SPECIAL SESSION
MINUTES
TOWN OF BENTON COUNCIL
105 SIBLEY STREET, BENTON, LOUISIANA 71006
TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2026, 6:30 p.m.

This meeting was declared null and void due to the failure to provide proper public notice as required by law.

The Town of Benton met in a Special Session on the 25th day of August 2026 at 6:30 p.m. in the Benton Council Chambers, Benton Town Hall, 105 Sibley Street, Benton, Louisiana. Mayor James Friday called the meeting to order. CAO Stephanie Collier called the roll with all members as follows:

Alderman Jacqueline Neal Carr	ABSENT	(No call/ no show)
Alderman Tiffany Manning	ABSENT	(No call/ no show)
Alderman Tammy Brunson	PRESENT	
Alderman Arshundae Perry	PRESENT	
Alderman Terry Lawrence	PRESENT	

Others present were Assistant Chief Weaver, Officers Chachere and Washington and members of the public.

A motion was made by Alderman Lawrence and seconded by Alderman Perry to approve the agenda for the Special Session.

SPECIAL SESSION ITEMS: Mayor Friday read aloud for the record.

RESOLUTION 6 OF 2026:

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF BENTON, LOUISIANA, APPROVING THE APPLICATION OF BENTON CROSSING RV PARK AND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEMPORARY RV PARKS TO ACCOMMODATE THE INCREASED DEMAND FOR TEMPORARY HOUSING AND FOR ESTABLISHING MINIMUM OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND COVENANTS TO BE INCORPORATED INTO LEASE AGREEMENTS; AND OTHERWISE PROVIDING WITH RESPECT THERETO.

Mayor asked Mrs. Collier to read the resolution aloud for the record.

WHEREAS the Town of Benton, Louisiana ("Town"), has experienced or anticipates increased demand for temporary housing associated with economic development, construction activities, infrastructure projects, emergency response needs, workforce housing demands, and other temporary residential needs; and

WHEREAS Benton Crossing RV Park ("Applicant") has submitted an application seeking approval for the development and operation of a temporary RV park within the jurisdiction of the Town; and

WHEREAS the Benton MPC, Mayor, and Board of Aldermen have reviewed the application and determined that the proposed development may assist in addressing temporary housing needs while promoting orderly growth and protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the Town; and

WHEREAS approval of the proposed development shall be effective for an initial term of five (5) years from the date of approval, with the option to renew for successive one-year terms upon approval by the Town Council and continued compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, and permit requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Town finds it necessary and appropriate to establish minimum operating standards and lease requirements applicable to temporary RV parks and their occupants;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the Town of Benton, Louisiana, that:

SECTION 1. APPROVAL OF APPLICATION
The application submitted by Benton Crossing RV Park for the development and operation of a temporary RV park is hereby approved, subject to compliance with all applicable federal, state, parish, and local laws, ordinances, regulations, permits, inspections, and the conditions set forth in this Resolution. Such approval shall remain in effect for an initial term of **five (5) years** from the date of approval. Upon expiration of the initial term, the agreement may be renewed for **successive one-year terms** upon approval of the Town Council, provided the development remains in compliance.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE
The purpose of this Resolution is to facilitate temporary housing opportunities while ensuring that temporary RV park developments operate in a safe, sanitary, and orderly manner, and are compatible with surrounding properties and the interests of the Town.

SECTION 3. MINIMUM OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS
The owner and operator of Benton Crossing RV Park shall, at a minimum:

1. Maintain all utility connections, roads, parking areas, drainage facilities, and common areas in a safe and operable condition.
2. Provide potable water, wastewater disposal, electrical service, and solid waste collection in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
3. Maintain the property free from excessive debris, nuisance conditions, and health hazards.
4. Provide adequate lighting for common areas, entrances, and roadways.
5. Maintain appropriate liability insurance coverage.
6. Establish a designated management representative available to respond to operational issues and emergencies.
7. Comply with all fire safety, building safety, and emergency access requirements.
8. Prohibit activities constituting a public nuisance or creating unreasonable disturbances to neighboring properties.
9. Maintain a current registry of tenants and occupied spaces, subject to applicable privacy laws.
10. Allow inspections by authorized governmental officials as permitted by law.
11. Maintain a valid Occupational license annually.

SECTION 4. LEASE AGREEMENT COVENANTS

All lease agreements executed between the RV park operator and tenants shall include provisions substantially requiring:

1. Compliance with all park rules and regulations.
2. Compliance with all applicable laws and ordinances.
3. Registration of all occupants residing within the leased RV space.
4. Maintain the leased space in a clean and sanitary condition.
5. Proper disposal of trash and waste materials.
6. Prohibition of unlawful conduct, excessive noise, or nuisance activities.
7. Maintenance of valid registration and insurance for recreational vehicles as required by law.
8. Acknowledgment that occupancy is temporary in nature and subject to the terms and conditions established by the RV park operator and the Town.
9. Consent to enforcement actions for violations, including warnings, fines where authorized, eviction proceedings, or termination of occupancy rights as permitted by law.
10. Compliance with safety directives issued during emergencies or natural disasters.

SECTION 5. ENFORCEMENT
Failure to comply with the requirements of this Resolution, Town ordinances, or applicable laws may result in enforcement actions including suspension or revocation of approvals, issuance of notices of violation, penalties authorized by law, or other remedies available to the Town.

SECTION 6. SEVERABILITY
If any provision of this Resolution is held invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, such determination shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE
This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

Mayor Friday advised Blake Whittington and Greg Williams with the RV park were present to answer any questions anyone might have. He then called for any public comments:
Marsha Murry came forward to question why the RV park wasn't being built on the 1,000-acre Data Center land. **Mark Crouch** came forward with the same question and added concerns about the increased traffic in the town and possible domestic disputes within the park. Next **Ken Shiflett** stepped up sharing thoughts on ways the park would help the town to grow. He noted it was only a five-year lease and then could have a yearly option to resume the trailer park or remain an RV park. It would increase business at our establishments and create better tax revenue for the town. Lastly, **Blake Whittington** addressed the council and public as he handed out an information booklet called "Benton Crossing RV Park at Silliman Place". He stated, "The data center is happening. The people need places to stay and there is a shortage on places to stay". Other points noted are data center builders will be paid per diem, $68 per day, to spend locally; approximately two million over the project time and 50K in sales tax for the town. In addition, water/sewer/trash fees. He highlighted digital payment, pre-signed rules/regulations-which he provided to council-and when the project is finished and the permit runs out the park can go back to whatever is needed at that time.
Mayor Friday called for any other comments, **Steve Stewart** approached the council. His concerns were more related to the new infrastructure. Wondering if it would be an increase to our electricity and water bills, bringing more power in. **Greg Williams** answered, explaining the added revenue from the park would help the overall cost. The mayor added that it would be the same amount no matter what was going in there. Mr. Stewart also asked if any plans for repairs would be made to Old Plain Dealing Road to which Mayor answered there would be.

Mayor then read aloud a few rules and regulations from the handout book and asked for any other

questions. **Melanie Bernett** came up to the podium. Her concerns were with police, fire and traffic not being able to keep up with the number of residents. Next, **Hanna Gamble** stepped up to speak stating she was 'pro-development' but had questions regarding traffic studies, road improvements if needed, water concerns-sewer and run off, and on-site management vs. a camera. The answers to the questions from various sources present included no traffic study was needed but the turn light could be made longer, sewer water would be managed by the town as well as ditches for the runoff, and a manager would be available but was not required to be onsite. **Dawn Bushnell** came forward with questions concerning on-site management, the application and the process. She 'doesn't feel it's a good fit for Benton'. She opposed the comment that Benton does not have any RV parks when Black Bayou is here and Plain Dealing has one. **Mark Crouch** came forward again feeling like the decisions are being rushed. He raised the increased traffic issue again with the red-light issue, inquired about what the RV pads would be made of, and disagreed with a camera monitoring the safety of the park. **Ken Shiflett** returned to comment maybe we could compromise with a security company that would monitor the cameras. He also pointed out that when the contract was up it could be a good idea to put nice permanent mobile homes there on larger lots. **Hanna Gamble** returned to comment. Her point being she had to obtain a permit and police to host an event on her farm due to attendance being over 75 individuals. Her comment being why can't we have a contract having our police monitor it, hourly drive-through's, reporting system and so forth. She also stated she didn't understand how the council votes on these rules and regulations. The mayor read aloud to her Section two 'the purpose of the Resolution' and reiterated this is a temporary situation.
Alderman Perry presented a question to Whittington and Williams regarding the camera system. "What will be in place for if they have trouble or need something?," she asked. Mr. Whittington came forward advising they would have a 24-hour phone notification, text or call along with an email with someone on retainer to go out. He also explained there is a lot you can do with AI now such as license plate readers coming in and out and notifying when someone other than a resident is there. As far as disorderly residents conduct, the park will have the authority to notify the tenant and ask them to leave if necessary. He pointed out that having an on-site person there does not include 'defusing situations' as a requirement as that could be dangerous. And lastly, **Chris Redford** came up with comments. First being, "It would be great if all five council members were here because this does represent the entire Benton proper". His main point was it would be a shame to let the money the workers spend go to the parish instead of keeping it in Benton. The town will die without growth.

Mayor Friday asked for any other questions from anyone before voting on the resolution. A motion was made by Alderman Perry and seconded by Alderman Lawrence to adopt the resolution. The following votes were recorded:

YEAS: Alderman Perry, Alderman Lawrence
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Alderman Carr, Alderman Manning
ABSTAIN: Alderman Brunson

Mayor Friday called for adjournment. A motion was made by Alderman Lawrence and seconded by Alderman Perry to adjourn. Mayor called for all in favor:
AYES: 3
NAYS : 0