

4-28-94 Minutes

An adjourned meeting from the April 26, 1994, regular meeting of the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia, was held in the Circuit Court Room of the Bedford County Court House at 7:30 p.m., April 28, 1994.

The meeting was a joint meeting between Bedford City Council and the Bedford County Board of Supervisors.

City Council members present: Mayor G. Michael Shelton; Councilwoman Joanne A. Grahame; Councilman Payton M. Otey; Councilman Ronnie C. Rice; Councilman W. D. Tharp; and Vice Mayor James A. Vest.

City Council member absent: Councilman Larry D. Brookshier.

City Staff present: City Manager Jack A. Gross; City Attorney W. W. Berry, IV; and Clerk of the Council Teresa W. Hatcher.

Board members present: Chairman James Teass; Supervisor Lucille Boggess; Supervisor Henry Creasy; Supervisor Calvin Updike; Supervisor Dale Wheeler; Supervisor Gus Saarnijoki; and Supervisor Anthony Ware.

County Staff present: County Administrator Bill Rolfe; County Attorney Johnny Overstreet; and Director of Community Development Garland Page.

Chairman Teass and Mayor Shelton opened the meeting.

The purpose of the joint meeting was for discussion of consolidation issues by the Council and the Board.

Mayor Shelton made introductory remarks and stated that Council has established five principles for guidance in discussions with the County:

1. Any change in the structure of the City government should not cost City taxpayers more money.
2. Any change should not result in higher taxes to City citizens and businesses.
3. Any change should not reduce the level of services provided to City citizens.
4. Any change should respect the high level of representation City citizens enjoy under the present City government.
5. Any change should not reduce the access City citizens have to their government.

Mayor Shelton stated that the following two facts about the current situation must be understood by everyone:

1. Bedford City and County share a significant number of services, which include: education, health, social services, fire services, courts, judicial administration, sheriff and jail, and library services. The Mayor indicated that unlike other cities and counties in Virginia, the City and the County do not have duplication in services that drive up the costs of government.

2. Based on projections from the University of Virginia Center for Public Service, the population of the City will continue its modest gain. In 1990, the City had 6,300 residents. In the year 2000, it is projected the City will have 6660. In the City a growth of 300 citizens a decade is projected to continue through the year 2030. In contrast, the County is projected to grow tremendously, as it has in the past. Its population of 43,400 in 1990 is projected to be 50,900 in the year 2000 and 73,400 in the year 2030. Mayor Shelton indicated that those figures present contrasting future obligations.

Mayor Shelton indicated that Council will enter into the process of developing a consolidation agreement with an open mind, based on the simple premise of what is best for City citizens.

Chairman Teass stated that the Board of Supervisors was present this evening in a spirit of cooperation and stands ready to faithfully and honestly fulfill its legal commitment to begin the process of preparing a consolidation plan to put forth to the voters of both localities.

Mayor Shelton announced that Councilwoman Grahame and Councilman Rice will serve as Council's representatives in the preparation of the consolidation agreement, along with the City Manager and the City Attorney serving as staff to them to provide assistance.

Mayor Shelton stated that the City recommends that this group and the County's counterparts be referred to as the "Consolidation Study Committee".

Chairman Teass stated that Supervisor Saarnijoki and himself, along with the County Attorney Johnny Overstreet, County Administrator Bill Rolfe, and Director of Community Development Garland Page will serve as the Board's representatives on the Consolidation Study Committee.

Mayor Shelton submitted a proposed meeting schedule for consideration by the Consolidation Study Committee.

Mayor Shelton passed out a suggested list of ideas of topics for discussion by the Study Committee.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion ensued regarding the payment of costs associated with developing a consolidation plan. A suggestion was made if there are areas that both governing bodies agree require an expenditure, that the cost be split down the middle; but if there is an area that would require expenditures for only one governing body's purpose, then that governing body would pay the cost.

The Consolidation Study Committee will hold its first meeting on May 11 at 7:00 p.m., with the location to be determined by the City Manager and the County Administrator.

Mayor Shelton and Chairman Teass adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.