

Watab Town Board Meeting Minutes for March 7, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of the Watab Town Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 by Chairman Craig Gondeck. Board members present were Treasurer Eileen Saldana, Clerk Pat Spence, Supervisor Gondeck, Supervisor Lloyd Erdmann, and Supervisor Todd Waytashek. Audience members were Engineer Jon Bogart, Jason Kruger, Ed Kacures, Anna Saldana, Ray Thompson, Allen and Sandra Saldana, Dick Raveling, Bob Raveling, Kevin Reiter, Jerome Walker, John Walker, Katie Wilson, Erik Forsberg, Brian Erdmann, Ray Thompson, Jeff Hanson, Maureen Graber, and Amanda Guertin. Following the Pledge to the Flag, the following changes were made to the agenda through a motion by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann: discuss donations to the township and the recognition of an employee; motion passed.

Chair Gondeck introduced Jon Bogart to continue the Public Hearing on Alterations to 95th Street NW. He noted that changes had been made to move the edge of the road an additional eight feet away from Jerome Walker's house than the previous plan. Jon is waiting for the go ahead from the Town Attorney when the final permanent easement has been obtained, so that the project can go out for bids. Jerome Walker had reviewed the plan prior to the beginning of the meeting; Allen and Sandra Saldana came forward at this time to see it. Ray Thompson asked why the road isn't staying exactly where it is currently. Jerome Walker came forward and stated that Allen and Sandra Saldana should give a quit claim deed to the township for some of their property, so the road could move toward their house. Supervisor Gondeck responded that the project was discussed for public input at last year's annual meeting, and everyone was in favor of moving ahead with improving it. Ray stated that the board should get some common sense and leave it where it is or cancel the whole project. Kevin Reiter asked if moving the road would affect Walker's property value. Chair Gondeck responded that the board is keeping the road within the township right of way, and the house is located incorrectly due to a Benton County permitting error many years ago. Maureen Graber asked to have discussion closed, since the discussion wasn't going anywhere. There were no other comments or questions.

A motion was made by Supervisor Waytashek, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to approve the minutes of the February 7 Regular Meeting and the February 28 Public Hearing on Alterations to 95th Street NW. Eileen Saldana gave the Treasurer's Report with a cash balance of \$563,862.20. A motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Waytashek, and passed to accept her report. Supervisor Gondeck thanked her for her many years of service. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Waytashek, and passed to pay the Claims # 6303 – 6325 and Electronic Transfers for PERA, MN Dept. of Revenue, and IRS totaling \$28,696.95.

Citizen's Issues: Amanda Guertin, Benton Soil and Water Conservation District staff member, reported that the Benton County Water Plan is being updated to protect water resources in the county and come up with goals and plans to help improve water quality. She has a survey online and handouts available to describe the project. Agriculture will be addressed in the new

water plan. Dick Raveling asked about the aquifer level. Kevin Reiter asked about water quality testing. Amanda responded that she does not have answers on the aquifer level, and residents can bring in water samples to the BCSWCD for free testing. Maureen Graber added that grants are available for failing septic systems and well sealing. The board thanked Amanda for coming.

Old Business included the following:

- A. Brownfield Grant: Supervisor Gondeck showed the consultant three blighted Watab sites: one commercial and two residential properties. He said that he would like to invite the consultant to a future meeting. It takes about 6 months to get the grant.
- B. Frontage Road: Clerk Spence was asked to inquire if Jim Dahl is back in Minnesota to set up a meeting with him. She also referred to an email from someone who doesn't want the frontage road extending past the Golf Course to the north.
- C. Supervisor Gondeck reported on Land Disturbance Permits.
- D. Update on the Rice Fire Contract: Maureen Graber and Supervisor Gondeck attended that Rice City Council Planning Meeting last evening. The City wants to give Watab another three month extension, because they aren't prepared to make a decision. Maureen said they still have a lot of questions; the Fire Chief hasn't analyzed the city cost of the calls. The Mayor said the City would lose money if they only collected \$75 per cancelled call. Supervisor Waytashek asked the Clerk if it was true that the Fire Chief had told her and Maureen that the City might not have to charge the township anything for cancelled calls; she responded, "Yes." Maureen suggested that the Supervisors make sure there is a thirty-day cancellation clause in the next contract. Supervisor Gondeck said that a large concern for the City is how dropping our medical calls will affect the morale of the fire department. Eric Forsberg and Katie Wilson were present to tell the story of their daughter's medical call, and to stress that they don't want medical calls dropped. They are very concerned that their daughter might die without the Rice First Responders; they live on River Road immediately north of 95th Street NW. Supervisor Gondeck responded that the township's major goal is to get costs under control. Maureen added that the township has been discussing getting the costs under control for at least ten years. Supervisor Gondeck added that the Foley Fire Department charges \$100 per medical call; Rice charges \$350. He concluded the discussion by stating that he won't be surprised if the City ignores most of the township's requests for the contract.
- E. Benton County Association of Township Meeting recap was given by Clerk Spence. County elected officials and town boards from throughout the county attended the meeting on February 16th at Watab's Town Hall.
- F. Supervisor Gondeck nominated Patrick Virnig to receive the first Watab Pride Award for cleaning up a blighted property and then building a home on it. Motion was passed by Supervisor Erdmann, seconded by Supervisor Waytashek, and passed to approve the nomination. He will be invited to the April board meeting to receive the award, which will be a gift certificate to Rumor's donated by a private citizen.
- G. Supervisor Gondeck said that the acoustical tiles for the ceiling at the town hall will be installed this month. He received approval from the Sauk Rapids Fire Chief on the materials.
- H. The new storage cabinets for plats have been installed in the Supervisor's room.

- I. Supervisor Gondeck spoke with the Department of Development regarding the request for the portable toilet to be located again at St. Regis Park. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to send a letter to Monty Headley asking that the portable toilet be placed there year-round.

New Business included:

- A. Siren Maintenance Contract: Frontline Outdoor Warning Sirens of Monticello are recommending an annual maintenance contract for the two outdoor warning sirens for \$500 per year; the proposed contract was reviewed by the board. Supervisor Erdmann made a motion, second by Supervisor Waytashek, and passed to approve the contract. Allen Saldana asked why the siren didn't go off with the recent wind storm. Supervisor Gondeck said that others had also asked, and he will check on it tomorrow.
- B. Clerk Spence showed the Supervisors three possibilities to replace the current donation board. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Gondeck, and passed to purchase a two-door, oak framed letter board for \$366.
- C. Chair Gondeck gave a brief summary of the Governor's Fishing Opener, which will be held in St. Cloud. Volunteers are needed to supply boats and drive visitors for the fishing, which will be on the Mississippi River and also may extend to the Channel and Little Rock Lake. There will also be an event at Lake George on May 12th with a variety of vendors.
- D. Motion was made to renew the township's membership in the Central Minnesota Water Education Alliance for \$586; motion was seconded by Supervisor Gondeck and passed. It helps fulfill the township's public education component for the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Permit from MPCA.
- E. The Minnesota Association of Townships is holding an Urban Short Course on April 20th. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann and passed to have Todd, Pat, and Craig attend the training.
- F. Clerk Spence reported on the board's responsibility to find state statutes that allow the township to make donations recommended by voters at the Annual Meeting. If there isn't a statute that allows the donation, board members are personally responsible to repay the funds donated.
- G. Watab's Board of Equalization will be April 11th at 2:30 p.m. Supervisors Waytashek and Erdmann will need to get certificates of training this summer.
- H. Benton County has sent Watab the annual Park Dedication Report. There is a year-end balance of \$10,236. Jeff Hanson asked questions about it. Supervisor Gondeck stated that the town board wants to have control of the park dedication dollars in the future.
- I. Clerk Spence gave the report on the Annual Election and Meeting for March 11th. Polling hours are from 11:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. The Annual Meeting will immediately follow. Absentee voting is on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until noon.
- J. The Minnesota Association Township Short Course is March 28th at the Holiday Inn in St. Cloud; Clerk Spence was asked to have a check prepared to cover the registration fee.
- K. Supervisor Gondeck said that he and Clerk Spence would be going on the District 8 Bus Trip to the Capitol tomorrow for lobbying purposes on township issues. Maureen Graber suggested that they discuss funding for election equipment.

- L. A motion was made by Supervisor Waytashek, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to continue the Public Hearing on Alterations to 95th Street NW to April 4th at 7:00 p.m. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to accept the Permanent Easements from Phillip Saldana and Willard and Joyce Laab.
- M. Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed for Supervisor Gondeck and Clerk Spence to attend the MS4 training in Willmar on April 26th.
- N. Newsletter donations total \$1,650. Supervisor Gondeck thanked Ed Kacures for coming up with the idea for the newsletter; there was a round of applause from the audience.

Board Work Plan: Supervisor Gondeck will attend a March 24th meeting at the Kelly Inn in St. Cloud on water runoff issues. He will continue to work on township signs; recently some have been stolen. Motion was made by Supervisor Erdmann, second by Supervisor Waytashek, and passed to authorize him to order crack filling material. Roads will be chosen on the spring road tour, which will be scheduled at the next meeting. Supervisor Erdmann and Clerk Spence will get the meeting scheduled with the Golf Course owners regarding the frontage road. The board will ask residents at the Annual Meeting for a preferred date for the 85th Street input meeting.

Citizen's Issues: Jason Kruger talked about the Sauk Rapids Rice school district referendum vote coming up in May and recommended more information be provided residents at the Annual Meeting.

Supervisor Gondeck called Eileen Saldana forward to receive an engraved plaque and congratulations from the board on her thirty-eight years of service as the Township Treasurer. A board photo was taken with Eileen receiving the plaque and refreshments were enjoyed after the meeting to honor her. She will be missed.

Motion was made by Supervisor Gondeck, second by Supervisor Erdmann, and passed to adjourn at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence