

Watab Town Board Meeting Minutes of September 2, 2014

The regular monthly meeting of the Watab Town Board was held on Tuesday, September 2, 2014 at the Watab Town Hall. Chairman Ed Kacures Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All board members were present: Treasurer Eileen Saldana; Clerk Pat Spence; and two other Supervisors: Lloyd Erdmann and Craig Gondeck. Audience members were: Steve Laakso, Cindy and Dave Hiedeman, Lori Stellmach, Jason Krueger, John Baune, and Bob Raveling. Following the Pledge to the Flag, the agenda was approved with the addition of a potential grant for the newsletter. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, seconded by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to approve the agenda with the noted addition. Minutes were approved for the August meeting with the correction of a typographical error; motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed. Eileen Saldana gave the Treasurer's Report with a cash balance of \$369,826.29; motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Kacures and passed to accept her report.

The Board Chair invited citizen's input to the board: Cindy Hiedeman expressed that she was here with a group of people to address trains. They have concerns about the number of trains, crossing arms down with no trains in sight, longer and louder whistles, and greatly increased starting and stopping of the trains. Many cars are stacked on Benton Drive for the turn onto River Road, and it's becoming a large safety hazard. Supervisor Kacures talked about how much the board learned dealing with the railroad. The average number of trains through the township daily is sixty, and the railroad says that it will only become higher if the Keystone Pipeline is not approved. Supervisor Erdmann talked about the trains stopping due to the large amount of work going on the tracks south of St. Cloud. There is one section of tracks south of St. Cloud that has only one line of tracks, while we have two going through this area so some of the southbound trains have to stop. Lori Stellmach and Steve Laakso said these are quality of life issues for the residents with the train horns being a large problem. Supervisor Erdmann explained what is causing the crossing arms to stick. Lori asked if other crossings are in the works to become quiet zones, especially in the southern part of the township. Supervisor Kacures encouraged them to stay for the report by Jon Bogart on future railroad crossing work. Supervisor Gondeck said that that to make a Quiet Zone at Benton Drive and River Road is estimated at a cost of \$250,000, and it is on a county road. Supervisor Erdmann explained why the costs are so high. Supervisor Erdmann encouraged the concerned citizens to contact Benton County. A question was asked about how the board chose the first two projects. Supervisor Erdmann explained that the first two were in dense population areas; Supervisor Kacures noted that the Lakewood Shore Road crossing was narrow, deteriorated, and the most in need of work; the County Road 79 crossing was in good condition, so making it a quiet zone was the most inexpensive. Supervisor Kacures encouraged those present to come to the Annual Meeting to help raise more funds to do the projects. A motion was made by Supervisor Kacures, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed for the Clerk to send a letter to the railroad and copied to the Transportation Committee at the Legislature, the Benton County Board, and Chris Byrd telling them all the issues that were expressed tonight. Jason Krueger also spoke in favor of the letter and expressed his support for moving forward. Supervisor Erdmann commented

that the board is seeking personal donations for making the Quiet Zones and that it would help to have pledges for the other crossings.

Authorization to pay the monthly bills and withdraw the necessary funds was made through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to pay claims # 5507 through 5540 and electronic transfers for IRS and MN Department of Revenue totaling \$14,127.59.

Old Business included:

A. Report on Future Railroad Crossings by Jon Bogart, Town Engineer: Jon gave preliminary cost estimates and drawings for improvements to the following crossings:

1. Frost Road: \$65,413
2. 95th Street NW: \$161, 413 (could be \$10,000 less with some changes)
3. 105th Street: \$103,286

If the projects on 95th and 105th are done together, materials can be shared and some money could be saved. Costs for the wider planks are not included in these estimates; Clerk Spence noted that the planks for Lakewood Shore Rd NW cost about \$28,000. Jon estimates we would need four planks for the projects; \$28,000 was the cost for eight planks. Supervisor Kacures questioned if 12 feet would be too narrow for the crossings on 95th and 105th because of the large vehicles that use the crossings.

Supervisor Erdmann asked if Jon had looked at using rubber curbs and plastic pylons, which could greatly reduce costs; Jon will inquire if the railroad approves of this material. He said that curb and gutter is a significant cost of \$6-7,000. The next step is to decide on how the board wants to move forward. Supervisor Kacures expressed that the board should move forward with the next steps in planning. Supervisor Gondeck suggested traffic counts on all three roads; Supervisor Erdmann said that all the traffic counts are on the web. Supervisor Kacures said that we should be looking mainly at safety concerns. Clerk Spence spoke in favor of completing the final design for the three projects, which is \$12,380, and then working on the budget planning to stage the projects. Supervisor Kacures made a motion to go through the final design phase as noted by the engineer; Clerk Spence said that this will be well within the \$25,000 budgeted for this year's engineering costs for the railroad crossings. The second was made by Supervisor Gondeck; Supervisor Erdmann made a suggestion about other changes to the Frost Road design; motion passed.

B. One quote for a two-year snow plowing contract was received by the August 27th deadline from Marson, Inc. Burski Excavating submitted a quote two days later for a higher amount. Supervisor Erdmann made a motion to accept Marson, Inc.'s lump sum quote of \$38,800 to do all township roads or \$36,728, excluding the roads that have not been accepted in the developments, according to the contract specifications for 2014 through 2016; second was by Supervisor Gondeck; and the motion passed. Clerk Spence was asked to send a letter to Marsons acknowledging the award of the contract and a letter to the developers telling them what their costs will be for snow plowing in their developments. Supervisor Kacures said that the board will be holding the contractor to the contract language details.

C. Awarding of Sucker Creek: Rice Contracting & Development Services submitted a quote for \$6,700. Supervisor Kacures suggested waiting to rebid it for spring work to see if we

could get a lower price. Supervisor Erdmann said that he would need to abstain because the quote is from his brother's company. Supervisor Kacures made a motion to table until winter. Supervisor Gondeck said that he believed the board should be moving ahead.

- D. West Lake Road Frost Heave Repair: Supervisor Erdmann again expressed that he would have to abstain, but he believed that the cost of the quote is in line with what needs to be done; the quote is for \$14,797.50. Supervisor Gondeck made a motion to proceed; second by Supervisor Kacures; and motion passed with Supervisor Erdmann abstaining. Clerk Spence is to contact Brian Erdmann to let him know to proceed.
- E. Crack Filling: Supervisor Gondeck reported that the north section of 15th Avenue will begin next week and all roads will be completed this fall, since he was able to get additional crack filling compound through the county. Hemlock Road and Fifth Avenue will also be completed. Supervisor Kacures said that he had read that Stearns County was going to eliminate the STS Crew; Clerk Spence presented the draft of a letter to send to Benton County thanking them for the STS program. The board approved the letter, and it was signed by the board chair.
- F. Dry Hydrant System: Supervisor Gondeck talked with Prom Excavating; he says the excavating companies are not seeking additional work at this time and recommends revising the plans to make them simpler. The project can be rebid this winter for the projects to begin in early spring. The DNR permits are good through 2015.
- G. Primary Election Report: Clerk Spence reported that there was only a 10% voter turnout in Watab. Everything went smoothly with the judges doing an excellent job; it is good training for the General Election in November.
- H. MS4 workshop: October 9th workshop at Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District; send registrations at this time for Supervisor Gondeck and Clerk Spence; Supervisors Erdmann and Kacures will decide later if they can attend.
- I. MS4 paperwork and process: Clerk Spence reported that Land Disturbance Permits are not always applied for prior to receiving a Building Permit; she was asked to send a letter to Nancy Scott emphasizing that no building permits are to be issued without the appropriate Land Disturbance Permits in place.
- J. Town Hall Maintenance Reports: board members reported on work completed during the past month. Supervisor Gondeck removed the rust from the sidewalk and pulled the tree on the north side of building; Clerk Spence cleaned the carpet. Supervisor Gondeck recommended replacing the landscape rock near the flagpole since it is very rust stained; he volunteer to remove and replace the rock. He also reported that mulch has been spread on the trail by the storm water pond; he recommended putting out a small sign to pick up left-over mulch free of charge.

New Business:

- A. The board set a special meeting for September 22 at 7:00 to work on the Storm Water Ordinance.
- B. SWPPP construction site inspections: Supervisor Gondeck reported that they are going well; all seven construction sites are in compliance.
- C. Supervisor Gondeck spoke about the interest in Watab Township Clean Up Day. The board authorized the chair to sign the contract with Central Appliance Recyclers.

Supervisor Kacures recommended that there be more signage. Clerk Spence recommended using the STS Crew to help with some of the clean up next year if they are available.

- D. Benton County Auditor's Office has requested the 2015 levy be certified by September 15th. Motion by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Kacures, to certify the levy as presented by the Clerk and established by the electors at the Annual Meeting; motion passed. (General Fund: \$80,000; Road and Bridge Fund: \$170,000; Fire District 1: \$40,000; Fire District 2: \$32,000; Building Fund: \$22,000; and Debt Service for Road Projects: \$56,000 for a total of \$400,000).
- E. Road Certification Report was approved as presented through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Kacures, and passed. Clerk Spence thanked the board members for their assistance in reviewing the past records. The Clerk was asked to send the list to Benton County with a letter of explanation.
- F. Clerk Spence said that an issue had arisen during the past month that requires clarification of the Road Right of Way Ordinance. The Clerk was asked to draft a resolution for next month's meeting stating the circumstances that would require a permit. Supervisors Kacures and Gondeck stated that nothing should be placed in the road right of way. The issue was tabled until next month.
- G. 80th Street washout: Supervisor Gondeck showed the board photographs of the washout and was asked to work with Saldana Excavating on a remedy.
- H. Hwy 10 Update: Supervisor Gondeck reported that MNDOT is doing a gap study on the section of Highway 10 between Rice and St. Cloud.
- I. Grant for newsletter: Supervisor Gondeck reported that since the township has an article about Clean Up Day in the newsletter, the township could apply for a SCORE Grant to help defray the cost of the newsletter; the board approved for him to go ahead with the application. Supervisor Gondeck said that he will donate his time for this and for work on the newsletter, and he asked others to also do this.
- J. The Supervisors reviewed photos taken by Supervisor Gondeck during the past month. A photo of junk that he picked up this month along a township road fostered discussion about seeking additional funding in the Adopt a Highway grant to cover having a township dumpster at one of the Supervisor's properties. This will be discussed further at a future meeting. The Supervisors also discussed signs that need adjustments or brush cleared for better visibility.
- K. Monthly Correspondence: weed inspections need to be done this month; bridge inspection report was received from Benton County; and on Wednesday, September 10th at 2pm there will be a meeting for clerks and head judges on the elections.
- L. Board Member Reports: there was not a development board meeting this month; Supervisor Gondeck is working with some potential companies to locate in Watab.
- M. Donations for silent zones: \$3,000 was recently received from the Cove Development Company; there is a request for additional donations on the township website; Supervisor Erdmann will be collecting the donations that were pledged before the project began.
- N. Water Softener: there were two service calls during the past month, and the softener has used several bags of salt during the sprinkling season. The township needs to get a

rain gauge indicator for the sprinkler system. Supervisor Gondeck made a motion to contract with Land Concepts to blow out the sprinkler lines this fall; second by Supervisor Kacures; and motion passed.

- O. There has been a citizen complaint about excess gravel and stones on the road and in the yard at the intersection of Lakewood Shore Rd and Plaziak Rd. This is being caused by four-wheelers going around the corner and into the ditch (tracks are there). Supervisor Gondeck will clean up the mess, and the board will look into possible restrictions in the township on four wheelers.
- P. Benton County Association of Township meeting is September 18th at 7:30 pm at Mr. Jim's. The entire board is encouraged to attend. Supervisor Gondeck talked about future fire department issues. Supervisor Kacures played two complaints that he received on his phone regarding 66th Street dust; Jason Zwilling is asking for sodium chloride on the road, and said he would pay half of cost. Mrs. Gallion also complained about the dust. Supervisor Gondeck was asked to contact Jason Zwilling to see if he's still willing to pay half the cost and also ask if others on the road would contribute. Supervisor Gondeck asked the board if he should pursue purchasing a picnic table, which was approved through a past SCORE grant; he was given approval to do so. During the past month, the cables were moved for the internet at the modem in the utility room; the board made the decision to keep the utility room locked for all future rentals.

There were no additional citizen's comments. Motion was made by Supervisor Kacures, seconded by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed for adjournment of the meeting at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence