

Village of Benton
June 18, 2025
Board Meeting Minutes

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

Absent members:

Village employees present: Sonya Silvers, Brian Hammill

Others Present: Michelle Savatski, Matt Pivot, Adam Linden, Tim Wiederholt

The regular board meeting of the Benton Village Board was called to order by village president Ken Farrey at 6:30 p.m. in the conference room of the Benton Business Incubator Building at 244 Ridge Avenue on Wednesday, June 18, 2025. 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 (Robbins, Slater) to approve the minutes from the regular village board meeting held on May 21, 2025, as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Adam Linden from Kluesner Sanitation and Tim Wiederholt from Wiederholt Enterprises were present and requested a chance to bid for the trash and recycling contract when the current contract with Republic Service expires.

Brian Hammill has been enforcing speed on County J this month. The speed sign on County J is also not working.

Sonya Silvers mentioned that the Lafayette County Housing Project would like to request an extension on the purchase agreement that was signed in November of 2022. The current agreement has a completion date of 36 months, which would be November 2025, to complete the project, or the land would revert back to the Village of Benton. The board discussed the possibility of getting an easement on the land and would like a meeting with the housing authority. On July 28th, Sonya and Emily will have a full day of online training for the online community portal. The portal should be live at the beginning of August. The PSC is reviewing the water rate case and should have an estimate of the rate increases in the next few weeks. A resolution will need to be passed at June's meeting to add the public fire protection to the customer's utility bills. The audit has been finalized and will be reviewed by the finance committee before the next board meeting.

The groundbreaking for the community center, library, and museum was held on Wednesday, June 11th. There were over 75 in attendance. Michelle Savatski announced that the construction contracts have been signed and have the USDA stamp of approval. The fence has been installed around the construction site. FEH will hold bi-monthly meetings at the fire department. The core committee group met with the design team for furnishings. The bid process for furnishings will not start until the WHEDC grant is approved.

Committee Reports:

- ≈ The Park Committee met.
- ≈ The Street Committee agreed on following the street plan with the exception of not doing First Street and using that money to complete the end of the White Street turnaround and the end of Easy Street. A portion of sidewalk by the old Quality Motors will be repaired.

Matt Pivot with Republic Service provided a proposal to switch recycling to biweekly and extend the current contract another five years. An amendment was also presented that would change recycling to biweekly, but it will still expire in June 2026. Kluesner Sanitation has partnered with Wiederholt Enterprises to provide residential trash and recycling pickup. If the current contract is changed or opened, they would like the opportunity to put a bid in. Ken Farrey recommended approving the extension from Republic Service. Cal Robbins recommended that the current contract be carried out until the expiration date and the village can go out to bid. If we change the contract, others should be able to bid.

Motion (Robbins, Perkins) to approve leaving the current contract with Republic Service as is for the remaining time without the recycling reduction. Roll: Scott Cruse- Yes, John Perkins-Yes, Jill Knight-Yes, Chuck Wartner-Yes, Joe Slater- Yes, Cal Robbins- Yes, Ken Farrey-No. Carried.

Sonya presented the capitalization policy to the board with an adjustment from \$5,000 to \$10,000 per recommendation of the auditors in the 2024 audit report.

Motion (Knight, Robbins) to approve the adjustment of the capitalization policy from \$5,000 to \$10,000 per recommendation of the auditors in the 2024 audit report. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

The 2024 Benton waterworks quality water report was presented.

Motion (Perkins, Robbins) to approve the 2024 Benton waterworks quality water report as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

The annual compliance maintenance resolution #2025-01 was presented.

Motion (Wartner, Robbins) to approve the annual compliance maintenance resolution # 2025-01 as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

The park committee met and recommended that the outhouse at the Boy Scout cabin be taken down by the public works department.

Motion (Knight, Slater) to approve the removal of the outhouse that is located at the Boy Scout cabin. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

Jill Knight announced the recommendation from the library board to appoint Dave Hillary to the library board to fill a vacancy.

Motion (Knight, Slater) to approve the appointment of Dave Hillary to the library board. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

Scott Cruse, chair of the Community Development Authority of the Village of Benton (CDA), announced the recommendation from the CDA to reappoint Bill Bastian to a full term on the CDA board.

Motion (Knight, Cruse) to reappoint Bill Bastian for a full term on the CDA board. Voice-all ayes. Carried

The village received another fluoride grant from the DNR. There will be a \$2,000 shortage from the amount that the grant will cover.

Motion (Knight, Cruse) to approve the expense of \$2,000 for fluoride supplies that the grant will not cover. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Scott attended the Lafayette County Development meeting and announced that \$4,000 from the small business grant was awarded to the Benton VFW for new siding.

Joe Slater asked what happened with the water tower and why all the water main breaks. The water tower was being emptied so it could be cleaned; it over pressurized, and pressure valves did not open. Cal mentioned that we need to do better on traffic control when there is work being done on Hwy 11. The board would like to see a safety plan put in place. Brian will work on the safety plan.

The 2025-2026 beer/liquor licenses were presented.

Motion (Wartner, Cruse) to approve the Class "A" and "Class A" liquor licenses for Driftless Stores, INC., dba Jeff's Mart. Voice-all ayes.

Motion (Robbins, Slater) to approve the Class "B" and "Class B" liquor licenses for Lawrence's Outback, LLC. Voice-all ayes.

Motion (Knight, Robbins) to approve the Class "B" and "Class B" liquor licenses for Joseph F. McCrea VFW Post 7896. Voice-all ayes.

Motion (Wartner, Perkins) to approve the Class "B" and "Class B" liquor licenses for McCarthy's Tavern, LLC. Voice-all ayes.

Motion (Robbins, Cruse) to approve the Class "B" and "Class B" liquor licenses for Whitey's Bar & Grill, LLC. Voice-all ayes.

The 2025-2026 operator licenses were presented.

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Motion (Robbins, Slater) to approve the 2025-2026 operator licenses for Shane Lawrence, Rory Lawrence, Eldon Kruser, John Scanlan, William Sides, Nicholas Neis, Sarah McCarthy, Aaron DeMuth, Brenda Richards, Randy Wiegman, Alivia Carius, Lora Carius, Kevin Kirk, Dora Pate, Selena Garza. Voice-all ayes.

The 2025-2026 cigarette, tobacco, and electronic vaping devices licenses were presented.

Motion (Robbins, Knight) to approve the 2025-2026 cigarette, tobacco, and electronic vaping devices license for Driftless Stores, INC., dba Jeff's Mart. Voice-all ayes.

Pay the claims against the village.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

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