

## **Minutes of Emergency Services Committee Meeting on July 18, 2017**

A meeting of the Watab Emergency Services Committee was held on Tuesday, July 18, 2017 at the Watab Town Hall. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Craig Gondeck. Those in attendance were Ed Kacures, Craig Gondeck, Todd Waytashek, Jason Krueger, John Olson, Dick Raveling, Bob Raveling, Lloyd Erdmann, Pat Spence, and Maureen Graber. Following the Pledge, items added to the agenda were: (1) to accept the resignation of Rob Jacobs from the committee due to scheduling conflicts and the appointment of a replacement; (2) timeline for getting a recommendation to the voters; and (3) committee member responsible for researching financing options.

Todd Waytashek, Committee Chairperson, recapped the visit to the Chain of Lakes Fire Department: great facility and equipment; cost was \$1.1 million which included buying the land, installing two wells, and purchasing the equipment. Photos of the department were viewed. Pat Spence was asked to send a thank you letter to Dan Holthaus for hosting the committee members.

Craig Gondeck was asked to set up visits to the Baldwin and Palmer Township Departments. Baldwin is a stand-alone department, and Palmer Township is a sub-station for Clear Lake. Tentatively the tour for Baldwin is set for the morning of July 29<sup>th</sup>. Craig will confirm the tours and get the information to Pat Spence. All committee members will be invited to go on the tours.

Lloyd Erdmann asked if the township should be notifying Sauk Rapids on our planning process. It was decided to wait until the committee is ready to make a recommendation to residents.

ISO ratings impact on homeowner's property insurance was discussed comparing what residents currently pay versus what they might pay with a Watab Department. Lloyd Erdmann said a lot of the homes in the township have no benefit from an ISO rating, because they are further than five miles from the fire station. Credit scores are the most important factor in insurance rates. Dick Raveling will provide data to the committee on the impact this will have on several of his customers; he will redact the names to maintain confidentiality for his clients. We also need to research impact on commercial properties in the township. Sauk Rapids has an ISO rating of four and Rice's rating is six.

The committee discussed the location of the fire station; other than the town hall site, the property for the former King's Inn would be a good location, but cost and water supply would be major factors mitigating against that choice. Todd Waytashek is researching the location of gas pipelines and utilities adjacent to the town hall property.

Maureen Graber, John Olson, Jason Krueger, and Ed Kacures will analyze cost comparisons, geographic area served, and number of households served for Chain of Lakes, Baldwin, and Palmer Townships' departments. Craig will get the information to them.

Once the costs are determined, Pat Spence was asked to research the most cost-effective financing options for the committee to consider. Pat was also asked to contact the architect for the Chain of Lakes Department to get more information on the size of the building and perhaps a copy of the blueprint. We need to determine the size of the building that we need to serve our residents. Lloyd Erdmann suggested that the building contain a storm shelter. Craig Gondeck said that from conversations he has had, there currently is not much difference between the cost of a steel or concrete building, and there is about a nine-month turnaround on ordering materials and completion of construction. Lloyd was asked to be the point person on researching building construction options.

Craig Gondeck was asked to speak with the Benton County Sheriff on the need for water rescue. Does Benton County provide or would the township? Gold Cross has expressed an interest in being an occupant; the committee should also ask if the Sheriff's Office would like to have a sub-station here.

Craig Gondeck and Pat Spence were asked to generate a letter that would go out for recruitment of fire fighters, both men and women. Pat will contact Chain of Lakes for a copy of their recruiting materials.

Lloyd Erdmann said at some time the media will be asking questions; Pat Spence was asked to be the spokesperson.

Todd Waytashek and Craig Gondeck will research used equipment suppliers; we need to establish a good list of potential vendors.

John Olson recommended that the committee establish two spreadsheets: one with the Capital Budget and one with the Operating Budget. That will allow good comparison with current costs and help form a recommendation to the residents. The committee agreed to work as aggressively as possible with a goal of formulating a recommendation by the end of September and a meeting with residents in October.

Dick Raveling suggested that he can work with key legislators on changing the state law so that owners of rental property could be billed for unpaid emergency calls. There was further discussion on the question if the township can have an ordinance to license rental properties. This will be discussed at a town board meeting.

The committee reviewed the slide presentation that had been revised with input from committee members and discussed additional ideas. Craig Gondeck was given authority to ask Doug Harden to serve on the committee. John Pearson may also be willing to serve. Craig Gondeck will generate a map of wet and dry hydrants in the township; he noted that DNR may pay for fifty percent of the installation costs for additional dry hydrants. He will confirm this information.

The next meeting was set for August 8<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm through a motion by Craig Gondeck and second by John Olson.

Respectfully submitted by Clerk Pat Spence