

An adjourned meeting of the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia, from the June 2, 1997, adjourned Council meeting, was held jointly with the Bedford County Board of Supervisors at Stephen's Galley Restaurant at 8:25 p.m., June 5, 1997.

Council members present: Mayor G. Michael Shelton; Councilman H. Davis Ballard; Vice Mayor Larry D. Brookshier; Councilwoman Mary L. Flood; Councilwoman Linda Kochendarfer; Councilman W. D. Tharp; and Councilman Robert T. Wandrei.

Council members absent: None.

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

Supervisors present: Chairperson Lucille Boggess, Supervisors E. Anthony Ware, Roger Cheek, Robert L. Crouch, and Dale Wheeler.

Supervisors absent: Supervisors Calvin Updike and Bob Bashore.

Chairperson Boggess and Mayor Shelton called the meeting to order.

Mayor Shelton indicated that the purpose of the meeting was to adopt a resolution establishing a twinning relationship between the City and the County of Bedford and the communities in the Omaha Beach area of the Republic of France.

Deputy Mayor Philippe Ygouf, of Vierville-sur-Mer, France, and his wife were guests at the meeting.

The Mayor reviewed a map of the communities in Omaha Beach area. Mayor Shelton gave a brief history of the twinning process.

Mayor Shelton and Chairperson Boggess read aloud the following proposed resolution:

## **RESOLUTION**

### **IN SUPPORT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT**

### **OF A TWINNING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN**

### **THE CITY AND THE COUNTY OF BEDFORD, VIRGINIA AND**

### **THE COMMUNITIES IN THE OMAHA BEACH AREA**

### **OF THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE**

**WHEREAS**, the United States of America and the Republic of France have for over 200 years maintained a strong kinship and friendship as nations of the world; and

**WHEREAS**, the histories of these two countries reflect numerous military, economic, diplomatic, cultural and educational relationships which have been mutually beneficial; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 6, 1944, known worldwide as D-Day, the Allied Forces of World War II initiated "Operation Overlord," designed to begin the liberation of France and the captive European countries held by the oppressive Nazi regime of Germany; and

**WHEREAS**, as part of the D-Day liberation efforts by the Allied Forces, the U.S. Army 29th Infantry Division, which was the only National Guard unit participating in this liberation action, landed in the first assaults in the Omaha Beach area; and

**WHEREAS**, "A" Company, 116th Infantry Regiment of the 29th Infantry Division, based in the Town of Bedford and comprised of many citizen soldiers from the Bedford County area, was one of the first units to land on Omaha Beach at 0630 hours on June 6, 1944 in the immediate Vierville-sur-Mer village; and

**WHEREAS**, "A" Company had 35 Bedford soldiers as part of the landing assault, 19 of which were killed in the first minutes of battle against the German fortifications, and 4 more soldiers being lost during the D-Day historic time frame, for a total of 23 lost citizen soldiers; and

**WHEREAS**, Bedford, Virginia has the historic distinction as the locality experiencing the highest per-capita loss of soldiers on D-Day of anywhere in the United States and the Allied countries, and Bedford, Virginia has been designated as the official location in the United States for the National D-Day Memorial; and

**WHEREAS**, the inhabitants of Vierville-sur-Mer, France were witnesses to the landings of the soldiers of "A" Company and other Allied military units; and

**WHEREAS**, Vierville-sur-Mer, St. Laurent, Colleville-sur-Mer, and Trevieres are all located along the massive stretch of Omaha Beach, site of the historic amphibious landings and the bloodiest fighting of the liberation efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, these beautiful communities experienced much in the way of oppression and tyranny during World War II and their citizens hold a deep sense of honor, remembrance, and gratitude for the efforts of the Allied liberation efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, fifty-three years have passed since the largest and greatest land, sea and air assault in military history which resulted in the ultimate liberation of the people of France from Nazi oppression and tyranny; and

**WHEREAS**, history has created a natural kinship between the communities of Bedford, Virginia and the communities of the Omaha Beach area of Calvados Department in the Normandy Region of France, which calls for the formalization of an ongoing and productive relationship between our local governments and our peoples for the exchange of friendship, education, culture, economy, and visitations; and

**WHEREAS**, in a meeting held on March 22, 1997, in the Town Hall of Vierville-sur-Mer, France between the Mayor of the City of Bedford, Virginia and the Mayor and Council of Vierville-sur-Mer, it was determined that the establishment of an international relationship would be mutually beneficial and productive for our communities and, particularly, our young people;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the City of Bedford, Virginia and the County of Bedford, Virginia, jointly, and the communities of the Omaha Beach area of the Republic of France, through the leadership of the Mayor and Council of Vierville-sur-Mer, do

hereby formally establish an international twinning relationship between our localities which recognizes our unique kinship in history representing the triumph of liberty and democracy over oppression and tyranny; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this relationship shall be established for the benefit of our peoples so as to exchange our cultures, economies, visits, and educational and governmental processes for future generations to learn from our unique past; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that our first steps in this twinning process shall be to establish lines of communication between our respective schools and educational institutions in order to foster friendships among our school children by use of classes in the French and English languages utilizing the INTERNET World Wide Web E-Mail processes, compressed video outlets for two-way visual communications as facilities are available, the respective governmental postal services, facsimile machines, telephones, and any other means deemed appropriate by the respective school officials;

**AND, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that each governing body of the localities which will participate in this twinning effort shall formally adopt this resolution setting forth the establishment of our relationships, and shall communicate to all of its citizens, schools, businesses and other interested parties the action which we have jointly taken. Original copies of this resolution shall be provided in the French language for each French locality participating and in the English language for the City of Bedford and the County of Bedford so that all of our citizens may read and understand the significance of our actions. Each resolution shall be signed by the chief elected officials of each locality and each locality shall retain one of the resolutions in its official language and also retain one in the foreign language. Copies of the resolutions shall, upon complete signing by all of the localities, be transmitted to each governing body for public display, preservation and to serve as the basis for initiating the twinning process.

Supervisor Ware moved that the Board adopt the resolution. The motion was then voted upon by the Board and carried.

Councilman Tharp moved that the resolution be adopted. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wandrei, voted upon and carried unanimously by the following roll call vote:

Councilman Ballard aye

Vice Mayor Brookshier aye

Councilwoman Flood aye

Councilwoman Kochendarfer aye

Councilman Tharp aye

Councilman Wandrei aye

Mayor Shelton aye

Mayor Shelton and Chairperson Boggess then signed copies of the resolution. Deputy Mayor Ygouf will

deliver copies to the Omaha Beach communities.

Deputy Mayor Ygouf expressed his pleasure of being able to visit the Bedford area and also spoke regarding the twinning relationship.

Chairperson Boggess and Mayor Shelton presented Deputy Mayor Ygouf with gifts from the County and the City.

Chairperson Boggess and Mayor Shelton adjourned the meeting at 9:13 p.m.