

MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED BENTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2025 AT 5:00 P.M. IN THE CAMPBELL BUILDING LOCATED AT 901 PUBLIC SQUARE BENTON, ILLINOIS.

MAYOR MESSERSMITH CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AND DIRECTED ROLL TO BE CALLED. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, COMMISSIONER GARAVALIA, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH WERE PRESENT FOR ROLL CALL.

COMMISSIONER KAYS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY FEBRUARY 24, 2025 AT 5 P.M. IN THE CAMPBELL BUILDING LOCATED AT 901 PUBLIC SQUARE IN BENTON, ILLINOIS. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER COCKRUM. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, COMMISSIONER GARAVALIA, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0

MAYOR MESSERSMITH STATED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO ASK PARKER JOHNSON TO COME TO THE FRONT OF THE COUNCIL ROOM. MAYOR MESSERSMITH STATED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO PROVIDE A PROCLAMATION TO MR. JOHNSON FOR WINNING THE CHAMPIONSHIP IN IMPROMPTU SPEAKING FOR THE STATE OF ILLINOIS. MAYOR MESSERSMITH STATED THAT YOU CAN FIND PARKER'S SPEECH ON YOUTUBE IF YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN HEARING IT.

COMMISSIONER GARAVALIA STATED SHE HAD NO PURCHASE ORDERS FOR THE MEETING.

COMMISSIONER GARAVALIA STATED THAT SHE WOULD LIKE TO OPEN THE MOWING BIDS AT THIS TIME. THE BIDS WERE OPENED BY ALL THE COUNCIL MEMBERS. THE BIDS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

NAME	CITY HALL	POLICE DEPT.	AIRPORT	TWIN OAKS	NUISANCE LAWNS
REX IT LAWN CARE	\$45	\$45	\$330	\$460	\$45
HICKORY HILLS WOODWORKS	\$50	\$50	\$300	\$300	---
KRIS KIRKPATRICK	\$30	\$35	\$220	\$260	\$40
ALL AROUND FENCE	\$40	\$40	\$340	\$300	---
REID'S LAWN CARE	\$55	\$60	\$400	\$400	\$100
AMERICAN MOWING & SNOW REMOVAL	\$75	\$45	\$500	\$350	\$50 & \$45 FOR ADDITIONAL LOTS
WE THE PEOPLE ROOFING & MORE	\$40	\$50	\$900	\$900	\$40-\$60
AMERICAN MOWING	\$45	\$45	\$200	\$250	\$35
UPTON'S LAWN & TREE REMOVAL	\$45	\$40	\$85	\$220	---
BOOKER'S MOWING	\$45	\$45	\$250	\$300	\$45
DB'S LAWN CARE	\$40	\$50	\$3,750	\$1,200	\$45, \$60 FOR DOUBLE LOT

COMMISSIONER GARAVALIA STATED THAT SHE WOULD LIKE TO HOST A VOLUNTEER FAIR AT THE FIRE DEPARTMENT IN THEIR NEW TRAINING ROOM. COMMISSIONER GARAVALIA STATED THE GOAL OF THIS FAIR IS TO PROMOTE VOLUNTEERISM, RAISE AWARENESS OF VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, HELP PEOPLE FIND THEIR NICHE, ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY INCLUSION, AND STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY. SHE STATED THAT SHE WOULD LIKE TO HOLD THIS IN APRIL, PROBABLY THE THIRD WEEK OF APRIL AS IT IS NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK. COMMISSIONER GARAVALIA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CITY HOSTING A VOLUNTEER FAIR. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER STOREY. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, COMMISSIONER GARAVALIA, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0

COMMISSIONER COCKRUM STATED HE HAD NO PURCHASE ORDERS, NO POOL ADJUSTMENTS, AND NO LAKE LOT LEASE TRANSFERS FOR THIS MEETING. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM STATED THAT THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT IS COMING ALONG WITH ALL THE POTHOLE.

COMMISSIONER STOREY STATED THAT HE HAD NO PURCHASE ORDERS, UPDATES, OR DEPARTMENT REPORTS FOR THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER STOREY STATED THAT THE FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT HAVE BOTH BEEN VERY BUSY THIS PAST WEEK.

COMMISSIONER KAYS MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT PAYROLL DATED FOR MARCH 14, 2025 TOTALING \$103,676.17 WITH \$76,610.71 FROM THE GENERAL FUND AND \$27,065.46 FROM THE REVENUE FUND. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STOREY. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, COMMISSIONER GARAVALLA, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0.

COMMISSIONER KAYS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE BILLS FROM THE AP FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$290,694.58 AND FROM THE MFT FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$19,696.53 FOR A TOTAL BILL AMOUNT OF \$310,391.11 TO BE PAID ON 03/10/2025. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER COCKRUM. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, COMMISSIONER GARAVALLA, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0.

COMMISSIONER KAYS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE PURCHASE ORDER #00862 TO CONCEPT OF ILLINOIS FOR A BLOCK OF 50 HOURS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$6,000.00. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER GARAVALLA. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, COMMISSIONER GARAVALLA, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0.

COMMISSIONER KAYS STATED THAT HE WOULD LIKE THE COUNCIL TO BEGIN THE DISCUSSION REGARDING EMPLOYEE RESIDENCY. COMMISSIONER KAYS STATED THAT HE WOULD PREFER ALL OF THE CITY'S EMPLOYEES RESIDE WITHIN THE CORPORATE CITY LIMITS OF BENTON, BUT HE HAS SEEN IT IS BECOMING HARDER TO FIND EMPLOYEES IN THIS PARAMETER. COMMISSIONER KAYS SAID THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO TAKE ANY ACTION AT THIS MEETING REGARDING THIS TOPIC.

NO UPDATES FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY.

UNDER UPDATES MAYOR MESSERSMITH WANTED TO CONGRATULATE THE BENTON HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM ON THEIR GOOD RUN. MAYOR MESSERSMITH ALSO STATED THAT ANDREW KINSMAN HAS ALREADY BROKEN HIS OWN SCHOOL RECORD IN SHOT PUT THIS YEAR AND THE SEASON HAS JUST STARTED. MAYOR MESSERSMITH REPORTED THAT MALKOVICH PARK IS SET TO HAVE THE CONCRETE SEALED SOON. AFTER THE CONCRETE IS SEALED THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT WILL START PLACING THE NEW ITEMS IN THE PARK. MAYOR MESSERSMITH ALSO STATED THAT GREATER EGYPT REGIONAL PLANNING IS HELPING THE CITY OF BENTON APPLY FOR A GRANT TO COMPLETE A NEW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. THE LAST COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY WAS DONE IN 2013.

MAYOR MESSERSMITH HAD NO PURCHASE ORDERS FOR THIS MEETING.

MAYOR MESSERSMITH ASKED FOR A MOTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER CONSOLIDATION PROJECT. THIS RESOLUTION NUMBER IS #25-03. COMMISSIONER STOREY MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #25-03 FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER CONSOLIDATION PROJECT.



SECOND BY COMMISSIONER KAYS. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, COMMISSIONER GARAVALLIA, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0.

MAYOR MESSERSMITH ASKED ATTORNEY MALKOVICH TO HANDLE ITEM (E) DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL OF PROPERTY DONATION FROM THE MUNOZ FAMILY. ATTORNEY MALKOVICH STARTED THAT HE RECEIVED A LETTER FROM KAREN MUNOZ STATING THAT SHE AND HER BROTHER JOHN ARE FROM BENTON, BUT HAVE BOTH RELOCATED. THE LETTER STATED THAT THEIR FATHER HAD LEFT THESE LOTS TO THEM HOPING THAT ONE OF THEM WOULD RETURN TO BENTON AND SET UP AN OFFICE, BUT THEY ARE BOTH IN THEIR 70'S AND DO NOT ANTICIPATE MOVING BACK TO THE AREA. THE LETTER STATED THAT IF THE CITY WOULD HAVE ANY IDEAS OR FOR THE LOTS, THEY WOULD DONATE THEM TO THE CITY. A MAP WAS PROVIDED SHOWING THAT THE LOTS SIT TO THE NORTH EAST OF THE FRANKLIN HOSPITAL, WITH A LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF "SEC TWP RNG FRANKLIN HEIGHTS ADD LOTS 36 AND 37" AND A PARCEL NUMBER OF 08-07-453-091. COMMISSIONER GARAVALLIA MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE DONATION OF THESE LOTS. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER STOREY. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, COMMISSIONER GARAVALLIA, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0.

MAYOR MESSERSMITH ASKED ZONING ADMINISTRATOR BRIAN CALCATERRA TO ADDRESS ITEM (F) DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL OF THE PETITION FOR ANNEXATION MADE BY JAMES AND LEIGH ANN WARD TO ANNEX THE PROPERTY COMMONLY KNOWN AS 14507 CUTLER STREET INTO THE CORPORATE BOUNDARY OF THE CITY OF BENTON. MR. CALCATERRA PRESENTED A MAP OF THE AREA AND SAID THAT THE WARD FAMILY WOULD BE IMPROVING THE PROPERTY AND ALSO ALLOWING THEIR CHILDREN TO BUILD ON THE PROPERTY IN THE FUTURE. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE PETITION FOR ANNEXATION MADE BY JAMES AND LEIGH ANN WARD TO ANNEX THE PROPERTY COMMONLY KNOWN AS 14507 CUTLER STREET INTO THE CORPORATE BOUNDARY OF THE CITY OF BENTON. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER GARAVALLIA. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, COMMISSIONER GARAVALLIA, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0.

MAYOR MESSERSMITH ASKED ATTORNEY MALKOVICH TO PRESENT ITEM (G) DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL OF TRANSFERRING 2025 HOME RULE VOLUME CAP TO SIDA. ATTORNEY MALKOVICH STARTED THAT PERIODICALLY WE WILL RECEIVE A REQUEST FROM THE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (SIDA) REQUESTING THE TRANSFER OF UNNEEDED HOME RULE VOLUME CAP TO SIDA. THE CITY CURRENTLY HAS NO PROJECT FOR THE TOTAL VOLUME CAP ALLOCATION OF \$857,740.00. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM MADE A MOTION TO TRANSFER THE 2025 HOME RULE VOLUME CAP OF \$857,740.00 TO SIDA. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER STOREY. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 4. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, AND COMMISSIONER GARAVALLIA. NAYS: 0. MAYOR MESSERSMITH ABSTAINED.

MAYOR MESSERSMITH ASKED FOR A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FIRST RANGER RODEO TO BE HELD AT THE BENTON MUNICIPAL AIRPORT ON MAY 3, 2025. COMMISSIONER GARAVALLIA MADE THIS MOTION. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER STOREY. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, COMMISSIONER GARAVALLIA, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0.

IN MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS, COMMISSIONER KAYS STATED THAT THE COUNCIL IS TRYING OUT MICROPHONES TO HELP WITH THE VOLUME ISSUE ON THE LIVESTREAMS OF THE COUNCIL MEETINGS. ALSO, COMMISSIONER KAYS STATED THAT META IS GOING TO START AUTOMATIC DELETING OF LIVESTREAMS THAT ARE OLDER THAN 30 DAYS. THE CITY WILL BE POSTING THESE PREVIOUS VIDEOS TO A YOUTUBE PAGE TO ALLOW THE CITIZENS TO STILL VIEW THEM AFTER THE 30 DAYS ON FACEBOOK.

NO OLD BUSINESS.

NO NEW BUSINESS.

IN MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC AUDIENCE, TONYA FREHNER FROM BIRTH TO FIVE ADDRESSED THE COUNCIL. SHE STATED THAT THERE WERE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FOR FAMILIES IN OUR AREA TO HELP WITH THE COST OF DAYCARE AND MORE. SHE LEFT FLYERS FOR THE CITY TO HAND OUT TO CITIZENS. DYLAN YOUNG WITH LITTLE EGYPT PEST CONTROL SPOKE TO THE COUNCIL. HE GAVE A BACKGROUND ON HIS COMPANY AND THE WORK THEY HAVE DONE FOR THE CITY IN THE PAST WITH MOSQUITO ABATEMENT. HE STATED THAT THIS YEAR'S MOSQUITO ABATEMENT WILL BE DONE WITH NO PRICE INCREASE FROM LAST YEAR. KAREN REINSCHMIEDT ASKED THE COUNCIL IF THE ROAD PROGRAM COULD BE DONE EARLIER THIS YEAR DUE TO THE NORMAL TIME BEING WHEN THEY ARE VERY BUSY AT KOA AND THE ROAD IN FRONT OF HER BUSINESS WILL BE ONE TO BE PAVED. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM STATED THAT THEY WILL BE DOING THE PROGRAM A BIT EARLIER THIS YEAR, BUT THAT THE PAVING IN FRONT OF HER BUSINESS SHOULD ONLY TAKE ABOUT A DAY.

COMMISSIONER KAYS MADE A MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR ITEM (C) DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE, OR DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES OF THE PUBLIC BODY OR LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE PUBLIC BODY, INCLUDING HEARING TESTIMONY ON A COMPLAINT LODGED AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE OF THE PUBLIC BODY OR AGAINST LEGAL COUNSEL FOR THE PUBLIC BODY TO DETERMINE ITS VALIDITY. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER COCKRUM. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER GARAVALLA, COMMISSIONER KAYS, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0.

5:49 P.M.

COMMISSIONER KAYS MADE A MOTION TO RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER STOREY. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER GARAVALLA, COMMISSIONER KAYS, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0.

6:29 P.M.

NO ACTION WAS TAKEN AFTER EXECUTIVE SESSION.

COMMISSIONER STOREY MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER COCKRUM. VOTE WAS TAKEN. YEAS: 5. COMMISSIONER COCKRUM, COMMISSIONER STOREY, COMMISSIONER KAYS, COMMISSIONER GARAVALLA, AND MAYOR MESSERSMITH. NAYS: 0.

6:30 P.M.

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