



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

February 3, 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, District Administrator Wheeler.

Staff Members Present: Firefighter Harpel, Firefighter Strasser, Firefighter France, Firefighter Thomas

Guests: Jeannie Howell

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: *None.*

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.

- Agenda: Approve Agenda dated February 3, 2026.
- Minutes: Approve minutes of the Regular Board Meeting dated January 20, 2026.
- Claim Vouchers (*Fund 6821*)
 - Approve Bill vouchers in the amount of \$28,997.96 ending February 13, 2026.

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

IMPORTANT DATES

- 02-14-2026, Tri-County Comm Meeting, STA 210
- 02-16-2026, *Holiday: President's Day, Office Closed*
- **02-17-2026, B2 Fire COMM Meeting, 4:00 PM, STA 210, Tuesday**
- **03-03-2026, B2 Fire COMM Meeting, 4:00 PM, STA 210, Tuesday**
- 03-04-2026, Leadership Conference, Portland, OR

CONFERENCES

- March 4-6, 2026, **Leadership Conference** (Portland, OR)
 - *Attending: Dormaier, Orth, Rouse, Hawley.*
- October 21-24, 2026, **WFCA State Conference** (Spokane, WA)
 - *Attending: Orth, Howell, Rouse, Bates*



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FINANCIALS (*Financial Officer*)

- Budget Position Report as of 12/31/2025.
- District Financial Report:

General Fund 6821	\$353,780.98
EMS Fund 6828	\$1,871,836.57
Reserve Fund 6826	\$70,000.86
Total General Fund	\$2,295,618.41
Bond Fund 6822	\$35,302.51
Total ALL Funds 12/31/25	\$2,330,920.92

RESOLUTIONS/MOTIONS

Resolution 2026-01 –Transfer Funds from General 6821 to Reserve 6826 the amount of \$4,000.

Commissioner Howell moved to approve Resolution 2026-01. Commissioner Rouse seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

REPORTS

- Fire Chief Bates –
 - A Flood After-Action Review (AAR) was held today with Emergency Management. AC Dormaier attended in person, and I participated via Teams. The group reviewed lessons learned and discussed opportunities for improvement for future events.
 - The 800MHz radio project continues to move forward. We picked up the new radios on January 29, 2026. Regional installations will begin in early February, with our installations anticipated around March. Captain Guerin will be conducting training on the new radios and system. The goal is to transition to 800MHz in early summer, pending completion of infrastructure installation. Representatives from the installation team will meet with us tomorrow to review specialized equipment requirements for setup.
 - Our volunteers, including Volunteer Residents, have been actively supporting projects, training efforts, and call response. Their continued dedication is greatly appreciated.
 - Officers are working diligently to ensure personnel meet participation standards, facilitate training, and provide coverage for calls and Duty Chief shifts. Thank you to all for your leadership and commitment.
 - Special thanks to Captain Hawley for his extensive work implementing NERIS alongside his ongoing RMS and Medical Officer responsibilities.
 - Full-time and EM Hire personnel have been stepping up to take additional shifts to maintain coverage and support operational needs. Thank you for your flexibility and commitment.



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- The Shop has been extremely productive, keeping apparatus and equipment operational, assisting with training, supporting morale, and advancing various projects. Thank you to Captain Pettis and all personnel assisting in the shop.
 - Training efforts remain highly active, including FET, 1st Due training, regional training participation, involvement in regional testing processes, and onboarding new personnel to ensure service delivery readiness. Thank you to Captain Guerin for leading these efforts.
 - AC Dormaier continues working on staffing initiatives. A new full-time Firefighter/EMT will begin on days starting February 17. Efforts are underway to backfill the EM Hire position for B-Shift and continue onboarding Volunteers and Residents. Additional candidates are in process, and the Training Officer will coordinate required schools and certifications as opportunities become available.
 - The Front Office has been exceptionally busy with year-end processing, W-2 preparation, annual forms, policy development, payroll, and other administrative responsibilities. Appreciation to Caren and Shellie for their outstanding work and continued support of department operations.
 - On January 27, 2026, crews responded to a residential structure fire (RSF). While only one bedroom of a heavily involved duplex unit could be saved, crews successfully prevented fire extension to the adjoining unit. Strong interagency cooperation was demonstrated: BCSO ensured all occupants were safely evacuated, BC4 provided engine support, REA and the City of BC secured utilities, and Chaplaincy assisted displaced residents. Before clearing the first incident, crews responded to a second structure fire involving a dryer. With assistance from a BC4 engine, crews successfully saved the residence and its occupants. Excellent work by all involved.
- Asst Chief Dormaier/PIO – *None*.
 - Training Cpt. Kale Guerin – *None*
 - Safety Cpt. Mike Meyer, HSO – *None*.
 - 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 4:43 PM.

Attested on: February 17, 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