



BENTON COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO. 2
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 6, 2026

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairperson Orth called the regular meeting of the **Board of Fire Commissioners of Benton County Fire District #2** meeting to order at **4:00 PM** at 1304 Dale Avenue, Benton City, Washington.

THOSE PRESENT

Chairperson Orth, Commissioner Howell, Commissioner Rouse, Fire Chief Bates, Assistant Chief Dormaier and District Administrator Wheeler.

Staff Members Present: Captain Guerin, Captain Meye, Firefighter Hamilton, Firefighter Fernandez, Firefighter Ogle, Firefighter Tupper

Guests: Jeannie Howell

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA *Oath of Office: Fire Commissioner Rouse sworn in by Chairperson Orth.*

PUBLIC COMMENT: *None*

Financial Review: *Review of revenue and expenditures reports/vouchers presented for approval.*

CONSENT AGENDA

All matters listed within the Consent Agenda have been distributed to each member of the Board for reading and study. These matters are considered to be routine and will be considered or enacted by one motion of the Board with no separate discussion. However, if any member of the Board desires separate discussion on a specific item, that item may be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda by request.

- Public Comments
- Agenda – Approval of Agenda dated January 6, 2026.
- Minutes – Approval of Minutes dated December 18, 2025.
- Approval and Pay
 - Claim Vouchers (*Fund 6821*)
 - Approved 2025 13th mo. Bill vouchers in the amount of \$21,690.79.
 - Approved 2026 Bill vouchers in the amount of \$23,089.10.

Commissioner Howell moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Rouse seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **01-06-2026, B2 Fire COMM Meeting, 4:00 PM, STA 210, Tuesday**
- *01-19-2026, Holiday: M. L. King Day, Office Closed*
- **01-20-2026, B2 Fire COMM Meeting, 4:00 PM, STA 210, Tuesday**

CONFERENCES

- March 4-6, 2026, **Leadership Conference** (Portland, OR) *Attending: Dormaier, Orth, Rouse, Hawley.*



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- October 21-24, 2026, **WFCA State Conference** (Spokane, WA) *Attending: Orth, Howell, Rouse, Bates.*

CORRESPONDENCE

- Fireline 4th QTR

FINANCIALS (*Financial Officer*)

- District Financial Reports: *None.*

REPORTS

- Fire Chief Bates –
 - The holiday period went well and allowed for a shorter report.
 - The department concluded 2025 with 1,356 calls for service per ImageTrend data. Captain Hawley will review the data further to confirm the final absolute call count.
 - The year 2026 began with an intentionally human-caused fire at an apartment complex. The incident was reported promptly, with early mitigation by Benton County Sheriff's Office personnel using a fire extinguisher prior to fire unit arrival. Department crews secured the scene upon arrival, and interagency coordination contributed to a positive outcome.
 - Year-end closeout activities are underway as the department transitions into 2026 operations. Initial priorities included transitioning the reporting system to NERIS (beginning December 29, 2025), ending contracts with software platforms that are no longer needed or effective, and acquiring appropriate tools to improve efficiency, accuracy, documentation, and accounting. Scheduling remains a key area of focus.
 - A range of projects is planned for the coming year to support continued organizational improvement.
- Asst Chief Dormaier/PIO – *None.*
- Training Cpt. Kale Guerin – For 2025 staff have completed approximately 3,576 training hours
- Safety Cpt. Mike Meyer, HSO – No new reports. No new injuries.
- B2 Association – *None.*

CITY OF BENTON CITY: *None.*

NEW BUSINESS *None.*

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: *None.*

PERSONNEL: *None.*

AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING *There were no agenda items to add to the next meeting.*

EXECUTIVE SESSION: *None.*



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ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Howell moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Rouse seconded. There being no further business, Chairperson Orth adjourned the meeting at 4:12 PM.

Attested on: January 20, 2026

/s/ Caren Wheeler

CAREN WHEELER, DISTRICT ADMIN

/s/ Barry Orth

BARRY G. ORTH, CHAIRPERSON

/s/ Larry Howell

LARRY D. HOWELL, COMMISSIONER

/s/ Steve Rouse

LEWIS S. ROUSE, COMMISSIONER