

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

Absent members:

Village employees present: Sonya Silvers, Jim Goffinet, Brian Hammill

Others Present: Dave Watson

2025 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing of the Benton Village Board was called to order by Village President, Scott Cruse, at 6:15 p.m. at 244 Ridge Avenue in the conference room of the Benton Business Incubator building on Wednesday, December 4, 2024. In compliance with the open meeting law, proper notice of the meeting had been posted in four public places: Benton State Bank, Benton Post Office, Benton Business Incubator Building, and the Zephyr Depot.

Discussion was held regarding the 2025 General Fund Budget.

Motion (Knight, Slater) to adjourn. Roll-all ayes. Carried. The public hearing adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

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, December 4th, 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 November 13th, 2024, as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Jim Goffinet is working on locates for the fiber internet. The boring crew is moving along at a good pace when weather permits.

Sonya Silvers will be submitting the Urban Forestry Tree Grant for reimbursement this week. The Hillary's in the new subdivision have pulled permits to start house construction.

Committee Reports:

- ≈ The Water/Sewer Committee met on Dec. 19th. Jared Roling presented bids for the sanitary sewer repairs. The valve that operates the oxidation ditch has been ordered, and Jared has been in touch with Julie Lott's attorney regarding the sewer at 536 W. Main Street. Julie will proceed with boring under Highway 11 to access the Villages sewer at her expense.
- ≈ The Nuisance Committee discussed storage containers. Chuck Wartner presented an example ordinance from the Village of Rudolph, WI. The committee will use the example to incorporate a new ordinance into the Village Ordinance Code. Inspection papers were sent to 216 W. Main Street, and there has been no communication from the owner. Scott Cruse will speak to the attorney regarding next steps.

Scott Cruse asked about the civil rights training and reminded the board to get this completed.

Sonya presented the Zoning Board of Appeals recommendation to approve David Watson's variance application to split the parcel at 159 Arbor Street. This will split the lot into two parcels, with one lot having a residential home and the other lot having a standalone garage on a residential lot.

Motion (Perkins, Slater) to approve the variance application from Dave Watson with the recommendation for approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Sonya presented the Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation for Tim White and Steve Malone's conditional use application and zoning amendment. This will allow a townhome with a zero lot line on a residential lot by issuing a conditional use permit. The zoning will be changed from multi-family residential district to single-family residential: medium density.

Motion (Robbins, Wartner) to approve the conditional use permit application from Steve Malone and Tim White to allow a townhome with a zero-lot line with the recommendation for approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Motion (Knight, Robbins) to approve the zoning amendment to change zoning from multi-family district to single-family residential: medium density with the recommendation for approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Resolution #2024-05 for adding fees within the Village of Benton fee schedule was presented. Brian Hammill would like to see the parking forfeiture fee be \$25.00, if paid within ten days, and a \$10 late fee if not paid in the ten days. The fee for a temporary storage permit will be \$50.00 for 90 days. Brian has received complaints about parking on Galena Street and Third Street.

Motion (Farrey, Robbins) to approve resolution #2024-05 for adding fees within the Village of Benton fee schedule as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried

1st Reading of Ordinance No. 2024-006 to amend § 320-29, b-1, b-2 relating to parking violations and penalties.

Motion (Slater, Wartner) to approve the 1st reading of ordinance No. 2024-006 to amend § 320-29, b-1, b-2 relating to parking violations and penalties as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried

To waive the 2nd reading & adopt Ordinance No. 2024-006.

Motion (Knight, Perkins) to approve waiving the 2nd reading & adopt ordinance No. 2024-006. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Resolution of the Village Board authorizing borrowing Resolution #2024-06 for \$120,000 general obligation debt from Benton State Bank.

Motion (Wartner, Farrey) to approve borrowing Resolution #2024-06 for \$120,600 general obligation debt from Benton State Bank as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried

The 2025 General Fund Budget was presented for final approval.

Motion (Wartner, Robbins) to approve the 2025 budget as presented. Roll-all ayes. Carried

The Finance Committee met and recommended a conventional water rate case. A full water rate case has not been done since 1998, and one will be required for the Main Street water main project. The committee would recommend placing public fire protection fees onto the monthly utility bills. The current public fire protection charge of \$87,794 is on the levy and included in the budget, which is paid by residents through property taxes. This transition would allow the village to continue to improve streets, sidewalks, and continue to provide critical services. The conventional rate case would take 7-8 months to complete by the Public Service Commission (PSC), village auditors, and the village clerk. The committee would like approval for Sonya to move forward with getting the application process started with the PSC.

Motion (Robbins, Knight) to approve Sonya moving forward with the conventional rate case application from the Public Service Commission. Roll-all ayes. Carried

Sonya submitted the Townweb website contract. This includes a one-time upgrade to the website of \$1,000 plus the annual fee. The contract will be for three years.

Motion (Robbins, Slater) to approve the three-year Townweb website contract, which includes a one-time upgrade fee of \$1,000 plus the annual fees. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Jared Roling presented bids to the Water/Sewer Committee for the sanitary sewer repairs from Delta 3, Vierbircher, and Town and Country. The committee recommends Town and Country's proposal contract. This will be for the engineering work and documents that will be ready to go out to bid and will not exceed \$10,000. This is not part of the facilities plan.

Motion (Robbins, Farrey) to approve the contract with Town and Country Engineering for engineering work and bid-ready documents for the sanitary sewer repairs. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Sonya presented an agreement between the Village of Benton and Hazel Green Area Rescue Squad to obligate ARPA funds for the purchase of a new ambulance.

Motion (Perkins, Robbins) to approve the contract between the Village of Benton and Hazel Green Area Rescue Squad to obligate ARPA funds for the purchase of a new ambulance. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Resolution 2024-07 for amending the Village of Benton Code of Ordinances regarding accessory uses or structures and regulating the use of storage containers.

Motion (Slater, Farrey) to approve resolution #2024-07 for amending the Village of Benton Code of Ordinances regarding accessory uses or structures and regulating the use of storage containers as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried

1st reading of ordinance No. 2024-007 to amend § 390-J, 1-3 relating to accessory uses or structures.

Motion (Wartner, Perkins) to approve the 1st reading of ordinance No. 2024-07 for amending the Village of Benton Code of Ordinances regarding accessory uses or structures and regulating the use of storage containers as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried

To waive the 2nd reading & adopt ordinance No. 2024-007.

Motion (Knight, Robins) to approve waiving the 2nd reading & adopt ordinance No: 2024-007. Voice-all ayes. Carried

1st reading of ordinance No. 2024-008 to amend § 390-7 relating to Definitions.

Motion (Robbins, Perkins) to approve the 1st reading of ordinance No. 2024-008 to amend § 390-7 relating to definitions as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried

To waive the 2nd reading & adopt ordinance No. 2024-008.

Motion (Knight, Slater) to approve waiving the 2nd reading & adopt ordinance No. 2024-008. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Pay the claims against the Village.

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

Cal Robbins mentioned a concern with the speed on Alma Street after school. Brian will talk to Todd Bastian about making an announcement at the school, and Brian will bring more ideas to the board meeting next month.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

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