Benton County Commission
November 16, 2026

Convene

Presiding Commissioner Steve Daleske called the meeting of the Benton County Commission to order at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, November 16, 2026, in the County Commission Room. Attendance: Larry Berry, Present; Scott Harms, Present; and Steve Daleske, Present.

Approval of Prior Minutes

District 1 Commissioner Larry Berry made the motion to approve prior minutes dated November 12, 2026. District 2 Commissioner Scott Harms seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Larry Berry (Yes), Scott Harms (Yes), and Steve Daleske (Yes).

Visitors

The following citizens were present: David Malecki, Sharon Guess, Patty Richardson, Rich Chiles, Amber Segar, Rosa Valentine, Cynthia Smith, and Peggy Crabtree-Berry.

2027 Budget Preparation

Commissioners continued preparation of the 2027 budget today.

Employee Health Insurance

Commissioners discussed information that has been received from Mike Keith Insurance pertaining to health insurance coverage for County employees. Further discussion will be given to this matter as part of the budget preparation process.

County Law Enforcement Restitution (CLERF) Fund

Presiding Commissioner Steve Daleske reported that he has received notification from Joe Reser, stating his decision to resign as a member of the County Law Enforcement Restitution (CLERF) board. Commissioners will discuss this board appointment after January 1, 2027.

Woodland Road

A citizen residing on Woodland Road met with Commissioners to request speed limit signs on that road.

Treasurer/Budget

Treasurer Rebecca Minks met with Commissioners to present her financial report. She also presented her 2027 budget requests.

County Commission/Courthouse/Custodian Budgets

Commissioners discussed various budgets, including County Commission, Courthouse, and Custodian.

County Clerk

County Clerk Susan Porterfield submitted bills for approval and payment.

Rosa Valentine

Rosa Valentine spoke to Commissioners pertaining to engaging another attorney for help with the lawsuit. Presiding Commissioner Daleske indicated that legal counsel is currently reviewing procedures for an ordinance that several counties can utilize for guidelines for data centers, but it is not available at this time.

Patty Richardson

Patty Richardson spoke to Commissioners, stating that the county's attorney presented no evidence in court pertaining to the data center lawsuit and there is information available that should be submitted to the judge.

Road Maintenance

Commissioners discussed road conditions throughout the County.

Lawsuit

Commissioners discussed the NSI 6 vs. Benton County lawsuit and noted that they were in Court on Friday, November 13, 2026, with legal counsel. Good cause existed for discussing this matter on less than 24 hours' notice because the closed session discussion under RSMo 610.021(1) concerned developments arising from the court hearing held on Friday, and confidential legal advice regarding time-sensitive next steps in the pending litigation. Those developments could not reasonably have been known or evaluated before the hearing, making compliance with the normal notice period impractical. The following points are the proposed plan of action moving forward:

1. Develop an alternative regulatory framework for the Commission to consider.
2. Prepare and file a writ petition with the Missouri Supreme Court, utilizing and building upon the work product previously developed for the writ filed in the Western District.
3. Conduct targeted discovery regarding NSI and the proposed project to further develop factual record.
4. Continue preparing for trial that is currently scheduled for February 10, 2027.

Adjourn

District 1 Commissioner Larry Berry made the motion to adjourn until November 18, 2026; District 2 Commissioner Scott Harms seconded the motion. The motion passed by vote: Larry Berry (Yes), Scott Harms (Yes), and Steve Daleske (Yes). Meeting adjourned at 12 p.m.

Signatures



Steve Daleske
Presiding Commissioner

(Visitors come and go at will during Commission session).