

# **Combined Committee of the Whole & City Council Meeting Minutes December 22, 2025**



The City Council of Bentonville, Arkansas, met in special session on Monday December 22, at 6:00 p.m., at City Hall, 305 S.W. A Street, Bentonville, Arkansas.

Present for Committee of the Whole; were Council Members Octavio Sanchez, Holly Hook, Bill Burckart, Beckie Seba, Chris Sooter, Aubrey Patterson (arriving at 6:17pm), Cindy Acree, and Gayatri Agnew.

Also, present were Mayor Stephanie Orman, City Staff Attorney David Bailey, City Clerk Malorie Marrs, the press, city staff, and the audience. Several members of the city staff and the public attended remotely via Zoom.

Mayor Orman called the meeting to order, and a scout from Troop 36 led everyone present in the Pledge of Allegiance, which was followed by a moment of silence in support of our armed forces.

Motion was made by Council Member Sanchez to approve the minutes of December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, regular council meeting as presented, second by Council Member Agnew. There was no discussion.

Motion carried (6-0) Patterson was absent.

## **I. Committee of the Whole Discussion**

Mayor Orman turned over Committee of the Whole for Council Member Sooter.

### **1. Ozark Regional Transit**

**Discussion of the 2026 Agreement for City of Bentonville Transit Services with Ozark Regional Transit.**

### **2. Consent Agenda Discussion**

#### **i. New Business items 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, & 14**

### **3. Committee of the Whole Closure move to City Council Topics**

Present were Council Members Octavio Sanchez, Holly Hook, Bill Burckart, Beckie Seba, Cindy Acree, Gayatri Agnew, Aubrey Patterson & Chris Sooter. Also, present were Mayor Stephanie Orman, Staff City Attorney David Bailey, City Clerk Malorie Marrs, the press, city staff, and the audience. Several members of the city staff and the public attended remotely via Zoom.

A motion was made by Council Member Sooter, to suspend the rules regarding the reading of all ordinances on three separate days, and further that all ordinances and resolutions be read by title only, second by Council Member Sanchez. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0)

A motion was made by Council Member Sooter, to place New Business items 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, & 14 approved for consent agenda second by Council Member Burckart.

There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0)

**II. New Business -**

**1. Informational: Recognition of Outgoing Board, Commission and Committee Members**

Recognize those outgoing members who have notably served on the City of Bentonville's Boards, Commissions and Committees.

**III. Consent Agenda:**

**New Business Items: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, & 14**

*Consent Items:*

**2. Appointment: Reappointment of Michele Stamps Pritchett to the Library Advisory Board**

Reappointment of Michele Stamps Pritchett, based upon staff recommendation to the Mayor, to the Library Advisory Board. This is Mrs. Pritchett's second term that will begin January 1, 2026 and expire December 31, 2030.

**3. Appointment: Roland Smith to the Library Advisory Board**

Appointment of Roland Smith, based upon staff recommendation to the Mayor, to the Library Advisory Board. This is Mr. Smith's first term that will begin January 1, 2026 and expire December 31, 2030.

**4. Appointment: Jennifer Doherty to the Library Advisory Board**

Appointment of Jennifer Doherty, based upon staff recommendation to the Mayor, to the Library Advisory Board. This is Mrs. Doherty's first term that will begin January 1, 2026 and expire December 31, 2030.

**5. Resolution 12-22-25 A: Purchase Parks Vehicles for 2026**

Resolution authorizing the Mayor and Clerk to enter into an agreement to purchase five (5) vehicles from the State Contract Vehicle FY 2026 Vendor List in the amount of \$228,594.00. No budget adjustment is needed.

**7. Resolution 12-22-25 B: Enter an Agreement with Crafton, Tull & Associates, Inc. for C Street Sidepath Project**

Resolution authorizing the Mayor and Clerk to enter into an agreement with Crafton Tull, in the amount of \$222,150.00, for design services for the C Street Sidepath. No budget adjustment is needed.

**14. Resolution 12-22-25 F: Development Agreement with ADAF Bentonville, LLC for Bright Road Extension**

A Resolution authorizing the City to enter into a Master Development Agreement with ADAF Bentonville, LLC for the Bright Road Extension Project. A budget adjustment is needed.

City Staff Attorney David Bailey read the items on consent by title only. Motion to approve by Council Member Sanchez, seconded by Council Member Agnew.  
Motion passes (8-0).

**IV. New Business- NON Consent Items**

**6. Ordinance 2025-217: Ordinance to Waive Competitive Bidding for 2026 Downtown Bentonville Incorporated Agreement**

Ordinance approving a bid waiver to Downtown Bentonville, Inc., and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk enter into an agreement for services for 2026. No budget adjustment is needed.

City Staff Attorney David Bailey read the ordinance by title only. Motion to approve by Council Member Sanchez, seconded by Council Member Seba.  
Ordinance passes (8-0).

**8. Resolution 12-22-25 C: Accepting a Grant from Walton Family Foundation for Little Sugar Creek Restoration**

Resolution authoring the Mayor and Clerk to accept a grant from the Walton Family Foundation, valued at \$2,125,922.00, for removal of the dam at Bella Vista Lake and the restoration of Little Sugar Creek. A budget adjustment is needed to accept and allocate funds.

Mayor Orman indicated that these both would need to pass together.

Director of Parks and Recreation, David Wright, discussed the project and its history with the City of Bentonville and Bella Vista, and outlined the need for the repairs and the benefits the restoration project will have for the area.

Various public comments from citizens and friends of Little Sugar Creek discussed their support of the dam update. Council Members voiced their concerns, and benefits of the project.

More detailed discussion can be found [HERE](#) (26:00 min-1 hr : 50min)

City Staff Attorney David Bailey read the resolution by title only. Motion to approve by Council Member Sanchez, seconded by Council Member Burckart.  
Resolution passes (6-2 NO, Acree & Agnew).

**9. Resolution 12-22-25 D: Awarding Bid IFB-25-43 to Streamline Environmental for Little Sugar Creek**

Resolution authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to enter into an agreement with Streamline Environmental, in the amount of \$4,459,704.00 (including a 10% contingency), for the removal of the dam at Bella Vista Lake and the restoration of the Little Sugar Creek. No budget adjustment is needed.

City Staff Attorney David Bailey read the resolution by title only. Motion to approve by Council Member Sanchez, seconded by Council Member Burckart.  
Resolution passes (6-2 NO, Acree & Agnew).

**10. Resolution 12-22-25 E: Construction Administration with WCRC for Little Sugar Creek Stream Restoration**

Resolution authorizing the Mayor and Clerk to enter into an amended agreement with WCRC, in the amount of \$446,000.00, for construction administration for the Bella Vista Lake dam removal and the Little Sugar stream restoration project. No budget adjustment is needed.

City Staff Attorney David Bailey read the resolution by title only. Motion to approve by Council Member Sanchez, seconded by Council Member Burckart.  
Resolution passes (6-2 NO, Acree & Agnew).

**11. Public Hearing to Authorize the Issuance of a Wastewater Development Fee Revenue Bond**

Public Hearing Public hearing authorizing the issuance of a bond in the amount of \$239,000,000.00 for the purpose of financing capital improvements to the City's wastewater system and the sale of the bond to the Alice Walton Foundation.

Mayor Orman opened the public hearing. Motion made by Council Member Patterson, seconded by Council Member Sanchez.

A \$239 million financing agreement with the Alice L. Walton Foundation to upgrade the city's aging sewer infrastructure.  
The plan requires developers to pay new residential and commercial development fees.  
Council member Cindy Acree & Burckart argued the proposal needed more time for review.

Supporters said the foundation offers a financing option the city couldn't obtain elsewhere without raising costs for existing ratepayers.

Multiple individuals commented on how this could impact developers. All public commenters were heard, and session was open for an additional 30 minutes to allow everyone to speak. Details [HERE](#) (1:51-3:20). Motion to close public hearing made by Council Member Sanchez, seconded Agnew. Motion passes (8-0)

**12. Ordinance 2025-218: Approving a Wastewater Development Fee**

Requesting City Council approval of an Ordinance to adopt a Wastewater Development Fee, as recommended by Utility Financial Solutions. No budget adjustment is needed.

City Staff Attorney David Bailey read the ordinance by title only. Motion to approve by Council Member Agnew, seconded by Council Member Sooter. Ordinance passes (7-1 NO, Acree).

**13. Ordinance 2025-219: Approving a Wastewater Development Fee Revenue Bond**


Requesting City Council approval of an ordinance to issue a Wastewater Development Fee Revenue bond in the amount of \$239,000,000.00 funded by the Alice Walton Foundation. No budget adjustment is needed.

City Staff Attorney David Bailey read the ordinance by title only. Motion to approve by Council Member Agnew, seconded by Council Member Sooter. Ordinance passes (7-1 NO, Acree).

Motion to adjourn made by Council Member Acree, Seconded by Council Member Hook, motion passed (8-0). 9:32pm voting portion closed

The next Bentonville City Council meeting will be January 13, 2026.

  
Malorie Marrs, City Clerk

  
Stephanie Orman, Mayor

