

Village of Benton

March 13, 2024

Board Meeting Minutes

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

Absent members: Chuck Wartner

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

Others Present: Ben Cernek, Andy Kurtz, Kurt Muchow, Keith Dalsing

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, March 13th, 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, Perkins) to approve the minutes from the regular village board meeting held on February 21st, 2024. Voice-all ayes. Carried

Bill Calvert was not present.

Ben Cernek was present, requesting permission to hook up to village water. Jared Roling provided the board with the cost in a prior meeting. The Public Service Commission rules were also presented to the board prior to the meeting. The village will tap into their water main and place a curb stop. There is a \$600.00 new water service charge that will be due to Benton Municipal Utilities upon completion. This will allow Ben to connect to the village water at his expense. The well on the property will need to be properly abandoned. Sonya provided grant information for well abandonment that will be sent to Ben via email.

Keith Dalsing announced that K.D. Engineering has merged with Vierbicher. This will allow them to offer municipalities a wider range of services. Andy Kurtz and Kurt Muchow shared business history on Vierbicher.

The village will be working with Vierbircher to secure funding for the Main Street water main project. Andy presented a STH 11 water main replacement public funding worksheet. This worksheet included community information, an estimated project cost, a project schedule, a project summary, and recommendations. Several different options, from grants to loans, were presented, and each scenario provided different funding options and payment amounts. Vierbircher is recommending option #4, a Congressional Directed Spending (CDS) grant and a Safe Drinking Water Loan (SDWL). The total estimated project cost is \$1,285,500. The CDS is currently accepting applications for the 2025 federal budget and grants can range from 50% to 100%. The CDS grant estimate would be \$964,000, assuming a grant with 75% funding. The SDWL loan would be estimated at \$321,500 at 2.145% over a 20-year amortization period. The CDS grant application will need to be submitted before March 24th, 2024, and this is an additional cost outside of the contract with Vierbircher. The village will need letters of support for the project. Any money received from grants for the water project will help reduce water rate increases.

Any curb and gutter that will be cut for the water main project would be a covered expense. Keith will add the curb and gutter to the estimated project total. If the grant application does not get approved, Vierbircher will move on to the next best scenario for funding.

Motion (Perkins, Slater) to authorize Vierbicher to submit the Congressional Direct Spending (CDS) grant application to Senator Tammy Baldwin and representatives' by March 24, 2024, for an additional fee to the village of \$1200.00. Roll-all ayes. Carried

Jared Roling is working on getting both RAS pumps running back to the way they were intentionally designed to work. L.W. Allen provided a quote of \$10,000 for VFD installation, RAS #2 rebuilding of the motor, and a

Cornell pump. This will be put on next month's agenda. Jared intends to televise sewer lines this summer. He received a quote of \$.65 a foot from Kleiber. Scott Cruse asked if that would include televising the sewer lines behind the new community center building. Jared stated that could be done as well. This will be added to next month's agenda for approval.

Brian Hammill focused on speeding over the past month and had 25 traffic calls. Brian has received questions on the ATV route and all the roads being open for the route. This will be added to a future agenda for discussion.

Sonya stated that letters went out this week to owners who have trees that need to be trimmed. The annual Lafayette County Highway Department meeting and lunch is April 2nd for any board member that would like to attend.

Committee Reports:

- ≈ The Street Committee looked at Eric Mowry's multiyear plan for street improvements. The committee will walk around town and prioritize which sidewalks need to be replaced. This will be prioritized by the condition and busyness of the sidewalk. Eric will try to repair the street sweeper to get through the year. Next year, they will look at possibilities for replacing the street sweeper. John mentioned that semis that park down by the town garage might need a different option for parking. The side of the salt shed can be looked at for a parking option.
- ≈ The Finance Committee will meet in April.
- ≈ The Park Committee looked at the Urban Tree Grant and will get estimates for removal from Felderman's. We have the new bathroom doors for Swift Park and Carl Langkamp will paint them. Discussion was held regarding trees that need to be trimmed in the village by homeowners. The village sign and boys' basketball sign will be removed in April from Ryan Kern's property. The boys' basketball sign will be moved to the Jamison property since the village owns it. Scott and Jill reached out to the school to see if they could help with making new signs as part of a class project. The school is going to take on the project. The next meeting will be held at the scout cabin to talk about what can be done with the cabin.

An estimate for repairing two transformers through T&R Electric for an estimated combined cost of \$5,700 was presented.

Motion (Knight, Farrey) to approve the repair of two transformers through T&R Electric for an estimated cost of \$5,700. Roll-all ayes. Carried

An estimate to order four new street lights as inventory for replacements for an estimated cost of \$1,260 was presented and approved by the board.

The operator's license for Melissa Johns will be moved to the next meeting until more information is gathered.

Jill Knight mentioned that the fire siren by the village office is not working. John Perkins has been having trouble with it and will look into it.

Pay the claims against the village.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

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

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