

**Benton County Commissioner Meeting**  
**July 6, 2022**

The Benton County Commissioners met at 8:15 a.m. in the Commissioners room at the Benton County Courthouse. Those in attendance were Commissioners Bryan Berry, Mike Freeland, Steve Cox, County Attorney, Jacob Ahler and County Auditor Deputy, Beth Budreau

Others in attendance were: Mike Budreau, Walt Wilson, Jason Fisher, Angie Taylor, Ron Shoup, Lucas Darling, John Cox, Dave Fisher, Sam Smith, Barb Creek, Jason Durr, Dan Klemme

**Mike Budreau – Highway Supervisor**

- Chip & Seal – finished up with Boswell, the back side of Oxford is done. Holding off since it rained.
- Trucks - got all the paperwork from Marcus, Commissioners just need to sign it for the title. They raised the price a little bit, from \$1800 to \$2500 per truck. Getting a year newer truck since it came in so late and that's why they are charging us more. The county has already paid for one of the trucks, but not the other. Mike did not want to give them the money without having the truck. Commissioner Berry asked our County Attorney, Jacob Ahler if that was okay to do, Jacob agreed it was fine. Commissioner Cox made a motion to pay for the second truck, and Commissioner Freeland seconded, motion carried.
- Community Crossing – still waiting, michelle got an email saying that they were applying for the money.
- Bridge – Sawing the road for the approaches, then pouring the approaches and will have to sit for a week to 10 days and then after that it should be open. The second bridge (600E), haven't heard when it will be delivered.
- New Drags – getting them figured out, just set up different then the ones they had before.
- Rowe – Having a hard time getting the pumps, because it's a front mounted pump. Mike went ahead and ordered a second pump for the second truck so hopefully it will be here in time.
- Bids on Drags will be held at the next meeting.

**Jason Fisher – DHS / EMA Director**

- EMS Building - Jason talked about the 2 quotes for heating and air, Adwell said that putting only 1 unit in would be less than \$1,000 in savings. He's worried about with only 1 unit that it won't keep up with having multiple rooms in the clinic. Commissioner Berry suggested maybe knocking out a wall and put the two units there so there is room to work on them. Jason said that Adwell mentioned that as well. Mr. Schutter is to meet with Jason about taking the wall out. Jason asked what the county wanted to do about the furnances. Commissioner Berry said that he would like to use the original bids from Adwell. Which for heating / cooling they were:  
\$8107.46 – EMT Building  
\$8889.94 – Fowler Med Offices / Garage  
Commissioner Cox made a motion to replace both the furnaces and A/C with Greg Adwell, Commissioner Freeland seconded, motion carried.

**Benton County Commissioner Meeting**  
**July 6, 2022**

- Dispatch – Commissioner Cox asked when dispatch was moving, Jason said hopefully this month or the first week of August. They are trying to work out some engineering solutions for the technology so they don't have to buy anything else.
- Burn Ban – Jason said he spoke with all the fire chiefs in the county, they were all on board to putting a burn ban into place, even though we have had a little bit of rain but there is a bunch of dead vegetation. Commissioner Berry said to go ahead and sign it and activate it Friday if we don't get anymore rain.
- EMS Class – 17 students in the EMT class, about half are from Benton County.

**Angie Taylor – Economic Development**

- Plot in Boswell – Angie said that she is going to reach out to Gene McGowen, to build housing.
- Angie said she met with TJ, Donna, Tim & Kathryn Baker (architects), they want to build Boswell. TJ is leaning more towards tiny houses – Bryan mentioned that there is a square footage that they have to abide by, there is no tiny houses aloud in the county.
- Met with Mark Dowd looking for grants for beautification/housing.
- Angie mentioned that the Durango needs A/C. Commissioner Cox told her to take it out to the county and have Mike look at it.
- Commissioner Berry asked about the hotel, Angie thinks it's a dead deal, she doesn't think the time is right, right now. She's heard people are more interested in investing in housing then hotels.
- Commissioner Berry, Asked about if Ivy Tech was still going in at the old school. Angie said she doesn't think its going to actually going to be "Ivy Tech" she said they're being accredited and its called GWO (Global Wind Organization) – Angie said that she would ask for sure about Ivy Tech.

**Business:**

The June 21<sup>st</sup> 2022 regular scheduled meeting minutes were reviewed and approved with a motion by Commissioner Cox, seconded by Commissioner Freeland and motion carried. Let the record show that Commissioner Berry abstained from voting, as he was not present for the meeting.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve monthly claims, Commissioner Berry asked that the claim for Purdue Ext. not be paid, as he wants to find the lease first and look at it, motion was seconded by Commissioner Freeland and motion carried.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve pay at once claims, seconded by Commissioner Freeland and motion carried.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve payroll, seconded by Commissioner Freeland motion carried. Let the record show that Commissioner Freeland abstained for voting on two employees payrolls.

Benton County Commissioner Meeting  
July 6, 2022

Commissioner Berry said that on the Data Pit Stop quotes he can't get a straight answer, so he would like to table it until next meeting so he can get some more information. Commissioner Freeland and Cox agreed.

Commissioner Berry said that on the Data / GIS request for strategic Econ Research, that the people have tried doing it before and they want the county to do their work for them. Commissioner Berry made a motion to denied their requests, seconded by Commissioner Freeland motion carried.

**Dave Fisher – Surveyor**

Dave said that he had a gentleman come in and talk to him about getting a bridge replaced. Dave said he told him that, that is the commissioners and drainage board and thought that the issue had been resolved. Commissioner Berry agreed he thought it was taken care of. It is not a county owned bridge, therefore its not the counties responsibility to maintain it.

**The board of Commissioners temporarily closed their meeting to hold a drainage board meeting at 9:00 a.m. for the. They re-opened their public meeting at 9:32 a.m.**

**John Cox – 2023 Elected Sheriff**

John came before the board to present how he has his first year as sheriff planned out. He explained to the board his work ethic and how he is consistent and risk management driven. John shared with the board that Sheriff Munson has been very pleasant to work with and he has been willing to share the budget information. Mr. Cox talked about how Jason Fisher helped him with a \$160,000 grant for new equipment (body worn video and new in car computers), which the department should receive in October/November.

John talked about the pay for the CO's. He mentioned that Benton County Deputies are one of the lowest paid in the state. He wants to work with the council and commissioners on getting their baseline raised. John went on to say that one of his biggest risk management issues inside the jail is his corrections officers. He wants to make sure that he gets the right people in there, managing the inmates the way they are suppose too.

John wants to move the merit deputies to hourly and preparing fair overtime budgeting for them. Commissioner Berry asked if he knew how he would track them going to hourly. John said that they would fill out a time card. It will be tracked 2 ways, in the CAD system and then they will also be clocking in and out at the dispatch center. Commissioner Berry mentioned maybe being able to put the systems to clock in and out in the cars. Commissioner Berry asked if overtime would be approved or if its automatic overtime, and John said it will be approved, it will be something he will review and sign off on. John mentioned that Sheriff Munson said the deputies have missed their holiday pay for this year. John said that he was going to take care of that as well. There will be a county process for that as well. That way if there is a complaint, John will be able to pull the data and look over it. Commissioner Berry said the deputies should be getting paid for the holidays, period.

John said that the county will have deputies on duty in their vehicle 24 hours a day 7 days a week 365 days a year.

Benton County Commissioner Meeting  
July 6, 2022

John said that with the dispatch center moving, he loses his eyes and ears in the evening hours for his CO's that are in the back and his front window people. John said he will remove most of the reflective film that is on the glass at the front counter.

John talked about how he wrote 2 job descriptions. A full time and part time for administrative assistant for the Sheriff Department and they will share duties with EMS administrative. The full time will work Monday-Friday. John said between him and Jason there will be plenty of things for them to do for a full time employee. The part time position will work up to 28 hours a week – Saturday/Sunday 8 hour shifts and fill in for the full time position when needed. John said he will email the commissioners the job descriptions.

John wants to work on the CO's, because right now there is only one CO on duty during the night shift. Part of it is just because there is turnover. But with the dispatch center, they will no longer have that person upfront. He doesn't want just one person managing the jail 20-30 people back in the pods. Its just a bad decision. So he would like to allowed to hire two additional CO's for the night shift – 6pm to 6am. If they happen to have three on one shift, then that person would be able to handle the front window if people come in. He stated if he only has 1 person at the jail, their first responsibility is back in the pod so if someone were to come in, he can't promise that they would be able to leave their duties in back and assist whomever were to come in.

John said that him and Jason have talked about the new fiber. They would like to be hooked up to the cameras between the Jail and Dispatch center. So if anything were to happen to a CO, dispatch will see and be able to call an officer over the radio. The CO's lifeline are the deputies if something were to happen at the Jail.

Other things that John has asked for is a bump in the budget for equipment for the CO's and deputies. He stated that a lot of the equipment is expired or inoperable. John sent out a spreadsheet and asked the CO's and deputies to list all the equipment/uniforms that they have, and he asked the status of all of it. He wants all his CO's to have the same equipment, as well as all his deputies to have the same equipment. He has a couple of deputies with expired vests, and that needs fixed.

Johns plan is to completely audit the sheriff's office. The equipment, everything. He can't find a spreadsheet for anything about what the department owns. So he is going to go through everything and make spreadsheets. He asked the commissioners if there is anything as far as lists of equipment or anything that the department owns, please let him know.

Johns going to update standard operating procedures for the Jail. There are some in place already, but through the sheriff's association he has access to all of their current standard operating procedures on the website. He wants to create consistency for his employees.

John is interested in interior/exterior door access review and facilities review. Commissioner Berry said Bliss McKnight inspects the jail. John said that he went in a few nights ago and said that they were having a trouble with their computers. He wants to find out who all our approved

Benton County Commissioner Meeting  
July 6, 2022

vendors and how you contact them after hours for emergencies. He wants to do a walk through the jail and just look at anything as far as maintenance or repairs that need done.

John asked the commissioners what they would like from him. Commissioner Berry said communication, John said that he will be at every meeting with updates. John said if he needs to communicate with any of them how would they like him to go about that. Commissioner Cox said to just send them all an email.

John said he spoke with his staff about the confidentiality, it is key. John said he wants to get things done and be proactive. He wants him and his deputies to be more involved with community events.

Commissioner Berry asked how council took wanting to hire three more employees. John said the general consensus was they know that dispatch moving is going to cost money, and there are some things that they need to do to help mitigate some of the risk management things they are going to have at the jail. Commissioner Berry asked about the CO's, where he is wanting to get them at, and what did council say about the salary. John said that he asked for up to \$34,000 - \$35,000, but its going to take time. But he wants update their equipment, and update their training and get their SOP's and his current CO's seemed happy with that. John said he asked for raises clear across the board, Commissioner Berry said that's what his concern was if he's going to hire more people he wants to see raises for everybody.

Commissioner Cox said when you send new deputies to the police academy, he wants them to have to stay on as a deputy for at least three years. John said that he is going to do that. Since were a small county and we don't pay that great.

John said that after elections he sent out an email introducing himself to all the staff. He explained their will be accountability and rules. What allows him to do what he does in the community is his honesty and integrity and that's what matters. He told all of the staff there are two ways that you will loose your job immediately, if you compromise your honesty and integrity.

**John Cox / Dan Klemme – Fairgrounds**

John talked about the fairgrounds, everything is going well. They did clean up Tuesday night, barns are in pretty good shape. John thanked the commissioners for the gravel. John asked if at all possible if the highway could bring a broom out to help clean off the drives right before fair, especially where they are building the new structure.

John said that he has been in contact with Lyle, he has a list of electrical things that he needs to look at. All the fridges, freezers and A/C's have been turned on and seem to be running well.

They went through the barns last night, the only structure issue that John found was at the horse and pony barn, one or two of the big posts are broken off at the ground. John and Dan are going to stabilize them so they don't lose a corner of the barn.

Benton County Commissioner Meeting  
July 6, 2022

John stated that the new letters on the swine barn are up and they look really nice. Earl Park Sign Shop is making the numbers for the dates of the fair to put out on the board.

John said the biggest issue they have is the 4H building. He walked in there Tuesday, it was 75-80% humidity and 80 degrees. There were 2 ladies in there scrubbing on mold, John asked them to leave because they didn't need to be in there. Dan had Matt Booth come out and look at it. Matt said he would not have anything held inside the building. Dan said that Matt doesn't have time to get it cleaned up before fair, it will need to be wiped down with antifungal. Commissioner Berry asked about using the blue building at the fairgrounds. John said that would be his recommendation. He asked if the county highway would be able to help get it cleaned out. John stated that they cleaned it out a lot last year, but there is still some stuff in there that needs cleaned out. Dan said that the extension office needs somewhere to go, Jason said that he would get ahold of TEMA and see if the fair could borrow one of their a/c tents and put it next to the blue building. Commissioner Berry said that he would stop out at the highway and see if any of the guys were available this week to help to clean out the blue building.

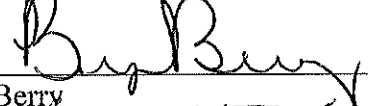
**Business Continued**

Commissioner Berry spoke about our existing SOFOS firewall from 2016 outdated – he said that Tom wanted to upgrade it. Sofos is willing to sell us two (2) 3100 for \$8200. Commissioner Cox made a motion to purchase 2 SOFOS for \$8200, seconded by Commissioner Freeland, motion carried.


Commissioner Berry stated that Josh Rutledge resigned as the counties ADA officer. Commissioner Berry talked to someone, but he won't have an answer until next Monday on whether they want to do it or not.

Mike Budreau forgot to bring the EDPR bond, the commissioners need to stop out at the highway and sign it. Commissioner Berry made a motion to accept the bond for the repair on the one turbine, seconded by Commissioner Freeland, motion carried.

**With no further business the Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m. with a motion by Commissioner, Bryan Berry, second by Commissioner, Mike Freeland and motion carried.**

  
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Bryan Berry

  
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Steve Cox

  
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Mike Freeland

  
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Attest: Beth Budreau, Benton County Deputy Auditor