

**Village of Benton**  
**December 06, 2023**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**

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

**Absent members:** Kenneth Farrey

**Village employees present:** Sonya Silvers, Jared Roling, Brian Hammill

**Others Present:** Christopher Wentz

**2023 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 6, 2023. 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 2024 General Fund Budget.

*Motion (Perkins, Slater) to adjourn. Voice-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 6th, 2023. 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 (Knight, Robbins) to approve the minutes from the regular Village Board meeting held on November 8th, 2023 as presented. Voice-all ayes. Carried*

Sonya announced that the USDA loan application was submitted to the state.

Jared mentioned that the materials would cost around \$800 to connect Ben Cernek to Village water. Extending the water down to Lee Alderson would cost around \$16,000 for materials. This does not include any cost for digging, equipment, or labor. The letters for well testing will be mailed at the beginning of the year. Anyone in the Village limits that has a well is required to get their well tested once a year. This testing is required by the DNR for the Village to remain in compliance and is due by October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. A used sewer jetter was purchased and will be used in performing preventative maintenance on the sewer lines. This will also help cut cost with emergency sewer backups, rather than hiring another company to come in and jet the lines. Jared has been working with the DNR to continue fluoride testing and obtaining a grant to help cover the cost. Two pumps have been sent in for repairs, one for the WWTP and one for lift station #2. The RAS pumps and motors have also been repaired. L.W. Allen has been contacted to evaluate the cost of returning the RAS system to original design specification. Next year the valve boxes will need to be cleaned out and repaired.

**Committee Reports:**

- ≈ The Police Committee has been working with Brian to obtain an attorney to handle criminal matters. A contract for Attorney Doug Heenan out of Platteville will be presented to the board. Cameras for Village and Swift Park were ordered and Jason Walter will help with the installation. The cameras will be reimbursed by the LEA grant money. A body camera will also be purchased for a cost of \$1300.00 a year for five years. Brian secured a \$1,000 grant from Casey's General Store to help with the first year expense.
- ≈ The Street Committee reported that the street sweeper is in need of repair. In 2021, the repairs cost \$9,000. In 2024 another \$10,000 for repairs was added to the budget. Eric will look into other options for street

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sweeping. The Village will use K.D Engineering for the Main Street water main project and Vierbicher for funding options.

- ≈ The Park Committee reported all the trees for the tree grant were taken down and two new trees at Village Park were planted. The tree plan for Village Park has been received from Cory Ritterbusch.
- ≈ The Personnel Committee has completed the police contract.

Sonya Silvers presented the appointment of the 2024-2025 election inspectors.

***Motion (Perkins, Slater) to approve the appointment of the 2024-2025 election inspectors as presented.***

**Voice-all ayes. Carried**

A contract from Doug Heenan attorney at law was presented to the board. Attorney Heenan will handle any criminal issues for the Village. The Village will not be charged a retainer or charged until there is a criminal court case.

***Motion (Slater, Robbins) to approve the contract from Scott and Heenan, LLC to obtain Attorney Doug Heenan to handle criminal court cases for the Village. Voice-all ayes. Carried***

The police contract was presented to the board. The personnel committee updated the contract and it was reviewed by attorney Eileen Brownlee.

***Motion (Robbins, Slater) to approve the updated police contract as presented from the personnel committee.***

**Roll-all ayes. Carried**

Resolution #2023-08 of the Village Board authorizing borrowing was presented to the board.

***Motion (Wartner, Robbins) to approve resolution #2023-08 authorizing borrowing as presented. Roll-all ayes. Carried***

The recommendation from the Zoning Board of Appeals to approve a variance request from Heath Rowe and Christopher Wentz was presented to the Village board.

***Motion (Robbins, Slater) to approve the recommendation from the Zoning Board of Appeals to approve a variance request from Heath Rowe and Christopher Wentz. Roll-all ayes. Carried***

The contract from Vierbircher to work with the Village for project funding was presented to the board. Scott Cruse sent the contract to attorney Eileen Brownlee. Eileen made some recommendations and Scott has sent the recommendations back to Vierbircher. The contract will be tabled until January's board meeting.

The 2024 Final budget was presented to the board for approval.

***Motion (Wartner, Robbins) to approve the 2024 final budget as presented. Roll-all ayes. Carried***

Pay the claims against the Village.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

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