

# Benton County Council

March 21st, 2024

The Benton County Council met at 8:30 a.m. at the Benton County Courthouse. Those in attendance were Council members: Jim Schoen, Jackie Steinmetz, Robert Sloniger, Trina Schutter, Brent Cox, Jack Duncan and Auditor, Audrey Freeland

Others in attendance were – Carole Hoff, Jasmine Bice, John Cox, Latisha Provo and Mike Freeland

## **John Cox – Sheriff**

He spoke on how he would like to re-establish the cum rate to assist in jail repairs and future ongoing routine maintenance. He would also like to ask the board for assistance with covering the expenses for the feasible study to be conducted. John spoke to the board about the known issues with the infrastructure, water damage, and roof. Councilman Schoen asked John what rate was he looking to try and raise it too? John reviewed the 3 different options; lower EMS, Cumulative Bridge or both to increase the rate of the Cum Jail without raising taxes overall. Councilman Schoen said that his concern and reservation is that both the Cum. Bridge and EMS need their rate for budgeting purposes and operating expenses. Councilman Sloniger asked Commissioner Freeland how many bridges they replace each year. Freeland replied that the board follows the recommendations provided through the bridge inspections (usually 1 per year) and cannot give an estimate on costs. Auditor Freeland added that she will be attending a class reviewing this topic and will send the information to the board and stated that in order to meet the deadline to re-establish a cumulative fund a special meeting will need to be held. John thanked the board for their consideration and will work on getting the board some figures on the repairs.

John gave an update on the jail. Councilman Schoen asked if there are any funds received from the state, yes once they are placed at DOC the county receives funding that is placed in county general. The board then reviewed the request for a feasible study and the costs associated with it. Councilman Sloniger asked about the funds he is stating that he is needing for this year, yes part of that has already been done and other funds have been allocated to cover most of those expenses. After some discussion it was approved to have the study completed and that it would be paid for out of wind funds. It was approved with a motion by Councilman, Robert Sloniger, seconded by Councilman, Jack Duncan and motion carried.

Councilman, Brent Cox will be the County Council representative for them on the jails contact team with RQAW.

## **Business:**

The meeting minutes from February 22, 2024, meeting were approved as presented with a motion by Councilman, Brent Cox, second by Councilwoman, Jackie Steinmetz and motion carried.

## **Carole Hoff – Treasurer**

Carole came today to discuss the investments. Councilman Sloniger asked if they were closing out the current ones to reopen new ones, yes that is the plan. Carole stated that per by the amended investment policy, it states it requires permission and must be duly noted in the minutes. She asked Councilman Schoen and asked if there were any changes. He spoke with Grant from FMB and said to move forward with whatever rates her and Grant agreed upon. Councilman Schoen said that it is an exception that they are cancelling the CD early, yes, it is.

Commissioner Freeland asked what rate they were giving. Carole replied to the following: CD # 42629 – 4% and CD # 42630 – 4.5% with the same maturity rates. She said that she is closing them to clean up the investments for the county. Councilman Schoen asked what the new end dates would be. Carole did

# Benton County Council

March 21st, 2024

not have that information with her. With no further questions it was approved with a motion by Councilman, Robert Sloniger, seconded by Councilman, Brent Cox and motion carried. Carole asked Auditor Freeland to let her know when the minutes are done. Auditor Freeland addressed the group and said that the minutes would not be approved until they are signed in April. The group discussed a letter being prepared on Council letterhead and President, Councilman, Jim Schoen to sign if approved by Farmers and Merchants Bank. Auditor Freeland will reach out to see if the bank will approve a letter as documentation. The letterhead documentation was approved to be drafted if approved with Grant's approval with a motion by Councilman, Robert Sloniger, seconded by Councilman, Brent Cox and motion carried.

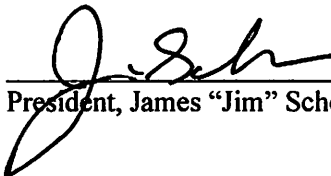
## Latisha Provo – Economic Development

Asked if the board was receiving their emails and if that approach was acceptable. The board said that was fine and they appreciated being kept in the loop.

## Mike Freeland – Commissioner

Gave a quick update on the new building at the fairgrounds. He also stated that there is not enough funding available, but Sheriff Cox is working on donations as well. The footings have been dug.

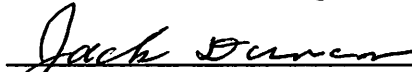
**With no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m. with a motion by Councilman, Brent Cox, second by Councilman, Jack Duncan, motion carried.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President, James "Jim" Schoen

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Vice President, Brent Cox

\_\_\_\_\_  
Councilman, Robert Sloniger

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Councilwoman, Angie Glotzbach

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Councilman, John "Jack" Duncan

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Councilwoman, Katrina "Trina" Schutter

\_\_\_\_\_  
Councilwoman, Jacqueline "Jackie" Steinmetz

Attest:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Audrey Freeland, County Auditor