

Village of Benton
October 10, 2024
Board Meeting Minutes

Members present: Scott Cruse, John Perkins, Jill Knight, Joe Slater, Kenneth Farrey, Cal Robbins

Absent members: Chuck Wartner

Village employees present: Sonya Silvers, Jared Roling, Eric Mowry

Others Present: Mark LaBarbera, Chad Pierce, Roger Kern

The regular board meeting of the Benton Village Board was called to order by village president Scott Cruse at 6:30 p.m. in the conference room of the Benton Business Incubator Building at 244 Ridge Avenue on Wednesday, October 9, 2024. In compliance with the open meeting law, proper notice of the meeting had been posted in four public places: the Zephyr Depot, Benton State Bank, Benton Post Office, and the Benton Business Incubator Building.

The minutes from the previous village board meeting were presented.

Motion (Farrey, Robbins) to approve the minutes from the regular village board meeting held on September 18, 2024, as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Mark LaBarbera from Outdoor Heritage Education Center Area & Trail (OHEC) was present to announce that \$7,500 in funding was secured from the National Endowment of the Izaak Walton League of America for the Village of Benton. The funding will cover cleanup, signage, and benches for the Boy Scout Cabin area from Dump Road to the parking area north of the Swift Park pavilion. The first phase will not include major work on the cabin. Eric Mowry questioned if his tree and brush removal for the Urban Forestry grant in that area would affect the funding. Mark did not see any conflicting problems with the planned work.

Motion (Slater, Knight) to approve phase 1 of the OHEC plan in accordance with the park committee and village staff to improve and clean the existing trail next to the creek, add directional signage, and add benches. Roll-all ayes. Carried

Jared Roling presented two options and estimates for the new water/sewer truck. Chad Pierce from Grant County Truck Bodies was present to answer board questions regarding the purchase of the truck and utility boxes. Discussion was held, and the board decided on the F250 with 16,000 lbs of towing capacity and an 8-foot flatbed. The utility tool box will also be purchased for the truck. The total amount is not to exceed \$62,000.

Motion (Robbins, Farrey) to approve purchasing a F250 truck for the water/sewer department with a utility box. The cost is not to exceed \$62,000. Roll-all ayes. Carried

Roger Kern has been having issues with rusty water at 582 E. Main Street. Jared has been flushing the hydrant regularly and believes the issue could be stemming from the well. Currently, Well 2 is not running, and Roger will see if he notices a difference with the rust. Jared would like Roger to start flushing the plumbing regularly. To avoid extra cost to Rogers water bill, Jared will check with the Public Service Commission to either use a deduct meter or an unmetered water and sewer charge. The water main will be replaced in 2028 during the Main Street water main project and will provide a long term solution.

Sonya announced that lot 13 in the subdivision was sold, and Lafayette County accepted the \$250 bid for the parcel of land by the salt shed.

Committee Reports:

- ≈ The Finance Committee met for a budget working session.
- ≈ The Public Nuisance Committee met and discussed 216 W. Main Street. A letter was drafted by the village attorney to establish a plan with the property owner to bring the property up to code.
- ≈ The water and sewer committee will have an engineer look at the line from Hwy 11 to the Waste Water Treatment Plant and present more options to repair the line.

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Scott Cruse mentioned the letter received from the Duxstead McDaniel law office regarding the sewer at 536 W. Main Street. Scott has drafted a letter in response and sent it to the village attorney for review. Scott also had a phone conversation with the attorney from the Duxstead McDaniel law office.

The village employee annual wage increase recommendation from the finance and personnel committees was presented to the board. The recommendations were made on the principals of fairness, recognition of good teamwork, and wages being competitive. Discussion was held, and the wages will be accepted as presented.

Motion (Farrey, Knight) to approve the employee annual wage increase as presented from the recommendation of the finance and personnel committee. Roll: Ken-Yes, Jill-Yes, Joe-Yes, Scott-Yes, Cal-No, John-No. Carried

Pay the claims against the village.

Motion (Knight, Slater) to pay the claims against the village. Roll-all ayes. Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Motion (Slater, Robbins) to adjourn. Voice-all ayes.