tretter Contracting filling a wetland across from the Zwilling mill on Fifth Avenue. He was asked to contact the county engineer, director of the department of development, and David Schwinghammer, the township MS4 administrator to remedy the situation. Supervisor Gondeck also spoke about his accident while installing a street sign on 15th Avenue NW. He received a head laceration and needed treatment at the emergency room. All paperwork has been filed. Supervisor Erdmann reported on the sink hole on the 85th Street project. There was rotten wood buried in at least ninety feet of the road, which was unexpected. He calculated the additional materials needed, and this was added to the lump sum bid. Supervisor Gondeck showed photos of the buried material. There have been many positive comments on the road project, which was done by Rice Contracting and Development Services. Supervisor Gondeck reported that the oil spill by ASTECH on Roseanna Beach Road has been cleaned up at their expense. The board also discussed the need for a buffer strip on the road right of way in Shangri La Loop; this is a recommendation of David Schwinghammer. Supervisor Gondeck will talk to the residents.

Supervisor Gondeck also reported road damage at 9425 Lakewood Shore Rd NW where water pools at a low spot. Lake Andrew signage is still not installed.

4. Clerk Pat Spence gave a report on the Primary Election held at the town hall on August 14. Of 1889 registered voters at the beginning of Election Day only 102 people voted. There were five new registered voters. Cost for the election was \$1,665.64. She expressed great concern about the cost of elections if the Voter ID Amendment passes. There will be many additional processes needed for the provisional balloting that would result and many unanswered questions about how the military personnel and absentee voters would show their photo identification. An audience member noted that everyone has a social security card they could show. This amendment, if passed, would require photo identification; so a social security card would not work. The Clerk stated that current voter fraud in Minnesota has been small and has resulted from felons voting who have not cleared their record. Photo identification would not prevent them from voting.
5. Supervisor Gondeck reported on the township weed tour with Ron Janson. Ron complimented the town board on the two cuttings of the road ditches and work on weed control over the past years. Supervisor Gondeck will treat the few weeds that were located. Tree trimming is needed on several town roads. Jason Zwilling will do the work at \$125 per hour for labor and equipment. Motion was made by Supervisor Kacures, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck to hire Jason Zwilling to complete the trimming at the above rate within 8 hours. Motion passed. Clerk Spence is to prepare a flyer for the residents notifying them when the work will be completed. Jason is to dispose of the wood.
6. Report on Siren Grant: Supervisor Gondeck reported that the grant request was not funded. He asked for permission to apply for a grant for one siren from AgStar Financial and Benton Telecommunications Foundation. The board asked him to research what would be required for the township matech.
7. The board reviewed a letter from the Department of Development related to the Teschke property/building permit request.

New Business included:

1. Watab Clean Up Day is scheduled for September 22. It is advertised on Channel 3, the township website, and postings. Supervisor Gondeck requested and was given permission to purchase safety vests for the workers.
2. Indigo Road: Clerk Spence described her research on the status of the road due to the request from the new owner of property north of Norway Pines Estate. Chair Kacures asked for further research on the road vacation document by the Clerk. Supervisor Erdmann was asked to check the placement of the irons on the property. Clerk Spence was also asked to check on removal of the abandoned vehicle on the township road.
3. The District 8 Meeting and Election is Tuesday, September 25th at the Little Falls Ballroom. Board members were asked to notify the Clerk by September 18th if they plan to attend. The Benton County Association of Township Officers' Meeting will be Thursday, September 20th at 7:30 p.m. in Foley. Several board members plan to attend.
4. Monthly Communications: 1) The board is invited to attend the first annual Little Rock Lake Water Quality Meeting on Friday evening; 2) The Office of the State Auditor has issued a statement of position on contract change orders and contractor's bonds. The Clerk reviewed the recommendations; report is on file in Clerk's Office; 3) Century Link notified the township that they will install cable in the road right of way at 980 Isaac Road NW.
5. Supervisor Gondeck asked to install a pedestrian sign on Rose Anna Beach Road; the township has the needed sign and post. Approval was given by the board. He said that the Clerk has suggested purchasing a new township road map for the purpose of preparing a new five-year road plan. Approval was given him to purchase a new township and county road map for a maximum cost of \$230 through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck and second by Supervisor Kacures; motion passed. Phil Saldana has adopted a

township road for clean up. Supervisor Gondeck expressed concern that our township is not represented on the Area Planning Organization (APO). Our road concerns with the new interchange coming in Rice need a venue for action. Supervisor Kacures asked the Clerk to research what is necessary for the township to join the APO. Supervisor Gondeck updated the board on the Sandy Shores shoreline development issue and action taken by the county department of development and DNR.

6. Allen Saldana reported to the board on the 95th Street drainage issue near Eileen and Phil Saldana's homes. He would be able to install a small shoulder between the road edge and gas main, so the water has a small area for run off. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck and seconded by Supervisor Kacures for Allen Saldana to complete the project at a cost of \$300 or less. Motion passed.
7. Supervisors gave the following reports:
 - a. Supervisor Gondeck said that the Benton County Economic Development Board is supportive of maintaining the department and full-time staff. County Commissioner Joe Wollak is opposed. The status of the county board's decision on this matter is not known at the time of this meeting.
 - b. Clerk Spence reported on the Rice City Council meeting that she attended. Scott Janski presented the preliminary fire department budget and a request to purchase a new fire truck at a cost of \$526,000. The City Clerk stated that it would be funded through \$211,000 from the city's Capitol Outlay Budget, \$250,000 from a low interest loan from East Central Electric, a \$25,000 grant, and \$40,000 in excess funds from various city accounts. The City levy would not be increased to purchase the new truck. Mayor Fiedler recommended that the City dedicate funds from the new township fire contracts for equipment replacement at \$80,000 per year. The City Council did not discuss the proposed contract with Watab. Clerk Spence noted that the Mayor had told this board there would be a response to us by the end of August; not response has yet been received.
 - c. Bend in the River Regional Park meeting: Clerk Spence attended this meeting at Supervisor Gondeck's request. Westwood Professional Services has been contracted by Benton County to design and apply for a grant for trail and other improvements. There was discussion about parking, improved overlooks, and whether the roads and parking areas should be paved. The park commission recommended some central parking adjacent to the overlooks of the river and that parking and trails should be gravel. There will be another meeting on September 11th. Clerk Spence noted that it may be helpful if the township offers some of our park dedication funds for the match that will be needed with the grant application.
 - d. Supervisor Erdmann reported that he has all the easement documents signed by the property owners for the Lakewood Shore improvements. They were all notarized by the Clerk and recorded at the County Recorder's Office.
 - e. Supervisor Gondeck asked about the status of doing another annual township newsletter. He would like to start soliciting donations for sponsors.
8. September Work Plan: In addition to the work that was assigned during the meeting, the board will attend the county and district meetings, the Clerk will assign unpaid fire call billings to Collection Resources, and Supervisor Gondeck will review the town roads with Jeff Hanson in preparation for snow plowing.
9. Citizen Concerns: Kevin Reiter said that snow plowing will be very difficult from Oak Court to the minimum maintenance road since the road surface is very broken for approximate ¼ mile. Chair Kacures asked the board members to review this area during the coming month. Supervisor Erdmann said that the road was black topped in the 1970's. Kevin also asked about some ditch mowing and weed killing that was done by the electric company.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 p.m. by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Kacures, and passed.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence