

BENTON COUNTY DITCH AUTHORITY
TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026
BENTON COUNTY BOARDROOM

The Benton County Ditch Authority met in regular session on January 20, 2026, in the County Boardroom in Foley, MN with County Board members Pam Benoit, Scott Johnson, Steve Heinen, Jared Gapinski and Ed Popp present. Also present was Montgomery Headley, County Administrator, Adam Ritsche, Environmental Technician-Ditch Inspector, and Beth Stay, Executive Assistant.

Ditch Authority Chair Scott Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:27 AM.

No one was present to speak during the Ditch Authority Meeting Open Forum.

Gapinski/Benoit to approve Consent Agenda item #1: 1) approve the Ditch Authority Meeting Minutes of January 6, 2026, as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Next, Environmental Technician-Ditch Inspector Adam Ritsche requested the Ditch Authority to consider quotes for Ditch Maintenance on County Ditch (CD) 9 and CD 14. Ritsche shared that they solicited quotes regarding CD 9 and CD 14 mowing of buffer strips on 12/16/2025. Quotes were due at 12:00 PM on 1/09/2026. Four quotes were received with wide cost differences and varying assumptions. Ritsche anticipates the mowing will be done in the spring of 2026 when the weather conditions are favorable. Ritsche noted that CD 9 Maintenance Assessment for 2026 was approved for \$10,000, and CD 14 was approved for \$15,000. Board members raised concerns about estimates without "not to exceed" limits, equipment suitability for wet buffer strips and the large variance between bids, despite lower-cost vendors expressing confidence and relevant experience. There was a consensus of the Ditch Authority Board to request revised quotes from all contractors that include not-to-exceed amounts and combined pricing for both ditches, and to consider additional vegetation management options such as herbicide treatment in the future. Action was deferred until updated quotes are received and reviewed at a subsequent meeting.

The Ditch Authority Meeting adjourned 10:42 AM.

Scott Johnson, Chair
Benton County Ditch Authority

ATTEST:

Montgomery Headley
Benton County Administrator