OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
BENSON COUNTY
NORTH DAKOTA
October 20, 2026

The Benson County commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, Oct. 20, 2026 at 8 a.m. in the commissioner room of the Benson County Courthouse, Minnewaukan, ND. Commissioners present: Dick Horner, Ron Stadum and Tammy Kuk. David Davidson and Doris M. Griffin were present via Teams. The meeting was called to order by Chair Davidson. Other people present: Kelly Glover, Benson County Farmers Press; James P. Wang, Benson County state's attorney; Scott Todahl, DEM and highway superintendent; and Joy Orvedal, highway department clerk.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

A motion was made by Griffin, seconded by Kuk, to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of Oct. 6, 2026 and the special meeting of Oct. 14, 2026. All members voted yes. The motion carried.

Scott Todahl, DEM and highway superintendent, met with the board to give a report for the highway department. Todahl stated he has been able to view images and footage from the new cameras at Wood Lake. He stated there will be trucks hauling on the Oberon paved road for the biking/hiking trail from Fort Totten to Devils Lake. He reported on the meeting he attended held in Bismarck with the NDDOT.

Laura Wanzek, Benson County sheriff, came to the meeting.

Discussion was held on Eddy and Nelson counties transferring to State Radio for 911 services. Eddy County will use Jamestown for jailing services and Nelson County will use Grand Forks.

A motion was made by Stadum, seconded by Kuk, to approve and have the chair sign the Maintenance Certification County Federal Aid Project SFN 51026 form from the NDDOT. All members voted yes. The motion carried.

Todahl stated his budget for year 2026 is looking good.

Sheriff Wanzek met with the board to give her sheriff's report. She stated her deputies are attending training in Devils Lake. She informed the board interviews will be held this week for two possible employees.

Timothy Topitzhofer came to the meeting.

The board reviewed the Benson County financial report for September 2026.

A proposed lease agreement for the public health office for year 2027 was presented to the board. A motion was made by Horner, seconded by Kuk, to approve the lease. All members voted yes. The motion carried.

The board reviewed a quit claim deed for the repurchase of property by Joshua and Tiffany Knutson. A motion was made by Horner, seconded by Griffin, to approve the transfer and have the chair sign. All members voted yes. The motion carried.

The board also reviewed a quit claim deed for the repurchase of property by Megann Arttus. A motion was made by Kuk, seconded by Horner, to approve the transfer and have the chair sign. All members voted yes. The motion carried.

A letter from the NDDOT dated October 2026 regarding the TA program was presented to the board.

The board reviewed an application for special event permit filed by Ye Olde Tavern for an event at the Odessa Events Center to be held on Nov. 14, 2026. A motion was made by Horner, seconded by Kuk, to approve the permit. All members voted yes.

The motion carried.

A motion was made by Kuk, seconded by Horner, to move the Nov. 3, 2026 meeting to Nov. 5, 2026 due to the general election. All members voted yes. The motion carried.

Sara Radomski, Erik Christenson and Cameron Thornberg, Rugby EMS, came to the meeting.

Topitzhofer spoke during the public comment period. He stated his frustration with the city of Oberon not being transparent with its financial records. He also discussed other issues relative to the city for weed control and water quality, etc. Topitzhofer stated there may be environmental hazards that need to be taken care of, including the burning of net wrap for bales and protection of the aquifer. He reported that he is no longer hooked up to the city water system. Topitzhofer requested an audit of the city of Oberon be conducted. SA Wang gave input on this issue. He informed Topitzhofer that he needs to deal with his issues through the city of Oberon as they are not a county issue. Wang recommended Topitzhofer contact the Lake Region District Health Unit and/or the ND League of Cities. He also stated Topitzhofer has the option of filing a lawsuit against the city. Wanzek stated the sheriff's department responded to the fire issue and reported it to the ND State Department of Health. Topitzhofer questioned how special assessments on property are applied. Davidson stated Topitzhofer will be scheduled in for the next Oberon City Council meeting and the meeting notice will be posted on the community center door. Topitzhofer discussed his frustration with city council meetings not being posted.

At 8:46 a.m. the public hearing was held on the appraised property values set for foreclosed property by the board. Nobody appeared for the hearing.

Christenson presented information on the new Rugby EMS that was organized. He stated the ambulance is run through the Heart of America Medical Center and it recently became a district due to change in state law. He informed the board that a new ambulance building is being built and the EMS receives approximately 600 calls per year. Radomski stated the election held back in June 2026 resulted in the public defeating the ballot question of the EMS going to 15 mills of taxation and they plan to resubmit it to a vote of the people again in the future.

The board discussed standing with the SLT against the CAFO being built in Pierce County as requested by the SLT at the special meeting held Oct. 14, 2026. Stadum suggested to get more information on the plans for the CAFO and revisit the issue at the Nov. 5, 2026 meeting. The board concluded getting more information would be good action to take at this time. Davidson stated he will contact the SLT to get more information for the next meeting.

Discussion was held on changing the meeting time for the commission meetings to 9 a.m. rather than 8 a.m. The board concluded to wait until after the general election to see what time works best for any new board members.

The board reviewed and discussed

the monthly county bills needing to be paid prior to end of month. A motion was made by Kuk, seconded by Stadum, to pay all the bills. All members voted yes. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made at 9:06 a.m.

Bonnie Erickson
Benson County Auditor

David Davidson
Chair