

April 2, 2024

The Benton County Board of Supervisors met in regular session with Supervisors Primmer, Bierschenk and Seeman present. Primmer called the meeting 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>. *Summarized Resolutions will be available in the Auditor's office and at: www.bentoncountyiowa.gov*

Seeman moved/Bierschenk seconded: To approve the agenda. Voting aye were Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk. Motion carried.

Bierschenk moved/Seeman seconded: To approve the revised minutes from March 19, 2024. Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk voting aye thereon. Motion carried.

Bierschenk moved/Seeman seconded: To set FY 25 Budget Hearing date for Tuesday, April 23, 2024 at 9:15 a.m. Voting aye thereon were Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk. Motion carried.

Seeman moved/Bierschenk seconded: To approve Resolution #24-27, Service Area Amendment to FY 24 Budget. Voting aye thereon were: Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION #24-27

SERVICE AREA BUDGET AMENDMENT

WHEREAS, the Benton County Board of Supervisors adopted the FY2024 budget on April 18, 2023;

WHEREAS, the Board now desires to amend said budget within service area(s) to reallocate funds;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Benton County Board of Supervisors that the FY2024 county budget is hereby amended within the following service areas:

Service Area 9) -\$12,000 0001-99 (General Basic)

 +\$12,000 0001-01 (General Basic)

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that said funds are hereby appropriated. The auditor is directed to make the necessary changes.

Signed this 2nd day of April, 2024

Rick Primmer, Chairman

Gary Bierschenk

Tracy Seeman

ATTEST:

Hayley Rippel, Benton County Auditor

Larry Hlas Van Horne Fire Department met with the board to inquire on the use of LOSST (Local Option Sales and Service Tax) funds for a breathing air compressor system for the department. This compressor would be used for hazardous air environment. The Board approved an amount of 10 percent after an invoice is turned into the Auditor for payment.

Bierschenk moved/Seeman seconded: To approve and authorize chairman to sign the contract and contractor's bond with Peterson Contractors, Inc. for the amount of \$559,457.50. Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk voting aye thereon. Motion carried. Shelby Williams, Conservation Director introduced Eric Shares, the new IRM (Integrated Roadside Manager) to the Supervisors. Williams also provided a department update on the Wildcat Bluff Project. Donations are coming in for the additional 180 acres that they are partnering with Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation on. They have recently received \$23,000 in private donations that includes Clickstop, Inc and Isaac Walton. This property includes ideal timber habitat and lowland habitat and additional Cedar River Bank.

Seeman moved/Bierschenk seconded: To approve and authorize signature request for release of funds for CDBG-20-DRI-025, grant for Conservation tree planting. Voting aye thereon were: Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk. Motion carried.

Seeman moved/Bierschenk seconded: To approve Class C liquor license for Hy-Vee, Inc. for August 30, 2024 through September 3, 2024 for a wedding. Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk voting aye thereon. Motion carried.

Seeman moved/Bierschenk seconded: To approve the multiple sets of minutes from March 26, 2024. Voting aye were: Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Tracy Seeman reported of him attending the East Central Iowa Housing Trust Fund and how they most recently supported a few local home buyers along with the ECICOG meeting. Gary Bierschenk reported on his regional mental health meeting. Rick Primmer reported on his recent Benton Development Group meeting and they are looking for locations to set up new business within the county. He also attended the Heartland Insurance Meeting which unfortunately took place the same time as the Iowa Workplace development meeting. Chairman Primmer also reported that he and the Board along with Auditor Rippel attended last week's EMS Advisory Council Meeting.

Seeman moved/Bierschenk seconded: To approve Resolution #24-28, Approving hiring Derek Marsh, Paralegal in the County Attorney's Office. Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk voting aye thereon. Motion carried.

RESOLUTION #24-28

APPROVE HIRE OF PARALEGAL

WHEREAS: Benton County Attorney's Office has an opening to fill for a Paralegal; and

WHEREAS: Applications were accepted for this position and,

WHEREAS: These applications have been reviewed and evaluated.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY The Benton County Board of Supervisors that Derek Marsh be hired to fill the position of Paralegal at a salary of \$50,000 per year. His start date will be June 3, 2024.

Signed this 2nd day of April, 2024.

Rick Primmer, Chairman

Gary Bierschenk

Tracy Seeman

ATTEST:

Hayley Rippel, Benton County Auditor

Seeman moved/Bierschenk seconded: To approve and authorize the chairman to sign the Iowa State Association of Counties Wellness program agreement. Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk voting aye thereon. Motion carried.

Seeman moved/Bierschenk seconded: To acknowledge resignation of Rick McNamara in secondary roads effective May 1, 2024. Primmer, Seeman and Bierschenk voting aye thereon. Motion carried.

Benton County Human Resource Director Sue Wilber wanted to provide an update on her job description and some of the things she has done for the county along with answering concerns brought up in previous meetings about her role. Wilber has updated the job application form, facilitated and helped in hiring of about 10 positions. Wilber is working to improve communications with a county-wide texting program. She reintroduced the countywide meeting and implemented county-wide challenges to promote team building and employee management along with starting a safety committee.

Wilber explained that we are in the process of converting to electronic timing attendance and leave tracking so staff has access to their time and leave balances. Wilber also wanted to address misconceptions and misunderstandings that have come up. She clarified she does not oversee IT, nor does she have the authority to tell the IT person what to do. She was asked by the Board to investigate the situation. There are certain expectations of employee conduct, which is why there is a county handbook and handbook committee. If there are violations to the handbook, she is asked to look into them and address them accordingly. Wilber stressed that part of her job is to protect the county from liability and risk. Wilber says a concern was brought to her about a deduction in an employee's paycheck that wasn't authorized. As far as money spent on legal fees, she said the county attorney directs her sometimes to reach out to outside legal services to provide a perspective or an opinion on a matter they may be handling. Wilber also brought up concerns about her having another job. There are numerous people who have outside employment. She said that she still works with her previous employer and the interview committee was okay with that. She even stated that the Auditor has a cookie business on the side. She encouraged people to stop by her office if they have questions. Auditor Hayley Rippel sought clarification on outside employment stating that her baking cookies is not an outside business, but rather a stress release and doesn't interfere with her county time. Rippel also addressed the texting program not working and stressed that payroll issues can't be corrected unless they are brought to her office's attention. Rippel explained when and why the Human Resource Department was created. She had sought help back in 2020 to address rising needs such as creating new policies and other measures that were arising due to the COVID Pandemic. At that time the supervisors decided to hire an in house employee and not spend money on outsourcing. This was when the Human Resource Department was created, otherwise all previous HR duties has always been done within the Auditor's office.

Seeman moved/Bierschenk seconded: To Adjourn. Voting aye were Primmer, Bierschenk and Seeman. Motion carried.

Richard Primmer, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Hayley Rippel, Benton County Auditor