

2-24-96 Minutes

An adjourned meeting of the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia, from the regular Council meeting of February 13, 1996, was held in the Community Room at Liberty Lake Park at 8:00 a.m., February 24, 1996.

Members present: Mayor G. Michael Shelton; Vice Mayor Larry D. Brookshier; Councilwoman Mary L. Flood; Councilwoman Joanne A. Grahame; Councilwoman Linda Kochendarfer; Councilman Ronnie C. Rice; and Councilman W. D. Tharp.

Members absent: None.

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

Mayor Shelton opened the meeting and stated the purpose of the meeting was for a planning session.

Mrs. Elizabeth Berry-Mosely, Executive Director of Bedford Main Street, Inc., reported on the Strategic Planning Initiative which was entered into in 1994 and worked on by a group of volunteers that represented a diverse segment of the community. Council received copies of the list of participants and a draft report. Mrs. Berry-Mosely stated that the mission determined by the group is to formulate a broad-based community plan of action for a shared vision. The group identified the following areas that need to be focused on: downtown retail, education, economic development, recreation for youth, and tourism.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Richard Burrow, Executive Director of the National D-Day Memorial Foundation, gave a report regarding the status of the National D-Day Memorial. Mr. Burrow indicated that the plan is to be presented to and critiqued by the George C. Marshall Foundation on March 6, 1996. Mr. Burrow also reported on fund raising efforts.

Chief of Police Graham stated that Council had two questions to resolve regarding the regional jail facility as follows:

1. Does the City want to continue to participate in the regional jail?
2. Will arrangements be made to house pre-trial inmates locally or will they have to be transported to Lynchburg at the time of the arrest? The Chief stated that Number 2 will depend on the decision

Bedford County makes regarding its participation in the regional jail.

Chief Graham then reviewed with Council various options regarding the regional jail. The Chief stated that the City will have to make a decision in March as to whether or not it will stay in the Blue Ridge Regional Jail Authority. Chief Graham is to prepare information on transportation costs of prisoners to the regional jail for the February 27 Council meeting.

Chief Graham reviewed the key elements of an agreement with the City of Lynchburg to house juveniles in the Lynchburg Juvenile Detention Home: guaranteed access to juvenile detention beds for Bedford City and County; Lynchburg will accept responsibility to house or find housing for all juveniles committed by Bedford City and County; and Lynchburg will transport and pay housing for all juveniles it cannot accommodate. The Chief reviewed the costs of this service. Chief Graham also reviewed other options available.

The Chief recommended that Council follow whatever decision is made by the Bedford County Board of Supervisors with regard to the Youth Detention Facility.

Chief of Police Graham reviewed with Council projected costs and preliminary financial plans for the regional radio system. The Chief also spoke regarding the current status of the Enhanced 911 system.

Discussion ensued.

Mayor Shelton stated a possible means of generating revenue would be to sell property owned by the City for which there are no future plans.

Vice Mayor Brookshier suggested that members of Council look at the site the City owns on Route 43 near the Peaks of Otter.

The City Manager will schedule a meeting of the Property Committee for the Committee to review City-owned property and determine what revenue could be generated if some of it were sold.

Mr. Jay Scudder, Director of Planning & Community Development, showed a video of Salem's Farmers Market. Mr. Scudder stated that the tents at Bedford's Farmers Market are unusable. Requests for bids will go out by the end of this month and it is planned for construction to begin before April. The project should be completed before the farmers market season. Mr. Scudder then reviewed with Council what the project entails.

Mr. Scudder indicated that the City has an option on the Robinson House and Robinson Way (the road which goes to the new Library). Mr. Scudder reported that a requirement of the lease of the Wharton House to the Bedford Historical Society is that the City

provide five parking spaces. Mr. Scudder reviewed possible uses for the Robinson House if it were purchased by the City.

Discussion ensued, with some members of Council indicating they would not be in favor of purchasing the Robinson House.

Mayor Shelton asked Council to contemplate the following in terms of providing additional space for the City: where to house a cable television studio; and consideration of providing space within the old grammar school for a youth center.

Vice Mayor Brookshier mentioned the unused space at the Library and this matter was discussed.

Further discussion ensued regarding expansion of the Municipal Building and use of the old grammar school.

Mayor Shelton stated that the Robinson House option will be carried over to another meeting in order to get further information.

At 10:15 a.m. members of Council and the staff left to take a tour of the Snowden Hydro Plant.

During the trip, Director of Parks, Recreation, & Cemeteries Fran Hart reviewed the need for additional ball fields which would be located at Bedford Elementary School. The cost of development of the multipurpose practice fields would be \$65,300.

Ms. Hart gave members of Council a report on the status of the Reynolds Park plan, which included the recommended Phase I construction figures. The amount of funding that is being requested in the 1996-97 budget is \$75,000.

The City Manager reported on the goals of the Telecommunications Committee. The first goal of the Committee is to connect everyone on the Committee with E-mail. Mr. Gross stated that E-mail is up and running on the system in the City.

Council then toured the Snowden Hydroelectric Plant and had lunch at a local restaurant.

During the trip back to Bedford, dissemination of information and public information methods were discussed. Discussion included using the new electric bill format as a way to issue information to citizens of the City. Also discussed was issuing a newsletter in the electric bills that would explain why the City is changing the format of the bills.

Further discussion ensued regarding the issuing of press releases and the possible need for a public information officer.

The City Manager will make a recommendation to Council regarding the public information process.

Council arrived back at Liberty Lake Park and the meeting continued at 1:30 p.m.

Members of the City School Board attended this portion of the meeting.

Councilwoman Flood gave a report from the School Facilities Committee which included information about projected student enrollment, capacity of facilities, and providing a new gymnasium and additional classrooms in order to provide for a true middle school.

A lengthy discussion ensued.

The School Facilities Committee made the following recommendation: that the City provide a gymnasium and a minimum of eleven additional classrooms.

The City Manager reviewed some of the items the staff will be studying regarding the recommendation of the Committee, such as cost of demolition, cost for building, recommended sizes, cost of rehab versus cost of a new building, etc.

Council took a break from 2:30 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Mr. Scudder and Mr. Protor Harvey presented a conceptual view of an industrial park that could be developed in the City. Mr. Scudder indicated that an industrial park could be developed for an amount between \$1,300,000 and \$1,500,000.

A lengthy discussion ensued.

Director of Public Works Clarke Gibson reviewed with Council a Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion Report. The City retained Olver, Inc., to assist with permit compliance and plant expansion alternatives. Recommendations follow:

- A. Thorough review and discussion of final report from Olver, Inc., which will be completed by March 20, 1996.
- B. Submit Olver, Inc., report to DEQ by March 20, 1996 (permit requirement).
- C. The wastewater treatment plant is currently meeting permit limits and should continue to meet permit limits until a flow of 1.3-1.4 MGD is met or exceeded. This should be considered by the City and the DEQ.
- D. The results of the DEQ re-evaluation of effluent limits should be considered.
- E. Future development, particularly industrial development, and the moratorium should be considered.

F. Based on preliminary review of Olver report, the recommended plant expansion plan is the 2.0 MGD alternative. The 3.0 MGD expansion alternative has been planned to integrate the 2.0 MGD expansion plan so that an increase in capacity to 3.0 MGD may be "phased in." However, the 3.0 MGD expansion alternative may be considered if significant industrial development is expected.

G. Investigate other alternatives such as a new plant at a different site.

Discussion ensued.

Council discussed a possible incentive performance program for City employees. Councilman Rice suggested the program to motivate City employees to make suggestions that would mean cost savings to the City. The Mayor stated that it is possible that suggestions could be made that would change a process that would make it more efficient, but not necessarily save money.

The staff will explore such a program and report back to Council at a later date.

Council discussed vacancies on the Recreation Advisory Committee. It was decided that at its next meeting, Council will appoint Eddie Martinez to a term beginning February 27, 1996, and ending June 30, 1998; and appoint Ann Coffey to a term beginning February 27, 1996, and ending June 30, 1999.

The City Manager reported on the status of the skimmer station. A Letter of Understanding between the City and Ohio National Life Assurance Corporation is expected to be finalized on February 26, 1996.

Councilman Tharp suggested that the Chamber of Commerce headquarters could possibly be included with the National D-Day Memorial Visitors Center thereby opening the City-owned Chamber building for expansion of City offices.

Councilman Tharp brought up the subject of making Bedford Main Street a function of the City in order for the programs to be delivered in a better way.

The Mayor stated that tying the Main Street program into the City's operation would possibly meet some of the needs of the public information process. The Mayor stated this was an idea that Council could consider when entering into the budget process. The City Manager stated that the Main Street Board would need to be included in these discussions.

Mayor Shelton stated that he could talk to the D-Day Foundation Board about these ideas.

Barry Thompson, Assistant City Manager, reviewed with Council an updated debt service schedule.

The City Manager spoke regarding the possibility of the City doing a design build on a new gymnasium for the Middle School.

Mayor Shelton suggested that instead of a gymnasium, Council should consider a community center concept that provides the facilities for large meetings, etc. The City Manager is to provide Council with funding information for the building of a community center.

Council discussed holding another planning meeting to discuss financing upcoming projects. A meeting was tentatively scheduled for April 6 at 8:00 a.m. in the Community Room at Liberty Lake Park.

Mayor Shelton adjourned the meeting at 5:11 p.m.