

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
CITY HALL
JANUARY 20, 2026**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Evenson. Members present: Jack Evenson, Eric Payne, Dan Enderson, Nancy Maanum, and Cherie Stielow. Members Absent: None. Also present: City Clerk Valerie Alsaker, City Manager Matt Skaret, Chief of Police Ian Hodge and Reed Anfinson.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

It was moved by Payne, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to approve the agenda.

First Skaret reminded the Council our Prosecuting Attorney, Danielle Olson, is resigning as of January 26, 2026. We currently have a joint powers agreement with the State of Minnesota BCA and Swift County, the City of Appleton and the City of Benson to share information with the prosecuting attorney, which is Danielle Olson, or her successor. Swift County recently appointed Deborah Gerads to be the Assistant County Attorney. At the County Commissioner meeting today, they appointed her as the interim County Attorney. There will be no election for this year, but there will be an election for her position in November which is a four year term. There was discussion on continuum of case load to which Hodge said he is very confident the transition will go well. After further discussion, it was moved by Payne, seconded by Stielow and carried unanimously to appoint Deborah Gerads as the interim City of Benson Prosecuting Attorney from January 27, 2026 until January 4, 2027.

Next Skaret said with Director of Finance Lisa Kent leaving as of February 19, 2026, he met with the personnel committee to discuss if we should contract out our payroll services with Conway, Deuth and Schmeising (CDS). He said they are our auditor and know our city. Enderson said he was looking into help in this area for a while. Skaret presented the proposal from CDS and said we are still waiting for a proposal from another firm. Payne asked if Skaret is asking for approval with CDS or did he want to wait for the second proposal. Skaret asked Council to direct the personnel committee to analyze the proposals and choose a firm. Evenson said this will not be a permanent solution. After further discussion, it was moved by Maanum, seconded by Payne and carried unanimously to direct the personnel committee to hire the best firm for temporarily outsourcing payroll for the City.

There being no further business to come before the Council a motion was made by Payne, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to adjourn the Special Council meeting at 5:49 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk