

April 18, 2023

The Benton County Board of Supervisors met in regular session with Supervisors Seeman, Primmer and Bierschenk present. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. at the conference room at the Benton County Service Center. Members of the public were provided the zoom access capability to join in during open session and livestream at <https://www.youtube.com/bentoncountyiowa>. Unless otherwise noted, all actions were approved unanimously. Summarized Resolutions will be available in the Auditor's office and at: www.bentoncountyiowa.gov (<https://www.youtube.com/bentoncountyiowa>)

Bierschenk moved/Primmer seconded: To approve the minutes of April 11, 2023. Motion carried.

Primmer moved/Bierschenk seconded: To approve Sheriff's Quarterly Report ending March 31, 2023. Motion carried.

Seeman made the motion, with Primmer to abstain and Bierschenk seconded: To approve Resolution #23-24, 2023 Noxious Weeds. Voting aye were Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk. Motion carried.

**Resolution #23-24
DESTRUCTION OF NOXIOUS WEEDS**

Be It Resolved by the Board of Supervisors of Benton County, Iowa that pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 317, Code of Iowa, it is hereby ordered:

1. That each owner and each person in the possession or control of any lands in Benton County shall cut, burn or otherwise destroy all noxious weeds thereon, as defined in this chapter, at such times in each year and in such manner as shall prevent said weeds from blooming or coming to maturity, and shall keep said lands free from such growth of any other weeds as shall render the streets or highways adjoining said land unsafe for public travel. Noxious weeds shall be cut or otherwise destroyed on or before **May 1st, 2023** and as often thereafter as is necessary to prevent seed production:

Primary Noxious Weeds: Destroy by: May 1, 2023	Secondary Noxious Weeds: Destroy By: May 1, 2023
Quackgrass (<i>Agropyron repens</i>)	Butterprint, Velvetleaf (<i>Abutilon theophrasti</i>)
Perennial Sowthistle (<i>Sonchus arvensis</i>)	Cocklebur (<i>Xanthium commune</i>)
Canada Thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>)	Wild Mustard (<i>Brassica arvensis</i>)
Bull Thistle (<i>Cirsium lanceolatum</i>)	Wild Carrot (<i>Daucus carota</i>)
Field Bindweed (<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>)	Sheep Sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosella</i>)
Horsenettle (<i>Solanum carolinense</i>)	Sour Dock (<i>Rumex crispus</i>)
Leafy Spurge (<i>Euphorbia esula</i>)	Smooth Dock (<i>Rumex altissimus</i>)
Perennial Peppergrass (<i>Lepidium draba</i>)	Poison Hemlock (<i>Conium maculatum</i>)
Russian Knapweed (<i>Centaurea repens</i>)	Multiflora Rose (<i>Rosa multiflora</i>)
Buckthorn (Not to include <i>Rhamnus frangula</i>)	Wild Sunflower (<i>Helianthus annuus L.</i>)
Musk Thistle (<i>Carduus nutans</i>)	Puncturevine (<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>)
Tall Thistle (<i>Cirsium altissimum</i>)	Teasel (<i>Dipsacus spp.</i>)
Palmer Amaranth (<i>Amaranthus palmeri</i>)	Shattercane (<i>Sorghum bicolor</i>)
	Buckhorn Plantain (<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>)

2. That each owner and each person in the possession or control of any lands in Benton County infested with any of the following noxious weeds shall adopt a program of weed destruction described by the Weed Commissioner, which may be expected to destroy and will immediately keep under control such infestations of said noxious weeds.

- (a) Primary Noxious Weeds: Quackgrass, Perennial Sowthistle, Canada Thistle, Bull Thistle, Musk Thistle, European Morning Glory or Field Bindweed, Horsenettle, Leafy Spurge, Perennial Peppergrass, Russian Knapweed, Buckthorn, Tall Thistle and all other species of thistles belonging in general of *Cirsium* and *Carduus*, Palmer Amaranth.
- (b) Secondary Noxious Weeds: Butterprint, Cocklebur, Wild Mustard, Puncturevine, Teasel, Wild Carrot, Buckthorn Plantain, Sheep Sorrel, Sour Dock, Smooth Dock, Poison Hemlock, Wild Sunflower, Multiflora Rose and Shattercane.

3. That if the owners or persons in possession or control of any land in Benton County fail to comply with the foregoing orders, the Weed Commissioner or his designee shall cause this to be done and the expense of said work, including costs of serving notice and other costs, if any, shall be assessed against the real estate.

4. That the County Engineer is hereby directed to cause notice of the making and entering of the foregoing order by one publication in each of the official newspapers of the County.

Dated this 18th day of April 2023.

Tracy Seeman, Chairman

Rick Primmer

Gary Bierschenk

ATTEST:

Hayley Rippel, Benton County Auditor

Primmer moved/Bierschenk seconded: To approve a 3-year contract renewal with Cost Advisory Services, Inc. in the amount of \$4,450. Motion carried.

Primmer moved/Bierschenk seconded: To approve and sign documents pertaining to the CDBG-DR Deracho funding pass-through: East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) Service Agreement, Federal Assurances Page, Subrecipient Assurances and Subrogation Agreement and Duplication of Benefits Certification. Motion carried.

The time being 9:30 a.m. and that being the set time for the FY 23 Budget Hearing was opened up for discussion. No comments were heard before today's meeting. Al Schafbuch, Benton County Farm Bureau Member was present and told the board they were doing a pretty good job but voiced his concern about upcoming budget years and assessments. Auditor Rippel explained the impact some of the legislative changes made on current budget and explained how the county is always working with three valuation years: 1) Treasurer file-2021 Values, what we are currently collecting taxes on Payable 22/23. 2) Auditor file is the 2022 values is what the upcoming FY 24 Budgets are estimating their revenue on for collection 23/24. 3) Assessor's file 2023 values in reference to most recent assessment notices that went out. Those are the amounts we will use for FY 25 Budgets. Supervisor Seeman also asked Rippel to explain the fund balances and how the non-levied funds and levied funds work. Currently Benton County has American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund (LATCF) and other pass throughs. It is important to have fund balance reserves for operating expenses to keep us going when the new fiscal year starts July 1 and taxes aren't due until September 30. Hearing no further comments, Primmer moved/Bierschenk seconded to close the FY24 Budget Hearing at 9:42 a.m. Motion carried.

Primmer moved/Bierschenk seconded: To approve Resolution #23-25, Adopting FY 24 Budget. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION #23-25

ADOPTION OF THE FY24 COUNTY BUDGET

BE IT REMEMBERED that on this, the 18th day of April 2023, the Board of Supervisors of Benton County, Iowa, met in session for the purpose of holding a public hearing on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2023-24 as filed with the Board. There was present a quorum as required by law. The notice and place of hearing had, according to law and as directed by the Board, been published in the Gazette, Cedar Valley Times, and Vinton Eagle, the official newspapers published in Benton County.

The budget was then taken up and considered. The public was provided an opportunity to speak.

The County Compensation Board recommendation for FY24 salaries for elected officials and as set forth and adopted in Resolution #23-5 is included in the FY24 budget.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a committed fund balance designation of the ending fiscal year fund balance be established for the following purposes:

- General Fund**-\$622,000 equipment/vehicle replacement, Emergency response, infrastructure
- Rural Services Fund** - \$32,000 land use administrator vehicle replacement
- EMS Revolving Loan Fund** – \$125,000 for emergency services loans
- LOSST Fund** - \$115,000 for technology upgrades and GIS re-flight

FURTHER the commitment of fund balances indicates that Benton County prefers to use available financial resources for the specific purposes set forth above, and although committed, the funds are to remain an integral part of the spendable or appropriable resources of Benton County.

The budget as adopted will approve the following property taxes for fiscal year 2023-24 (without gas and electric):

General Basic	\$5,987,994
General Supplemental	\$3,918,697
Rural Services Basic	\$4,339,178
Debt Service	\$799,157

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED, by the Benton County Board of Supervisors that the FY24 budget is hereby adopted.

Dated this 18th day of April, 2023.

Tracy Seeman, Chairman

Rick Primmer

Gary Bierschenk

ATTEST:

Hayley Rippel, Auditor

Primmer pointed out the 7% increase for the elected officials' salaries included in Resolution #23-5, and how that trickles down to different aspects such as those elected officials' deputies. Due to the inflationary trend he recommended giving all county employees a 7% increase instead of the 5% that was previously approved on January 25, 2023 as long as each department stays within their individual budgeted amounts. Rippel asked if that included Unions, and Primmer answered yes that it would.

Primmer moved/Bierschenk seconded: To give 7% to all Benton County Employees. Motion carried.

Maggie Mangold, Chairman of the Benton County Board of Health provided an update regarding their recent action and recommendations for working towards a county-based health program. Currently Benton County contracts with Virginia Gay Hospital, but were given notice they wanted to cut ties. Mangold said at the time of their last meeting held last week, the Health Board voted to take the route of a county-based department and hire an administrator. Barb Greenlee brought up a recent conversation she had with Buchanan County that took place after the recent BOH meeting about possibly sub-contracting with them for a year, to help guide us and get a better feel for a budget and then maybe hire our own Director. An upcoming combined meeting with Buchanan County Public Health officials is planned and then this will be discussed further. Mangold reminded the Board about the grant funds and restrictions and how all purchases currently will need to be made by June 30, 2023.

Discussion was had regarding the recent vacated Human Resource Director position and possible formation of a hiring committee. Primmer pointed out that Benton County has around 130 employees, and he felt Benton County needed another director. Auditor Rippel asked if she could provide a handout with her vision and goals for this area. Pointing out that in years past, this work was always handled by the Auditor's office. The daily paperwork goes hand in hand with what employees in her office handle such as payroll and all the insurance deductions and flex spending etc. Back in 2021 when she approached the Board and asked to outsource some needs on an as needed basis was because of the added stress COVID caused in regards to lack of policies we had in place such as working from home, or the sick leave. She now has five employees counting herself and they are willing to take back the duties and save the county money, stressing that the General Basic fund is already levied at the max. Asking to only outsource those personnel matters as they arise and have a non-biased professional handle those along with union negotiations for an hourly fee. Lough added he'd be happy to work on contract negotiations but adding his biggest concern for a county this size was confidentiality. He felt having someone dedicated to handle those situations is in our best interest. Primmer felt a hiring committee should be formed, and put that into motion adding that it was his turn to serve on it. Assistant Attorney Megan Hall said she would serve on the hiring committee and agreed this needed to be handled by someone who specializes in the area. Former County Auditor Jill Marlow said the HR work was always done in the Auditor's office and she felt the office was capable of handling the day-to-day administration, and pointed out the office is currently handling the duties with the vacancy. Marlow also brought up concerns with upcoming budget restrictions and the future years could see a freeze like years past. Marlow also asked how often in a year's time would you have to call in outside help. The Board took a phone call from a concerned employee who asked that they get employees input as well. Recorder Lexa Speidel agreed to try it out for a year and see if it was cost saving, that employees are used to going to the Auditor's office for their needs. Supervisor Bierschenk observed there have been things that have been lax these past few years and said there is plenty of space to get everybody back up to speed but did not second the motion. Supervisor Seeman said he wants to see what is out there and would second the motion adding he didn't want it all dumped on the Auditor's lap, but felt the office should still be in charge of a lot of these things. Motion carried. Further discussion on who would serve on the hiring committee was had. Sheriff Ron Tippet was willing and Primmer asked that someone from Conservation and Secondary Roads also serve.

Primmer moved/Bierschenk seconded: To adjourn. Motion carried.

Tracy Seeman, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Hayley Rippel, Benton County Auditor