



**TOWN OF BENTON
MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN
105 SIBLEY STREET, BENTON, LOUISIANA**

**REGULAR SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2026, 6:30 PM**

The Town of Benton met in a Regular Legal Session on the 9th day of February 2026 after an Executive Session and a Public Hearing in the Benton Council Chambers, Benton Town Hall, 105 Sibley Street, Benton, Louisiana. Mayor James Friday called the meeting to order after the invocation by Alderman Carr and Pledge of Allegiance by Alderman Brunson had previously been given prior to the Public Hearing meeting. Debbie Rios called the roll with Officer Cesar Mora, several members of the public and all members as follows:

Alderman Jackie Carr	PRESENT
Alderman Tiffany Manning	PRESENT
Alderman Tammy Brunson	PRESENT
Alderman Arshundae Perry	ABSENT
Alderman Terry Lawrence	PRESENT

A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Lawrence to approve the Regular Session Agenda. Mayor Friday called for public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

AYES: Alderman Carr, Alderman Manning, Alderman Brunson, Alderman Lawrence
NAYES: None
ABSENT: Alderman Perry
ABSTAIN: None

A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Lawrence to approve the Minutes for the January 12, 2026 Public Hearing and Regular Session. Mayor Friday called for public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

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

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OLD BUSINESS:

Final Vote: ORDINANCE **615** OF 2026: Decrease General Admin Dept 100-5000 (Salaries and Wages) at \$92,000.00 for a revised total of \$89,800.00.

A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Lawrence amending Ordinance 613 of 2025 and amending the 2026 General Fund Budget. Mayor Friday called for public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

AYES: Alderman Carr

NAYES: Alderman Manning, Alderman Brunson, Alderman Lawrence

ABSENT: Alderman Perry

ABSTAIN: None

Final Vote: ORDINANCE **617** OF 2026: Increase Maintenance Dept 400-5310 (Vehicles-Fuel) at \$2,500.00 for a revised total of \$9,000.00.

A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Manning amending Ordinance 613 of 2025 and amending the 2026 General Fund Budget. Mayor Friday called for public comments and **Chris Redford** stated, "I have a public comment. I was here at the last meeting, and they said that the average that the town mechanic I believe, spent \$1,500.00 a year for the last five years and now it's up to \$9,000.00? Where did they get that as far as tax money is going, increasing that by a lot"? **Attorney Nerren**: "Ms. Manning, this is a group of your ordinances. Do you want to respond to the question"? **Manning**: "No. Thank you for your comment." **Redford**: "We're taking a \$7,500.00 increase. As a taxpayer, we have the right to know where you get this giant increase from \$1,500.00 for the last five-year average to \$9,000.00 and all you're going to say is thank you for your comment? Who do you work for? Do you work for the town, or do you work for yourself? **Nerren**: "Alright Mr. Redford, you addressed your question, thank you." **Redford**: "Well I had a comment. My comment is it seemed like you serve yourself and not the town. That's my comment. Thank you." **Shonta Neal** came up to speak asking, "On that ordinance, that's not specifically for just the mechanic, right? That's for the Maintenance Departments trucks and gas for some of the equipment for the Maintenance Department. Not necessarily just the mechanic I believe." **Redford**: "Last meeting they said it was just for his gas, and he averaged \$1500 a year. That's what they said at the last meeting when the public was here." **Manning**: That's what Stephanie said. But that's not what this is." **Neal**: It could be true that they have switched up and changed that only the mechanic's gas is coming out of that code. But I was under the impression that may be why. I wouldn't have went that high (laughing) to \$9,000.00. But I was thinking maybe she was taking into consideration the maintenance department or something, possibly. And I wasn't at the meeting. I would have probably known more had I attended but I didn't make it." **Nerren**: "We appreciated your comment but Ms. Manning, who brought the ordinance, has the opportunity to speak for herself. Let's let her do that OK? He explained to Ms. Neal that he was at the last meeting and Ms. Manning had presented that it was for the gas for the mechanic." **Neal**: "I know he's in the maintenance department but I was saying is

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it just for the mechanic himself”. **Manning:** “It said the mechanic is himself.” **Carr:** “On the ordinance it says that the maintenance department.” **Neal:** “It probably needs a little clarity on it to be able to answer why so high or so low on it.” **Nerren:** “That’s great. All the information is in front of the board for them to make their decision. Thank you.” **Mayor:** “Ms. Manning do you have any reason as to why you raised it to \$9,000.00?” **Manning:** “After the discussion we had at the workshop when Stephanie said it was only for the fuel for the mechanic; I have a clear understanding. It was only for the only mechanic in the maintenance department, for his truck, I have a clear understanding now. The mayor called for any other public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

AYES: Alderman Carr

NAYS: Alderman Manning, Alderman Brunson, Alderman Lawrence

ABSENT: Alderman Perry

ABSTAIN: None

Final Vote: ORDINANCE **618** OF 2026: Increase Council Dept 140-5760 (Travel Expense) at \$1,000.00 for a revised total of \$2,000.00.

A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Manning amending Ordinance 613 and amending the 2026 General Fund Budget. Mayor Friday called for public comments. **Manning:** There are trainings that I think the board would benefit from attending like this LLA conference coming up in March. I didn’t make copies, but you can pass this around. If you have more than one person that would like to attend conferences, then we would be over budget. However, we could amend it and set it back over towards...” **Mayor:** That conference right there could be done online without traveling to Baton Rouge.” **Manning:** “I’m saying if there are conferences that the board members would like to attend.” **Mayor:** Yes ma’am but that’s the one you presented right there. **Manning:**” This is not the only conference.” **Mayor:** I understand that young lady but in due time if they want to vote for this then they can. You made your comment. Any others? **Neal:** I have a comment. Or a question. You say that’s a online course for LMA conference? **Manning:** LLA. You can go online and you can go in person if someone chooses. **Neal:** But don’t you think this board could stand to get some training? From what we’ve seen, the public has seen, I think all of y’all need to go. That’s all. Mayor called for any other comments. There being none the following votes were recorded:

AYES: Alderman Carr, Alderman Manning, Alderman Lawrence

NAYS: Alderman Brunson

ABSENT: Alderman Perry

ABSTAIN: None

Final Vote: ORDINANCE **619** OF 2026: Decrease General Admin Dept 100-5915 (Capital Outlay-Furniture) at \$500.00 for a revised total of \$0.00.

A motion was made by Alderman Lawrence and seconded by Alderman Carr amending Ordinance 613 of 2025 and amending the 2026 General Fund Budget. Mayor Friday called for public comments. Ms. Carr

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asked if there was anywhere else like Office Depot that we could get furniture if this amount was taken away? **Manning:** The reason I put this in there is because isn't there a certain dollar amount be deemed as capital outlay furniture and in the last meeting they said they wanted to purchase a chair. Couldn't that be, because they got \$6,500 for office supplies. Wouldn't that be considered office supplies? I'm trying to find...**Nerren:** So, your concern is how it's labeled? I'll try and answer Ms. Carr and your question in the same breath. In order to go back and to change it in the future I think we would have to back and reamend the budget essentially. If you moved it to zero I think that puts us at a point where we would have to come in front of the board to spend money on an office chair. After further comments by Ms. Carr and Ms. Manning being answered by Mr. Nerren, the mayor asked for any other comments. With there being none, the following votes were recorded:

AYES: None

NAYS: Alderman Carr, Alderman Manning, Alderman Brunson, Alderman Lawrence

ABSENT: Alderman Perry

ABSTAIN: None

Final Vote: ORDINANCE **620** OF 2026: Increase Council Dept (140-5755 (Training) at \$500.00 for a revised total of \$1,500.00.

A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Lawrence amending Ordinance 613 of 2025 and amending the 2026 General Fund Budget. Mayor Friday asked for public comments. **Manning:** So, this training would also include us attending conferences to help us do our job better and be informed on the laws of legislative government. Which I think would definitely benefit us especially some of the new board members. **Mayor:** Thank you for your comments. Anyone else before we vote? There being none, the following votes were recorded:

AYES: Alderman Carr, Alderman Manning, Alderman Lawrence

NAYES: Alderman Brunson

ABSENT: Alderman Perry

ABSTAIN: None

Final Vote: ORDINANCE **621** OF 2026: Decrease General Admin Dept 100-5130 (Supplies-General) at \$6,500.00 for a revised total of \$4,500.00. AND Decrease General Admin Dept 100-5140 (Supplies-Office) at \$6,000.00 for a revised total of \$3,500.00.

A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Manning to amend Ordinance 613 of 2025 and amend the 2026 General Fund Budget. Mayor Friday called for public comments. **Manning:** In the workshop, the town has a budget for supplies, the police dept has a budget for supplies, other places has places for budget for supplies and I know Stephanie made the comment that the police dept come and get some of their supplies from the town. So is the \$6,500, is that because of the police dept come and uses the town paper, the pens? That's what she's saying. The highlighters and the things that the town purchase because the police dept have a budget for supplies as well. So do you know why it was increased

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from \$6,500.00 Mayor? **Mayor:** Do you want to decrease this or ask the question of why it is \$6,500.00? **Manning:** Yes, do you know why the...**Mayor:** The police dept may, like they do everything else, share the budget. When they get items, they may itemize it to 100-5130 or which one the police dept is or whenever they get something. **Manning:** But the police dept have their own budget for supplies. **Mayor:** But we purchase all the supplies here and they don't deliver it over there. They just bring it all here. **Manning:** So does the police dept need to have a decrease in their supply? **Mayor:** You'll have to talk to the Police Chief about that because we're not over the Police Dept anymore. **Manning:** But the police dept has a budget with line items for supplies. So I'm just asking is this increase, the \$6500, is it influenced by the police coming and getting some of the supplies over here? Cause they got a \$6,000 budget for supplies too. **Mayor:** OK, then lets go with your decrease then here. **Manning:** We have to vote on it. **Mayor:** Yes ma'am we do have to vote on it. But you have introduced this to decrease from \$6500 to \$4500 and you've also decreased the \$6000 to \$3500. After the same back and forth regarding maybe there had been an increase added due to a new hire and money had been spent on a desk and a chair and other new suppliesbut was not needed this year the mayor called for any other public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

AYES: Alderman Carr

NAYS: Alderman Manning, Alderman Brunson, Alderman Lawrence

ABSENT: Alderman Perry

ABSTAIN: None

Final Vote: ORDINANCE 616 OF 2026:

A motion was made to table ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF BENTON ESTABLISHING THE SALARIES OF MUNICIPAL OFFICERS by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Lawrence. Mayor Friday called for public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

AYES: Alderman Carr, Alderman Manning, Alderman Brunson, Alderman Lawrence

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Alderman Perry

ABSTAIN: None

NEW BUSINESS:

(Presented by Alderman Carr)

ORDINANCE 622 OF 2026

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A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Manning to introduce and set for public hearing the Ordinance of the Board of Alderman of the Town of Benton establishing the salaries of the Board of Alderman. Mayor Friday called for public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

AYES: Alderman Carr, Alderman Manning, Alderman Brunson, Alderman Lawrence

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Alderman Perry

ABSTAIN: None

ORDINANCE 623 OF 2026: Introduce and Set for Public Hearing

A motion was made by Alderman Lawrence and seconded by Alderman Carr to introduce and set for public hearing the Ordinance 623 of 2026.

An ordinance amending the Town of Benton Code of Ordinance Article 1- in General, Section 2-6 Regular Monthly Meetings to move from the second Monday every month to the third Monday.

Mayor Friday called for public comments.

Ms Carr: This is not made by me. **Mayor:** Alright. I remember this being in the workshop but don't recall who made it. **Ms. Reyenga:** It was brought to my attention **that when the MPC meets on the first Monday of the month, anything that comes from our meeting to the town, sometimes there's not time to get that on the agenda that quickly.** It's not meant to be on the agenda that quickly. She explained that once it comes to them and goes to the town, it goes on the agenda the next month. She just wanted to clarify that because it had been brought to her that maybe they needed to change the town meeting to the third Monday because the MPC business couldn't get to the council for that, that next short distance (of time), because it's not meant to be. so if that's the reason for wanting to change your meeting dates, that's not a valid reason because anything that comes to you to act on would be the next month. **Manning:** Thank you. because it was told to us that was the hold up. **Reyenga:** I know. The conversation continued with the mayor, Mr. Jones, and Ms. Reyenga. **Manning:** When the MPC submits their packet to the town, is there anything special that has to be done by the town clerk to prepare the packet that y'all send her to present to us? **Ms. Reyenga:** No. Carlotta would just forward that package on. It would just have to be on your agenda. **Manning:** So the only thing she's doing is transferring information to our agenda? **Ms. Reyenga:** yes ma'am. She explains how much it is involved with what MPC does. **Manning:** so there is no intense laborious duties that our town clerk has to put in? **Ms. Reyenga:** no. and very seldom rarely do we get items specifically within the city limits. most of ours are within the five mile radius. **Manning:** yes i looked back in 2025 and we only had three items out of the twelve months. **reyenga:** yes.

The mayor advised he had not been aware of all she had said. He explained the town always thought it was way more involved than what she was explaining. **Manning:** very insightful. **Mr.**

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Jones wrapped up comments, expressing that the meetings have always been on the second Monday and didn't advise changing it in his opinion

Mayor Friday again called for any other public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

AYES: None

NAYS: Alderman Carr, Alderman Manning, Alderman Brunson, Alderman Lawrence

ABSENT: Alderman Perry

ABSTAIN: None

APPROVE THE BEER PERMIT RENEWALS

- **BENTON COUNTRY JUNCTION 6296 Hwy 3**

A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Manning to approve the Beer Permit renewal. Mayor Friday called for public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

IN FAVOR	3 AYES
OPPOSED	1 NAYS

- **DOLLAR GENERAL # 1 102 Third Street**

A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Lawrence to approve the Beer Permit renewal. Mayor Friday called for public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

IN FAVOR	4 ayes
OPPOSED	0 nays

- **DOLLAR GENERAL MARKET # 2 6404 Hwy 3**

A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Lawrence to approve the Beer Permit renewal. Mayor Friday called for public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

IN FAVOR	4
OPPOSED	0

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- **BROOKSHIRES GROCERY 6280 Hwy 3**

A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Lawrence to approve the Beer Permit renewal. Mayor Friday called for public comments. There being none, the following votes were recorded:

IN FAVOR 4
OPPOSED 0

APPROVE THE MONTH TO DATE FINANCIALS

A motion was made by Alderman Lawrence and seconded by Alderman Manning the approve the month to date financials. Mayor Friday called for public comments. There being non, the following votes were recorded:

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Friday called for the meeting to be adjourned. A motion was made by Alderman Carr and seconded by Alderman Lawrence. The following vote was recorded:

IN FAVOR: 4
OPPOSED: 0

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