Village of Benton
September 16, 2026
Board Meeting Minutes

Members present: Ken Farrey, John Perkins, Jill Knight, Bill Mowry, Joseph Slater
Absent: Steve Brink, Scott Cruse
Village employees present: Sonya Silvers, Brian Hammill, Jared Roling, Eric Mowry
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 community room of the Benton Community Center at 31 W. Main Street on Wednesday, September 16, 2026. In compliance with the open meeting law, proper notice of the meeting had been posted in four public places: the Community Center, Benton State Bank, Benton Post Office, and the Benton Business Incubator Building.

The minutes from the village board meeting on August 19, 2026, were presented. Amendment needs to be made to say replacement only for the fire hydrants.

Motion (Mowry, Slater) to approve the amendment from the minutes from the regular village board meeting held on August 19, 2026, to state the replacement of two fire hydrants. **Voice-all ayes.** ***Carried***

Motion (Slater, Perkins) to approve the minutes from the regular village board meeting held on August 19, 2026, after amendment. **Voice-all ayes.** ***Carried***

Michelle Savatski stated the community center grand opening was a success with up to 250 people attending. There are about five items left on the punch list left to get completed. The interior lights will be switched to manual instead of motion detected. The building inspector did a walk through and there will need to be another exit sign and the bathroom lights will need to be fixed. Solar installation was postponed due to weather with a new date of September 28th. Michelle spoke to Clean Energy regarding the federal rebate for solar and they recommended a couple companies to hire to help with the process.

Jared Roling presented a map of the interceptor project. Owen's excavating storm sewer that is in bad shape. The bid consisted of 60' being removed and they are recommending 140' with an additional cost of $3500.00. Jared is also recommending the village replace a few trees that were in the easement that have been taken out with an estimated cost of $500.00. There has been issues finding the sewer near manhole 6 due to it being deeper than on the prints.

Motion (Knight, Slater) to approve Owen's Excavating to proceed with the additional 80' of storm sewer for an additional cost of $3,500.00 and replace a few trees for an estimated cost of $500.00. **Voice-all ayes.** ***Carried***

Jared is waiting on proposals for Well #1 to fix the vibration issue. The engineer will be consulted when the proposals arrive. USG is covering the expense of Well #1.

Brian Hammill has had 230 calls for service for the year. There were no issues with Labor Day. E-Bikes have been an increasing problem and Brian has went and spoke to kids at the school regarding laws and safety.

Committee Reports:

- ≈ The Finance Committee reviewed the current to budget actual with most areas tracking as expected. Economic development and streets is over budget due to the Treganza Street development but there will be no USDA loan payment this year, which was budgeted for; Sonya is getting rates to finance the interceptor project and a new squad car. Sonya is receiving help with the bank reconciliation from the software company.
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The nuisance committee met and developed a tree policy. Discussion was held and it is recommended that this policy only be for trees in the street right away. Eric Mowry will look it over and report back with his thoughts and changes.

A new policing policy was presented to the board regarding First Responder calls. The squad car will remain in the village limits while on duty with a few exceptions like exigent circumstances or called out by the Sherriff's Department. The squad car will be stored in the village. Jill Knight went on record that she does not agree with not allowing the squad car to be taken home after reading Sherriff Gill's recommendation. The amended chief's contract was presented. The police chief will be allowed a paid 30 min lunch break providing he is in the duty jurisdiction.

Motion (Mowry, Slater) to approve the policing policy as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried.
Motion (Slater, Knight) to approve the amended chief's contract as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

A voice to text software proposal from the police department was presented for $1000 a year which would be part of the department's budget. This will allow reports to be done easier in the squad car, in a timelier manner, and stored properly.

Motion (Perkins, Slater) to approve the voice to text software proposal as part of the police department's annual budget. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

Ken Farrey has appointed a committee for the remodel of the old library to set it up for the village office and police department. Sonya will speak to the building inspector about the remodel and see if it needs state approved plans.

The agreement to provide public funding consulting services from Vierbicher for the State Hwy 11 project was presented. Jeff Evan from Vierbicher was present at the finance committee meeting and provided cost and funding estimates. Jill Knight is concerned with the impact to the general obligation amount that would be needed to complete the project as well as the Safe Drinking Water Loan (SDWL). The project cost have gone up and the SDWAL principal forgives amount has went down. In original cost estimates it was believed that the curb and gutter could be incorporated into the SDWL due to the water main rather than being added to the general obligation debt amount. Rates for water could increase up to 25%. The board will need clarification from Vierbircher but will approve the agreement due to the October 31st, 2026 deadline to keep the project on track.

Motion (Perkins, Slater) to approve the agreement to provide public funding consulting services from Vierbircher for the State Hwy 11 project and receiving additional clarification on the curb and gutter. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

Ken Farrey stated due to the conventional water rate case and the timing allowed by the Public Service Commission (PSC) the water rates will not be eligible for an increase 01/01/2027. The board will table the rate increase until allowable by the PSC.

Motion (Knight, Mowry) to approve tabling the water rate increase until allowable by the PSC. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

The sewer rate increase will also be tabled until the water rate can be implemented.

Motion (Perkins, Knight) to approve tabling the sewer rate increase until the water rate increase can be implemented. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Payment of Bills

Motion (Slater, Mowry) to pay the bills. Voice-all ayes. Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 P.M.

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