**Special Called Meeting**

**Budget Workshop**

**Benton City Council**

**May 4, 2021**

A special called meeting of the Benton City Council was called to order on Tuesday, May 4, 2021 at 2:00 P.M. by Mayor Rita Dotson.

Council members present were Rita Murray, Sherra Riley, Ann Riley, Charles Edmonds and Kevin Farley.

Absent was Butch Holland.

Other staff present were Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treasurer; Todd Riley, Gas Manager and Rob Mattingly, City Attorney.

Todd Riley reviewed Benton Gas budget amendments for 2020-2021:

* Reduce Training & Travel Expense from $19,000 to $5,000
* Increase Dues & Membership from $7,000 to $10,000
* Increase Repair Equipment from $12,000 to $20,000
* Increase Advertising from $6,000 to $9,000

A motion was made by Murray, seconded by Farley to approve the amendments for the 2020-

2021 budget. All agreed. Motion carried.

He also reviewed the proposed 2021-2022 Benton Gas System budget.

Mayor Dotson read minutes from the Water and Sewer Committee minutes of April 16, 2021. The committee recommended to Council to add Department for Local Government’s Cost of Living Adjustment to water and sewer rates. Water rates to begin adding COLA on July 1, 2021 and sewer rates to add COLA beginning July 1, 2022.

The committee also recommended raising sewer rates to $12/2000 gallons and $6.50 for each additional 1000 gallons for inside city and $20/2000 gallons and $9.50 for each additional 1000 gallons for outside city. A motion was made by Murray, seconded by A. Riley to approve City Attorney Mattingly to amend the current rate ordinance to reflect the recommendations. All agreed. Motion carried.

In order to build up the Water Maintenance Account and Sewer Maintenance Accounts in order to make much needed system repairs, they also want $1.00 per customer each month from the increased revenue to be deposited into each account in addition to what is currently being deposited.

The proposed 2021-2022 Benton Water and Sewer budget was reviewed and above items reflected.

There being no further discussion, meeting adjourned at 3:46 P.M.

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Rita Dotson, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treasurer