

Village of Benton
September 17, 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, Jared Roling

Others Present: Michelle Savatski

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, September 17, 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 (Cruse, Knight) to approve the minutes from the regular village board meeting held on August 20, 2025, with corrections. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Michelle Savatski reported the walls were poured last week, and the sandwich walls are scheduled to be poured this week. Underground plumbing is the next step. A progress meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 22, and a keying meeting for Monday, Sept. 22. Michelle and Sonya will submit the T-Mobile grant by the end of September. A newly released non-state grant will also be pursued.

Jared Roling met with the manager at Jeff's Mart, and a state inspector will be coming to inspect the station and will determine if there is a well on the premises. A certified well driller will be present, and if there is a well, it will be properly abandoned.

The water tower was taken down yesterday for cleaning. There were no issues, and it is back up and running. A leak was discovered on Frontier Street, and it is believed to be the hydrant, but more testing is being completed.

Jared met with A.W. Allen to run through the procedure of taking the water tower down. There will be new procedures set in place with pictures and documentation.

The water/sewer committee met to discuss the plans and prints for the interceptor repair. The committee will need to meet with Steve Rosseter to go over the construction plans. A meeting also take place with Heath Rowe and Chris Wentz about having a shared sewer line.

Sludge hauling will be coming up, and Jared will need to test the fields this year.

There have been two permit changes for the WWTP. The phosphorus discharge level went down, and we will be using more alum. Due to using more alum, there will be more storage needed. Jared looked into several options and purchased 4 storage containers that will hold 80 days of alum. The other permit change was for the disinfection level changed to e-coli.

Jared has been looking into options for tower contracts. The Benton tower will likely need to be sandblasted in the next 10-15 years. Sandblasting and containment is not covered in the contracts and is estimated to be over \$100,000.

Sonya Silvers mentioned that a letter was received from Principal Financial Group that offered to purchase the 421 shares held by the village for an amount of \$21,765.70. The new ambulance in Hazel Green will

arrive in February of 2026. The Village will be responsible for paying 23.15%, equaling \$33,801.40, due by March 1, 2026. The village had obligated \$60,000 of ARPA money to pay for the new ambulance.

Brian Hammill stated he added more parking signs and that Sheriff Gill helped with traffic control for Labor Day, and everything went great. Updates were given for traffic stops that were made during the month.

Committee Reports:

- ≈ The Police Committee met for discussion on the purchase of a camera for the squad car. The current system is over 10 years old, and the equipment cannot be updated. There is an upfront cost of \$2,336.00 and then an annual subscription fee of \$1,489.20. This would be in addition to the subscription fee for the body camera. There will be funds from the ARPA money that could be used for the upfront cost and setup of the camera. Sonya will check with the attorney to make sure the obligated ARPA funds can be used.

Motion (Cruse, Robbins) to approve the purchase of the camera for the squad car and use the excess ARPA funds to pay for the upfront installation and setup cost if allowed. Roll-all ayes. Carried.

The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin and the Village of Benton held an online public hearing regarding the conventional water rate case and the proposed changes on Monday, September 15, 2025. Sonya stated that the public fire protection is being moved to the utility bills, and the proposed amount is \$19.58. This will be placed on every parcel of land in the village limits regardless if they are a customer of the utility. There are landowners that will start getting a utility bill for the public fire protection. The proposed change will take effect at the beginning of the new year. The board held a discussion regarding the sewer rates. Sonya presented numbers for a sewer rate increase of 2%, 3%, and 4%; the board would like to do 4% for the base charge and the usage charge due to the age of the treatment plant and planned projects and repairs.

Motion (Cruse, Wartner) to approve a sewer base rate and a sewer usage rate increase of 4% to be implemented along with the new water rates and public fire protection at the beginning of the year. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

A village resident emailed asking about installing cat feeding stations around the village. Brian Hammill presented the village ordinance §115-6 that would not allow any cat feeding stations.

Approve 2025-2026 operator's license for Sara Grindy.

Motion (Perkins, Robbins) to approve the Approve 2025-2026 operator's license for Sara Grindy. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

Pay the claims against the village.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

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