



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

January 20, 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 Fox, Firefighter King

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 January 20, 2026.
- Minutes: Approve minutes of the Regular Board Meeting dated January 6, 2026.
- Payroll Vouchers (*Fund 6821*)
 - Approve 2025 13th mo. Payroll Vouchers in the amount of \$14,674.10.
 - Approve Direct Deposit in the amount of \$71,004.62.
 - Approve Payroll Vouchers in the amount of \$69,050.08.
- Claim Vouchers (*Fund 6821*)
 - Approve 2025 13th mo. Bill vouchers in the amount of \$6,676.09.
 - Approve 2026 Bill vouchers in the amount of \$62,128.05.

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

IMPORTANT DATES

- **02-03-2026, B2 Fire COMM Meeting, 4:00 PM, STA 210, Tuesday**
- *02-16-2026, Holiday: President's Day, Office Closed*
- **02-17-2026, B2 Fire COMM Meeting, 4:00 PM, STA 210, Tuesday**



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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*

CORRESPONDENCE *None.*

FINANCIALS *(Financial Officer)*

- District Financial Reports: *reports will be given at the first meeting of the month.*

REPORTS

- Fire Chief Bates –
 - Personnel are returning from holiday and vacation leave, and the department is transitioning fully into 2026 operations.
 - Year-end closeout activities for 2025 (13th month) are underway. Preparation of the annual report will follow.
 - As discussed during the prior budget workshop, the District is anticipated to undergo a State audit toward the end of 2026, covering fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025. Audit costs have been budgeted at \$5,000 per year, split between the current and next fiscal year, and are not expected to exceed that amount. The State typically initiates contact mid-year. Most recommended process improvements have been implemented, with the remaining item being the updated purchasing policy, which is expected to be returned from legal review shortly. Once the revised policy manual is completed, it will be presented to the Board.
 - The City of BC has appointed a new Public Works Director, Rocky Wallace, and a new Planning representative, Steve Zets. A coordination meeting will be scheduled to introduce leadership, discuss mutual support opportunities, and maintain open lines of communication for the benefit of the community.
 - The 800 MHz radio project is progressing. Delivery of new radios is scheduled for January 29, 2026. Regional installation efforts are expected to begin in early February, with local installation anticipated in March. Captain Guerin will conduct training on the new radios and system. The planned transition to the 800 MHz system is targeted for early summer, contingent upon completion of regional infrastructure installation.
- 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.*



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BVFF

Temporary Convene for BVFF Pension Meeting (Agenda Closed to Public)

- APPROVAL OF NEW INCIDENT REPORT CLAIM:
 - No new incidents
- BVFF Invoice Vouchers list dated 12/20/26 (separate sheet)

Commissioner Howell moved to approve BVFF Invoice vouchers for payment. Commissioner Rouse seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Resume Regular Public Meeting

PERSONNEL: None.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Howell moved that the meeting be adjourned. Commissioner Rouse seconded. There being no further business, Chairperson Orth adjourned the meeting at 4:13 PM.

Attested on: February 3, 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