

1. Benton County Ditch Authority Meeting Agenda And Packet February 17, 2026

Documents:

[**DITCH AUTHORITY PACKET FEBRUARY 17, 2026.PDF**](#)

BENTON COUNTY DITCH AUTHORITY

February 17, 2026, 9:00 AM
Benton County Board Room

AGENDA

1. Commissioner Ed Popp, Benton County Ditch Authority Vice-Chair
 - Call to Order
 - Roll Call
 - Approve or Amend the Agenda
2. Open Forum Announcement by the Ditch Authority Vice-Chair
 - Public Input and/or Informational Matters Not Requiring Action by the Ditch Authority
3. Consent Agenda
 1. Approve or Amend the Ditch Authority Meeting Minutes of February 3, 2026
4. Regular Agenda
 - Review the Quotes for Ditch Maintenance of CD 9 and CD 14 (Continued)
 - Set a Date for the Annual Special Drainage Authority Meeting
5. Adjourn

Benton County Board of Commissioners/Benton County Ditch Authority

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Pursuant to MN Statutes §13D.02 and County Policy, the following County Board members may participate from a remote location:

- Commissioner Scott Johnson, District 1
- Commissioner Ed Popp, District 2
- Commissioner Steve Heinen, District 3
- Commissioner Jared Gapinski, District 4
- Commissioner Pam Benoit, District 5

BENTON COUNTY DITCH AUTHORITY
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2026
BENTON COUNTY BOARDROOM

The Benton County Ditch Authority met in regular session on February 3, 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 10:10 AM.

Motion by Heinen and seconded by Gapinski to approve the Ditch Authority Meeting Agenda as written. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Benoit/Gapinski to approve Consent Agenda item #1: 1) approve the Ditch Authority Meeting Minutes of January 20, 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 for mowing the buffer strips on CD 9 and CD 14 on December 16, 2025. The 4 quotes received were presented to the Ditch Authority on January 20, 2026. The Drainage Authority requested Ritsche to ask those who provided quotes, to provide a “not-to-exceed-number” in their quotes. That request was made on January 20, 2026, with a due date of January 30, 2026. It was noted that CD 9 Maintenance Assessment for 2026 was approved for \$10,000, and CD 14 Maintenance Assessment was approved at \$15,000 for 2026. Ritsche added that only two vendors provided firm “not-to-exceed” quotes while others did not respond or significantly increased their estimates. The Drainage Authority expressed concern over large discrepancies between estimates and capped amounts, limited familiarity with one lower-cost vendor, and the lack of cost certainty. The Drainage Authority reached a consensus to continue the discussion, seek additional information and references, and keep vendors informed rather than selecting a quote at this time.

Next, Ritsche requested the Drainage Authority to consider the date, time and place of the Annual Special Drainage Authority Meeting. Last year's meeting was on August 19, 2025 at 6:00 PM at the Foley High School Auditorium, which also coincided with the same day as the second Regular County Board Meeting in August. If we were to do the same this year, the date would be August 18, 2026. Postcards were sent to all benefitting property owners at \$385 total, or approximately \$35 per ditch system in 2025. There was a consensus of the Drainage Authority to set the Annual Special Drainage Authority Meeting on Tuesday, August 18, 2026. There was also a consensus to send out post cards to all benefitting landowners to notify them of the Annual Special Drainage Authority Meeting. Once the location and time is confirmed, Ritsche will get formal approval to set the Annual Special Drainage Authority Meeting at an upcoming Ditch Authority Meeting.

The Ditch Authority Meeting adjourned 10:27 AM.

Scott Johnson, Chair
Benton County Ditch Authority

ATTEST:

Montgomery Headley
Benton County Administrator

DRAF

BENTON COUNTY DRAINAGE AUTHORITY

AGENDA ITEM REQUEST



MEETING DATE 2-17-2026

REGULAR AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA

REQUESTING DEPARTMENT Public Works/Highway

TITLE OF REQUESTED ITEM AS IT WILL APPEAR ON BOARD AGENDA

Review Quotes for Ditch Maintenance of CD 9 and CD 14 (Continued)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- More information on quotes

*County Ditch 9 Maintenance Assessment for 2026 was approved for \$10,000

*County Ditch 14 Maintenance Assessment for 2026 was approved for \$15,000

ACTION REQUESTED

Review quotes and approve a contractor to complete the work

FISCAL IMPACT

ESTIMATED COST (\$) Depends on quote

SOURCE OF FUNDS Specific ditch maintenance fund

NEW / ADDITIONAL REVENUE (\$)

COST BUDGETED IN CURRENT YEAR? YES NO

SUBMITTED/APPROVED

SUBMITTER/SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE Adam Ritsche DATE 2-9-26

DEPARTMENT HEAD SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

COUNTY ATTORNEY SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

STATE GRANT CONTRACT/AGREEMENT NOT REVIEWED BY COUNTY ATTORNEY (GRANT RENEWAL WITH NO CHANGES IN TERMS AND CONDITIONS).

DURATION 15 min PREFERRED PLACEMENT ON AGENDA Best Fit

RFQ Abstract

CD 9 Estimated (5.02 Miles of Mowing)			
Company	Hours	Rate	Total
Helmin Construction	73	\$190	\$13,870
Carr's Tree Service	32.46	\$199	\$6,460
MNL	24	\$248 HR + \$400 fee	\$6,352

CD 9 Not-to-Exceed	
Company	Not-to-Exceed
Helmin Construction	
MNL	\$14,880
Carr's Tree Service	\$6,460

CD 14 Estimated (7.34 Miles of Mowing)			
Company	Hours	Rate	Total
Helmin Construction	108	\$190	\$20,520
MNL	40	\$248 HR + \$400 fee	\$10,320
Carr's Tree Service	47.68	\$199	\$9,488

CD 14 Not-to-Exceed	
Company	Not-to-Exceed
Helmin Construction	
MNL	\$22,320
Carr's Tree Service	\$9,488

Method of Mowing	
Helmin Construction	Unknown
MNL	Tractor-mounted flail, rotary, batwing, and or offset wing mowers
Carr's Tree Service	Cat/Mow/Trlr, Pull Truck

Totals Estimated vs Totals Not-to-Exceed		
Company	Totals Estimated	Totals Not-to-Exceed
Helmin Construction	\$34,390	
MNL	\$16,672	\$37,200
Carr's Tree Service	\$15,948	\$15,948

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Maintenance Along County Ditch No. 14.

Overview: MNL will provide mowing services for Benton County Ditch (CD) 14, consisting of mowing the designated buffer strip along the ditch system. CD 14, consists of approximately 7.34 miles of ditch buffer strip mowing, per County specifications. CD 14 consists of a main trunk and multiple branches. Work will be completed during the 2026 mowing season (Est June–September), dependent on weather, site conditions, and access availability.

- **Scope:** MNL will mow the buffer strip along CD 14 in accordance with Benton County specifications. The buffer strip extends outward 16.5 feet from the top edge of the ditch channel on both sides of the ditch.
- **Method:** Mowing will be completed using appropriate equipment including but not limited to: tractor-mounted flail, rotary, batwing, and/or offset wing mowers, skid loader mounted mower or brush hog, and marsh master mounted mower. Buffer widths will be achieved using multiple passes as necessary, depending on vegetation density, equipment access, and slope conditions
- **Cut Height:** Vegetation will be cut to an appropriate height, typically 4–6 inches, depending on site conditions and infrastructure needs.
- **Sensitive or Inaccessible Areas:** Areas that are too steep, obstructed, excessively wet, or otherwise unsafe will be avoided to prevent damage and ensure safety. Final determination of these conditions will be made by MNL's field crews based on field assessments.

BENTON COUNTY DRAINAGE AUTHORITY
AGENDA ITEM REQUEST



MEETING DATE 2-17-2026

REGULAR AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA

REQUESTING DEPARTMENT Public Works/Highway

TITLE OF REQUESTED ITEM AS IT WILL APPEAR ON BOARD AGENDA

Set a Date for the Annual Special Drainage Authority Meeting

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Last year's meeting was on August 19th.
- Postcards were sent out between July 1st and 15th
- Rinke Noonan cannot attend on Tuesday August 18th, 2026.
 - Can attend any other night during the week of the 17th.
 - Can also attend on Tuesday August 4th at 6:00PM, which is the first board meeting day of the month.
- Foley High School said that construction in the auditorium this summer will be minimal, so the AC should be working.

ACTION REQUESTED

Confirm and set a Date for the Annual Special Drainage Authority Meeting

FISCAL IMPACT

ESTIMATED COST (\$) \$385 for postcards

SOURCE OF FUNDS \$35 a ditch system

NEW / ADDITIONAL REVENUE (\$)

COST BUDGETED IN CURRENT YEAR? YES NO

SUBMITTED/APPROVED

SUBMITTER/SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE

Adam Ritsche

DATE 2-9-2026

DEPARTMENT HEAD SIGNATURE

DATE

COUNTY ATTORNEY SIGNATURE

DATE

STATE GRANT CONTRACT/AGREEMENT NOT REVIEWED BY COUNTY ATTORNEY (GRANT RENEWAL WITH NO CHANGES IN TERMS AND CONDITIONS).

DURATION 10 min

PREFERRED PLACEMENT ON AGENDA Best Fit