

**MINUTES - BENSON CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING  
CITY HALL  
JULY 21, 2025**

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, Director of Finance Lisa Kent, Public Works Director Jeff Reuss, City Manager Matt Skaret, CEDA Representative Hillary Tweed and City Attorney Stephen Kowal, Telephonically: Rick Schaffer with USAquatics.

The Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor asked for any changes to the agenda, to which there were none. It was moved by Maanum, seconded by Payne and carried unanimously to approve the agenda.

The Mayor called for approval of the consent agenda. It was moved by Payne and seconded by Enderson and carried unanimously to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

- July 7, 2025 City Council Minutes
  - POST Board Training Compliance Completed
  - Pay Request- Engan Associates-Armory Engineering-\$3,868.07-Bal. - \$7,387.67
  - Pay Request – Ehler’s – Cottage Sq. Development Agreement--\$8,500.00
- Electronic Transfers:
- Payroll: June 26, 2025 - \$134,956.73  
July 10, 2025 - \$151,849.69
  - June Journal Entries: \$1,770,273.66

There were two staff announcements: Tweed reminded everyone of the Music in the Park event this Thursday, 5:30-8p.m. with Aaron Simmonds, and MiniSota Museum is serving food and having a petting zoo. Evenson and Payne stated the Kid Day activities last weekend were amazing and the weather couldn't have been nicer.

There was no one with unscheduled business.

Skaret approached the Council and was joined telephonically by Schaffer to discuss the pool repairs. Skaret said we have had multiple pool studies done on the pool over the past few years. Our pool is now 20 years old and is need of repairs. Structurally the pool is sound, but it is in need of several rehabilitation projects. He said after meeting with Schaeffer with USAquatics, the following items are some of the larger projects; re-plaster the main pool, pump rehabilitation and new gelcoat on the big slide. It is estimated it will cost \$400,000 for all the repairs. Skaret went on to say in the recent bond Council passed, we included \$500,000 for major pool repair. Included in the packet is a proposal for engineering and project management from USAquatics, which is \$67,000 plus trip fees. Construction administration costs are \$11,000 plus trip fees. Skaret said we would like to get as much done this fall as possible. There was concern about getting started this fall with the bidding process and Department of Health approval, which these processes can be run simultaneously. There was discussion on starting this fall and finishing up next spring, or starting entirely next spring which would delay opening the pool until the end of June. Schaeffer stated he could bid the work to start this fall, and work could begin one week after the bid is

awarded with a completion date by June of 2026, and felt the time line is feasible. After discussion, it was moved by Payne, seconded by Stielow and carried unanimously to approve USAquatics to move forward with the proposed consultation and design for the pool repairs.

Next was a pay request from Bolton & Menk for engineering services. Skaret said we will not require action on this item. He talked to Sheila Krose from Bolton & Menk on the \$130,000 engineering bill. She said this fee will be covered by the grant for the floodwall, however, since they went over their original approved dollar amount for engineering, they first have to amend their original contract agreement with us before we can submit this bill for reimbursement. He added we will see the amended contract at the August 4, 2025 meeting.

Kent, Skaret and Reuss approached the Council to discuss a master engineering agreement with DGR Engineering. The SCADA system, which is a computer system that talks to the controls at the power plant engines, are 16 years old and no longer functioning properly. The line crew is able to work with vendors to keep the system running for now. Kent said we knew we would need to replace the system and in the recent electric rate study, replacement was planned for 2028. Original estimates were \$140,000, but now it is closer to \$225,000. DGR's proposal for engineering is \$18,900. Staff is asking Council to approve the design phase of the project, and we will move forward with the project in 2026. Reuss said SCADA is the brains for operating the system. After discussion, it was moved by Enderson, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to approve engaging with DGR Engineering in the design phase of replacing the SCADA system in the power plant.

Skaret said there is some housekeeping with updating signatures on our investments. Adding Skaret will allow him to talk to our investment companies. The council reviewed, and it was moved by Stielow, seconded by Payne and carried unanimously to approve City Manager Matt Skaret as a signatory with RBC Investment account. It was moved by Payne, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously placing Skaret as a signatory with Wells Fargo investment account. Councilmember Maanum offered the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SIGNATORIES  
FOR THE CITY OF BENSON'S  
MULTI-BANK SECURITIES, INC.  
(RESOLUTION 2025-16)**

**I HEREBY CERTIFY** that a meeting of the Board of Directors (or other authorizing body) of ("Investor"), an organized under the laws of the State of, which at said meeting a quorum was present and acting throughout, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted and have been and now are in full force and effect.

**WHEREAS,** is duly authorized and permitted by its Charter, Bylaws and/or investment policies to:

1. Engage in cash settlement transactions for the purchase of securities purchased through any introducing Broker-Dealer.
2. Engage in cash or DVP (delivery versus payment) settlement transactions in securities including, but not limited to debt instruments, bond debentures, notes and CDs; and other fixed-income securities, including but not limited to U.S. government agency bonds, corporate bonds, municipal bonds, mortgage-backed securities, collateralized mortgage obligations and Treasury bonds, notes and bills.

3. Receive on behalf of the Investor, or deliver to the Investor or a designated third party, monies, bonds or other securities.
4. Sell, assign or endorse for transfer bonds or other securities registered in the name of the Investor.
5. Establish and maintain safekeeping accounts with Fedwire and ACH privileges from which account funds are directly spent, and the responsibility for which is entirely that of the Investor. Said privileges will be limited to the persons designated by the Investor below. Each designated person can independently perform the prescribed privileges.

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Email
Lisa	Kent	Director of Finance	<a href="mailto:lkent@bensonmn.us">lkent@bensonmn.us</a>
Matthew	Skaret	City Manager	mskaret@bensonmn.us

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that City of Benson can open an account or accounts in its name with a safekeeping agent, introducing broker, or federally insured financial institution offering CD rates through any introducing agent and that the persons named above, or their successors in office, may, on behalf of the Investor or any one of them acting individually, be and they are hereby authorized to (1) give or submit orders in said account(s) for the purchase, sale or other disposition of CDs, bonds and other securities offered by any introducing broker; (2) make, execute, deliver or submit directly any and all written endorsements and documents necessary to effectuate closure or the disbursements of funds of or from the Investor account; (3) may at any time while the account is open modify, amend, submit or enter into any other arrangement with the safekeeping agent of its CD or securities. This authorization to each of said officers is to remain in full force and effect until other written notice of revocation is submitted to the safekeeping agent(s) and Multi-Bank Securities, Inc. (MBS).

**I FURTHER CERTIFY**, that the officers (or others) identified above are authorized by the foregoing resolution to act for the City of Benson.

Councilmember Enderson seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded: AYES: Evenson, Stielow, Payne, Enderson, Maanum. NAYES: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared Resolution 2025-16 duly passed and adopted.

Kent presented the proposed electric rate increases for the next three years. She said these rate increases are a result of the electric rate study and were discussed at the last City Council meeting. Councilmember Enderson offered the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION AMENDING ELECTRIC RATES  
(RESOLUTION NO. 2025-17)**

WHEREAS, an electric rate study was prepared by Missouri River Energy Services, and

WHEREAS, the rate study recommended an increase in rates to each of the customer classes.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following utility rates be adopted effective August 20, 2025:

**ELECTRIC RATES**

	<b>Current</b>	<b>8-20-25</b>	<b>6-20-26</b>	<b>6-20-27</b>
<b>Residential</b>				
Monthly Customer Charge	\$12.50	\$13.75	\$15.00	\$16.50
Energy Charge per KWH	0.09	0.093	0.096	0.099
<b>Commercial</b>				
Monthly Single-phase Customer Charge	16.50	17.75	19.50	21.50
Monthly Three-phase Customer Charge	24.00	25.75	27.75	30.00
Energy Charge per KWH	0.092	0.097	0.102	0.107
<b>Large Power</b>				
Monthly Customer Charge	45.00	50.00	55.00	60.00
Demand Charge per KWH	14.00	15.60	17.30	19.10
Energy Charge per KWH	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.039
<b>Interruptible Rate</b>				
Energy Charge per KWH	0.047	0.048	0.049	0.050
<b>Monthly Controlled Water Heating Credit</b>	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
<b>Monthly Security Lighting</b>				
100 Watt	6.25	6.50	6.75	7.00
150 Watt	7.75	8.10	8.45	8.80
250 Watt	12.40	12.60	12.80	13.00
400 Watt	15.50	15.70	15.90	16.10
1,000 Watt	29.00	30.00	31.00	32.00
<b>Street Lighting</b>				
Energy Charge per KWH	0.158	0.170	0.183	0.197
<b>Power Cost Adjustment Base per KWH</b>	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050

Councilmember Maanum seconded the foregoing resolution and the following vote was recorded:  
 AYES: Evenson, Stielow, Payne, Enderson, Maanum. NAYES: None. Thereupon the Mayor declared  
 Resolution 2025-17 duly passed and adopted.

Next Tweed approached with Pay Application 2 from Marcus Construction for work on the Armory. It was noted very little of the contingency has been used to date. It was then moved by Maanum, seconded by Stielow and carried unanimously to approve Pay Application no. 2 from Marcus Construction in the amount of \$243,022.82.

Skaret approached with follow-up from the last Council meeting on the MRES Great Blue Research Survey. It appears other community response to this survey is low. After discussion, it was the consensus of the Council we will not participate in the Great Blue Research survey.

Skaret presented a Criminal Background Check Policy to Council. He said it isn't a regular practice to conduct a background check for new employees, citing it is a requirement for the Police Department. He presented a policy fashioned after the League of MN Cities (LMC) model policy, stating the City Attorney has reviewed it. Enderson questioned if this will be conducted on all new hires and what is the criteria for an unfavorable back-ground check. Enderson said as a member of the personnel committee, he wants input on how to implement the policy before implementation. It was moved by Enderson, seconded by Stielow and carried unanimously to approve the Criminal Background Check Policy with Personnel Committee input on the procedure.

Skaret said as a follow-up to the last Council meeting, he reached out to the LMC Charter Assistance program. They can assist us with review of our Charter. They estimate it will take 5-10 hours, with a minimum cost of \$1,000 plus mileage, overnight expenses and meals if we ask them to come out. Additional meetings will be at \$100 per hours. He said he reached out to American Legal Publication who the City has used to implement our codification process for many years, and they only do codifications, and do not offer assistance in reviewing charters or ordinances. He said we do not see any reason to create a special application for the Charter Commission, and suggested we amend our current board and commission application by adding Charter Commission to it. After further discussion, it was moved by Enderson, and seconded by Payne to authorize solicitation of Charter Commission applications, and engage the LMC charter assistance program to start reviewing our current Charter. The motion carried unanimously. Stielow asked to be informed of Charter Commission meetings when they start.

Next Skaret, at the request of Councilmember Enderson presented the 2023 Strategic Plan. He said he felt there are a lot of new people that have not seen this. He remarked several items on the 2023 Strategic Plan have been accomplished. He reminded Council the next Strategic Planning session will be September 19-20, 2025.

It was moved by Maanum, seconded by Enderson and carried unanimously to approve the bills and warrants in the amount of \$1,145,486.71.

Skaret said staff met in reference to the generous donation from Lake Central Bank as to where we should apply the \$80,000. Staff came up with their top three projects and presented them to the park board at their meeting last Wednesday. The three suggestions were 1. Pickleball courts, 2. A ninja play gym 3. Handicapped access to the handicapped swing at Roosevelt. The unanimous choice was pickleball courts at Lathrop Park. Skaret said he got some numbers from another town constructing pickleball courts and found it to cost \$125,000 for two courts. He went on to say we could maybe save some money having our employees do some work. After discussion, it was moved by Enderson, seconded by Maanum and carried unanimously to authorize staff to move forward with research on the pickleball courts.

Skaret gave his City Manager report as follows:

- Landpride is scheduled to begin utility work on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Street projects as well as Cottage Square this week.
- Kid Day was a success and he thanked City staff and all the volunteers and community for a successful event.
- The Liquor Committee met to study and evaluate the long-term use of the liquor store. THC products are starting to sell. We have reached out to Ringdahl Architects to come out next Monday for a walk through of the store.
- Staff will be attending several trainings/conferences this week.
- He and the Mayor will be at the CEDA annual meeting next week in Winona.
- CGMC Will hold a regional meeting August 7, 2025 from 5-6:30 p.m. in Willmar.
- There was a floodwall preconstruction meeting on July 10, 2025. They plan to start construction the first week in August.
- There will be a watering ban August 11-20 in order for the water department to conduct their practice for the water tower rehab next year.

There being no further business to come before the Council a motion was made by Maanum, seconded by Payne and carried unanimously to adjourn the Council meeting at 6:51 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk