

Village of Benton

May 15, 2024

Board Meeting Minutes

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

Absent members:

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

Others Present: Julie Lott, Ryan Kern, Kevin Slater, Lucas Kastner, Corwin Emery, Morgan Emery, Alex Droessler, Tim White, Steve Malone

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, May 15th, 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 April 17th, 2024.

Voice-all ayes. Carried

The water/sewer committee met with Kevin Slater and Ryan Kern to discuss the sewer line clogged with roots at 225 Railroad Avenue. An agreement was reached, and the village will pay Kern Plumbing \$8,924.02, which is approximately 2/3 of the bill.

Motion (Robbins, Perkins) to approve the recommendation from the water/sewer committee to pay Kern Plumbing \$8,924.02 for the clogged sewer line at 225 Railroad Avenue.

Roll: Ken Farrey-No, John Perkins-Yes, Chuck Wartner-Yes, Jill Knight-Yes, Joe Slater-Yes, Cal Robbins-Yes, Scott Cruse-Yes.

Tim White and Steve Malone explained the plan for converting their co-owned duplex into a townhome. There would be a Certified Survey Map completed to split the parcel, and a variance would be requested for a zero-side lot line. The property is currently zoned multi-family, and it would need to be rezoned to single-family residential. There would be a covenant agreement between the property owners to keep the outside appearance the same on each side. The board is supportive of the change, and Tim and Steve will continue to work with their legal console to get all the needed documents.

Julie Lott is requesting the village pay for and provide connection to the village sewer at 536 W. Main Street. There is not a sewer main adjacent to the property, meaning the connection would consist of easements, pumps, and boring under State Highway 11. Julie feels that if she pays taxes to the village, the property should be provided with all the village amenities. The village will provide access to the sewer main, but the expense of getting sewer to the property will be at the homeowner's expense. She will speak to her attorney for more options.

The owners of Spooky Pinball were present to reach an agreement with the village board to resolve the business park covenant and ordinance requirements for employee parking. Lucas Kasnter was dissatisfied with how the matter was handled and stated that Spooky Pinball did not know about the business park covenants until a letter was received from Village President Scott Cruse. After receiving the letter, Lucas requested a copy of the covenants and a meeting with Scott. Scott and Lucas met at the business incubator and spoke about the parking. Scott requested that he come to the Village Board meeting with a suggestion to solve the parking issue that would meet the requirements. Lucas questioned who is on the business park covenant committee and if they were present at the board meeting. There is no current business park covenant committee. Lucas suggested that if the village enforces the covenants, they should then follow the covenants and have a business park covenant committee. Cal Robbins suggested that the village put together a committee.

Spooky Pinball purposely did not put a parking lot at the new location so that in the future, if there is a need to expand, they will have a place to put up another building. The employees will start parking on Spooky Pinball's property rather

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than on the street starting on Monday. If additional parking is needed, Lucas stated that there are two other possible locations around the building where employees could park. The board agreed that this was an acceptable solution.

Jared Roling contacted Water Well Solutions for issues with well #2 VFD. The VFD has a life of 15 years, and the current VFD is 14 years old. Water Well Solutions is advising ordering a new VFD before there is a power failure and the VFD will not fire up again, causing the well to be down. The estimated cost is \$10,900.00. Cal Robins questioned if this would be covered in the contract the village has with Water Well Solutions. Jared stated the contract covers everything from the engine to the pump, so this is not covered. The estimated price is \$10,900.

Motion (Perkins, Knight) to approve ordering a new VFD from Water Well Solutions for an estimated cost of \$10,900. Roll-all ayes.

Jared presented a memorandum from Town and Country Engineer Greg Droessler. The WWTP recently had an overflow event due to plugged piping in the oxidation ditch. The plugs appear to be caused by wads of plastic and “flushable wipes” that bound together in the oxidation ditch and plugged the 10” pipe between the splitter box and the clarifier, not allowing flow. This was reported to the DNR per state law and permit requirements, and they will require the village to develop a plan to avoid similar events. This will consist of improving the screening at the facility and cleaning the existing tanks. A screen rebuild could cost up to \$20,000, while a new screen could cost up to \$100,000. This will go to the water/sewer committee for more discussion.

Jared would like to see a facilities plan created. An engineer would access the WWTP and equipment to provide a roadmap for the facility and repairs that will be needed in the future. This would allow for more funding opportunities. An estimate from Greg Droessler has been received. This will be discussed at the water/sewer meeting on May 29th.

Committee Reports:

- ≈ The Police Committee met, discussed, and compared statistics from prior years.
- ≈ The Public Nuisance Committee met and discussed problem properties and grass mowing.

Becky Freiburger will be done working for the village by July 1st. The personnel committee conducted an interview for the position of deputy clerk/treasurer. It is the recommendation of the personnel committee to hire Emily Rath to fill the position.

Motion (Wartner, Robbins) to approve Emily Rath to fill the position of deputy clerk/treasurer starting June 3rd, 2024. Roll-all ayes.

The board held a discussion on the ATV/UTV route. All roads will be accessible, and the 10 mph speed limit signs will be removed and no longer enforced. The posted speed limit will be the same as other motor vehicles, and all traffic laws will still be enforced. The 10 mph signs will be removed in the next few weeks. It has been requested that spots in front of the local businesses be made available for passenger vehicles; however, ATV/UTV parking on Main Street will be available at this time and may be reassessed in the future.

Motion (Slater, Farrey) to approve opening all streets in the village of Benton to ATV/UTV and removing the 10 MPH speed limit. The UTV/ATV speed limit will be the same as the posted motor vehicle speed limits. Roll-all ayes.

Pay the claims against the village.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

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