

**Special Called Meeting
Benton City Council
March 1, 2024**

A special called meeting of the Benton City Council was held on Friday, March 1, 2024 at 1:00 pm at Benton City Hall. Mayor Rita Dotson called the meeting to order followed by Pledge of Allegiance and opening prayer by Kevin Farley.

Council members present were Guy Henton, Rita Murray, Ann Riley, Laura Craynon, Kevin Farley and Butch Holland

Other staff present were Rob Mattingly, City Attorney; Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treasurer and Jessica Scillian, Gas Office Manager.

Retail Strategies joined us via Zoom to discuss our Downtown Strategic Plan. Jeremy Murdock gave a plan overview and discussed more in depth on the possibility of implementing a restaurant tax and vacant property registration fee. Elena Blevins was also present via Zoom and discussed restaurant tax from the tourism standpoint.

City Attorney Mattingly clarified that in the February 6, 2024 special called meeting with Purchase Area Development District on the Marshall County Caring & Needline CDBG that it was mentioned that the legal binding agreement would be amended to state that the city will not be responsible for any cost overrun. Although this is what is implied and has been promised that the city will not bear any cost-overruns, the agreement will not specifically state that. Council all understand and Mayor will proceed with signing the Legally Binding Agreement.

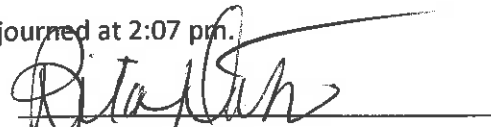
Mayor Dotson informed the Council of some funding issues through KIA and has suggested that we pull our application for KIA funding and use in-house funds through General Fund. This will save approximately \$626,209 in interest and fees. A motion was made by Riley, seconded Craynon to approve using General Fund funds to pay for this project and allow Benton Water & Sewer to make monthly payments for reimbursement. All agreed. Motion carried.

The following bid was received for the Lift Station Rehabilitation Project – Electrical Contract:

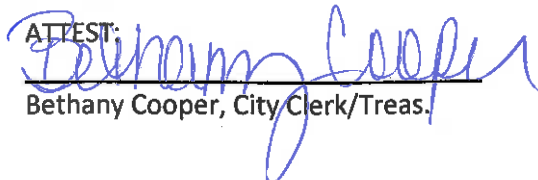
Youngblood Excavating \$775,795.00

Mayor Dotson also read the recommendation letter from RiverCrest Engineering that it would be the City's best financial interest to reject the bid and re-bid separately for materials, then electrical installation. A motion was made by Henton, seconded by Farley to reject the bid and proceed as recommended by RiverCrest Engineering. All agreed. Motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, meeting adjourned at 2:07 pm.



Rita Dotson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Bethany Cooper, City Clerk/Treas.