

Benton County Council December 19, 2024

The Benton County Council were set to meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Benton County Courthouse. Those in attendance were Council members: Jim Schoen, Trina Schutter, Jackie Steinmetz, Robert Sloniger, Angie Glotzbach, Jack Duncan and Chief Deputy Auditor, Beth Budreau.

Others in attendance were – Mike Freeland, John Cox, and Bryan Berry

Business:

The meeting minutes from the November 21, 2024, meeting was approved as presented with a motion by Councilman, Robert Sloniger, second by Councilman, Jack Duncan and motion carried.

The special meeting minutes from the November 22, 2024, meeting was approved as presenting with a motion by Councilman, Robert Sloniger, second by Councilwoman, Jackie Steinmetz and motion carried.

The year end transfers were presented with a motion by Councilwoman, Angie Glotzbach, second by Councilman, Jack Duncan and motion carried.

The council discussed that they need to appoint a KIRPC rep for 2025. Councilman, Robert Sloniger nominated Councilman Brent Cox to the KIRPC Representative, second by Councilwoman Jackie Steinmetz, motion carried.

John Cox – Sheriff

Sheriff Cox came to the meeting to discuss some highlights of the year.

- Sheriff Cox discussed that they did a jail study. They have come up with a plan to tackle over the next few years. They are going to tear out the trees on the south side along 6th street and have the county highway do some excavation work, do some water proofing on the walls and back fill dirt on that side of the jail.
- The jail roof will be next, commissioner Leuck has been on the roof to do measurements to get an idea of what the cost will be and then work with a local contractor to replace the roof and then the jail won't have to deal with the water problem.
- Replacing the jail door & camera system.
- Replacing vehicles in the fleet – moving from dodges to Chevrolets
- Replacing uniforms and equipment
- New VHF radios – allows for communication if the 1800 system were to go down.
- Technology in trucks – all is up and running. Deputies are able to work on the road.
- Interview room – recording system working great.
- IT room – fully functioning and no issues.
- Updated and completed 2024 certification for all employees.

Brian Gabriel with Mainstream Fiber joined the group via phone call and talked about the Benton County status on property taxes for fiber optic infrastructures. Brian stated that his

Call Date	Call Time	From Name	From	Dialed	To	Duration
12/19/2024	8:51:11	Benton County	(765) 884-0930	(765) 314-3985	Benton County Conference Bridge (8000)	0:05:01
12/19/2024	8:43:29	BRYAN GABRIEL	(812) 340-8644	(765) 314-3985	Benton County Conference Bridge (8000)	0:12:35

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understanding is that Benton County is not going to charge Mainstream property tax. Brian is just looking for confirmation or a motion that Benton County will not be charging Mainstream Fiber property tax. Councilman, Robert Sloniger asked for clarification on what Brian was meaning by property tax, if Brian was talking about the lines and the poles, and Brian said yes, not buildings, just fiber optic infrastructures. Councilman, Jim Schoen stated that it's no different than REMC and NISPCO and Brian stated yes Mainstream is a public Utility through The Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission. There was a motion made by Councilman, Robert Sloniger to not charge property tax on lines or poles for mainstream fiber, Councilwoman Trina Schutter seconded, motion carried.

The group closed out the meeting at 8:59 a.m. with a motion by Councilman, Robert Sloniger, second by Councilman, Jack Duncan, motion carried.

Ronald Shoup
Katrina Schutter
Cacuelina Stearns
John A. Cyr

George Sloniger

Attest: Beth Budreau
Beth Budreau, Chief Deputy Auditor