

March 24, 2026

The Benton County Board of Supervisors met in regular session with Supervisors Seeman, Tippet and Volz present. Chairman Seeman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.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>. *Full Resolutions will be available in the Auditor's office and at: www.bentoncountya.gov*

Tonight's meeting is for the purpose of the maximum proposed tax levies for the FY 27 Budget. This is the first public hearing in the budgeting process. Notices were mailed out to all tax payers notifying them of when the Cities, Schools and the County were holding their meetings so that concerned taxpayers could voice their opinions. No action will be taken and the subject in discussion is strictly on budget asking. There was a crowd of taxpayers along with a few department heads.

County Auditor, Hayley Rippel started out by explaining the mailer that went out and how it has nothing specific to the tax parcel other than distinguished by what tax district it resides in. Withing city limits, the County, School district and City information would show up, and those that are in the townships would only list county and school. Rippel also explained how consolidated tax rates are calculated, emphasizing that property taxes are distributed across multiple taxing entities and that not all the taxes go to the county. The county can only speak in regards to the counties amounts, if they had concerns with the schools or cities they would need to attend those scheduled meetings. County Assessor, Larry Andreesen was also present and explained how the assessment and taxable valuations are figured.

The supervisors addressed questions and concerns about spending increases and explained the factors behind those needs, including enhanced public safety measures. Unfunded mandates was a starting topic and how residents may not realize the burden put on the counties for various things. They also pointed out how they froze wages with the exception of the two unions, and how they are obligated to abide with the contracts in place. The board has actually lowered the overall levy in the county, but the tax base increased, therefore it shows an increase in the taxable dollars we will receive. The county too has increases in insurance, fuel and diesel and other provisions to keep departments up and going and upgrading equipment, software and hardware are essential.

The board also received a phone call from a concerned citizen regarding county assets and possibly unnecessary payroll expenses. To look at the needs versus the wants.

This public hearing allowed for open dialogue, with officials reinforcing their commitment to balancing responsible budgeting while still delivering essential services residents receive.

After no further comments, the public hearing was closed.

Tippet moved/Seeman seconded: To adjourn meeting at 6:51 p.m. Seeman and Volz voting aye. Motion carried.

Tracy Seeman, Chairman

ATTEST: _____

Hayley Rippel Benton County Auditor