

December 5, 2023

The Benton County Board of Supervisors met in special session with Supervisors Seeman and Bierschenk present, Primmer called in. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Benton County Service Center. Members of the public are invited to join in during open session or watch the 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*

Bierschenk moved/Primmer seconded: To approve the minutes of Tuesday December 5, 2023. Motion carried. Discussion continued on the upcoming Holiday schedule and if the county would follow the state and observe Tuesday, December 26 as a holiday. Primmer made motion to follow suit with the state, Bierschenk seconded that and motion was carried. Continued discussion after the motion was had such as how this would effect union employees who may have to work that day and how it would be paid out at time and half and could affect the Sheriff and Secondary Roads budget. Sue Wilber, Human Resource Director clarified this was originally brought up due to current handbook stating Christmas Eve being observed as a half day if it fell on Monday through Friday and the mentioning of December 26th was only if we were going to follow the State. Primmer withdrew the motion, and the chairman said to put it back on the agenda next week.

Bierschenk moved/Primmer seconded: To approve Resolution #23-85, Employment change for Owen Hansen. Motion carried.
RESOLUTION #23-85

WHEREAS, the Benton County Sheriff has a need for full-time corrections officer and;

WHEREAS, Owen Hansen has been employed by Benton County as part-time corrections officer since August 18, 2022 and;

WHEREAS, Hansen has completed all of the training related to the above-mentioned position; and

WHEREAS, the Sheriff recommended that Hansen have his employment status be changed from part-time to full-time

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Benton County Board of Supervisors that Owen Hansen be changed to a full-time corrections officer in the sheriff's office effective December 5, 2023 at the hourly rate of \$21.08 an hour.

Signed this 5th date of December, 2023

Tracy Seeman, Chairman

Rick Primmer

Gary Bierschenk

ATTEST:

Hayley Rippel, Benton County Auditor

Wilber said they were tabling the hiring of the full-time sheriff deputy. Wilber then explained a texting program she was researching to improve the communication for county employees. Not all employees have access to emails. There are different vendors that can do texting program and send out reminders/blasts to employees for various things or in an emergency situation. Employees would have the option to opt out also. Our current phone vendor is willing to add that onto our current plan for a set up cost of \$274.90 with a monthly fee of \$24.95. It was suggested that a survey be taken of employees to see how many people are interested in this before going further. No action taken. Scott Hansen brought up the County's early retirement policy and how it hasn't been reviewed since 2012. With his approaching retirement. He had questions about the insurance coverage and the amount of the premium that is covered for that time frame before he qualifies for Medicare. This will be put back on the agenda on December 19, to allow time to process the various amounts of health insurance premiums over the years and where that \$425 amount came into play compared to what the cost of the single premium was. Shelby Williams, Conservation Director discussed the idea of using the Local Tribal Grant Funds of \$100,000 for the Wildcat Bluff project. This grant is specific in the use and to help fund the tribal surveys of the land would be an approved use. It could possibly be used for grant matching for other funding as well.

Bierschenk moved/Primmer seconded: To commit \$100,000 Local Tribal Grant funds to use for the Wildcat Bluff project. Motion carried.

Bierschenk moved/Primmer seconded: To approve the Utility Permit for Alliant Energy to place conduit for fiber in the county's right of way in Kane, Union, Eldorado, Fremont and Florence Townships. Motion carried.

In public comments: Dana Sanders asked the board about the impact the recent \$250,000 settlement has on the insurance premiums. Board member Primmer said this should not affect it by very much. Sanders referred to the manual for County

Supervisors and holding them accountable and being transparent and compliant with open meeting laws. This led to questions regarding what discipline action is taken, which is confidential. Sanders was told that all employees are required to take harassment training and that the handbook is currently going through a review process for updates.

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

Tracy Seeman, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Hayley Rippel Benton County Auditor