

The regular meeting of the Benton Village Board was called to order by Village Chairperson, Gary McCrea, at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room of the Benton Business Incubator Building at 244 Ridge Avenue on Wednesday, November 4, 2009, with the following members present: Lori Droessler, Terry Sheffer, Lisa Lawrence, Ron Fladseth, Katey Neis, Rose Walton, and Gary McCrea. Absent: none. Citizens: none. Consultants: none. Village employees present: Darnell Hendricks and Ryan Carver. Others present: Dave Halloran, Lafayette County Supervisor District 16. In compliance with the open meeting law, proper notice of the meeting had been posted in four public places; the Zephyr Depot, Benton State Bank, Benton Post Office, and the Benton Business Incubator Building.

Motion (Sheffer, Fladseth) to approve the minutes as presented from the last regular meeting held October 21, 2009. Voice -all ayes. Carried.

Dave Halloran, Lafayette County Supervisor District 16, was present to update the board regarding the upcoming special referendum election to be held November 12, 2009. Halloran explained the referendum is asking voters if the County of Lafayette should be allowed to exceed its levy limit by a total of \$500,000 per year for the next three years with the \$500,000 to be used for the exclusive purpose of paying for a portion of the cost of operating the Lafayette County Manor Nursing Home. Halloran went on to explain some of the details related to the Manor, including: it employs approximately 100 people, employee costs are 94% of the total operating costs, the operating deficit for 2009 was at \$583,000 as of August 31, 2009, it currently provides services to 71 residents and has 80 certified beds. Halloran explained that the manor was picked as the target for the referendum due to the fact it provides non-mandated services. Halloran explained it is not an easy fix, as the manor could be \$800,000 over budget at the end of the year. It is also apparent that unless the intergovernmental transfer program, which is federal funds provided to the states for reimbursement to its public nursing homes to help offset losses, increases, the manor will be at an even larger deficit in the future. Halloran indicated he would not be surprised if a repeat of this referendum is requested in three years, however, for a larger amount. Halloran explained that part of the issue is the vital role the manor plays not only in the health care equation for the county, but also the economic impact the jobs have on the county. Halloran also explained that the concerted effort of the "friends of Lafayette Manor" is from the manor employee's union.

Ryan Carver was present with an update on the recent problems with the water tower. It was discovered last Friday that there was a leak in the water tower. A temporary system was put in place to allow the water tower to be drained to make repairs. These repairs will be completed within the next week. An observation made when setting up the temporary system was that the new water tower should have a pump with a variable frequency drive. The approximate cost of a pump of this nature is \$10,000.00. Carver will do more research on this matter and provide quotes at a later time.

Hendricks inquired about the upcoming 2009 Christmas party. A final head count will be needed at a later date.

Lawrence relayed information regarding a recent Municipal Electric Utilities of Wisconsin (MEUW) meeting she had attended. At the meeting the importance of wind energy and how the energy may be generated out west but then needs to be funneled through Wisconsin to provide energy east of Wisconsin was discussed.

McCrea updated the board on the Lafayette Development Corporation's upcoming annual meeting to be held November 16, 2009. Board members should advise McCrea if they are interested in attending this meeting.

A letter from Lafayette County Housing Authority executive director, MaryAnn Kowalski, was read. A response to this letter explaining the billing process and the procedure for placing past due bills on the tax roll was distributed.

The October police report was not yet available. This item will be placed on the next regular agenda for review.

A discussion related to collection policies for past due accounts of the Benton Municipal Utilities was held.

A letter from the Shaw Environmental, Inc. related to notification of contamination beneath Catherine Street and Main Street was distributed. Hendricks will contact Shaw Environmental, Inc. to determine what the next step will be.

An ordinance amending section 12-1-21 of the municipal code of the village of Benton was reviewed. This ordinance amendment would change the alternate side parking to be effective from 12:01 am to 6:00 am each day versus twenty four hours a day as is the case in the current ordinance. The amendment of the ordinance failed due to a lack of motion.

A letter from Stafford Rosenbaum outlining no increase in 2010 rates from the 2009 rates was reviewed.

A letter from the Lafayette Development Corporation regarding 2009 accomplishment's was distributed.

A discussion was held related to the 2010 General Fund Budget. By general consent the board approved the proposed budget with changes for posting.

The claims against the Village were presented for payment. *Motion (Walton, Neis) to pay the claims against the Village.* Roll-all ayes. Carried.

Motion (Neis, Sheffer) to adjourn. Voice-all ayes. Carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.