

01-30-99 Minutes

An adjourned meeting of the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia, from the January 26, 1999, regular meeting was held at Liberty Lake Park at 8:30 a.m., January 30, 1999.

Members present: Mayor G. Michael Shelton; Councilman H. Davis Ballard; Councilman Larry D. Brookshier; Councilwoman Mary L. Flood; Vice Mayor E. Thomas Messier; Councilman Ronnie C. Rice; and Councilman Robert T. Wandrei.

Members absent: None.

Staff present: City Manager F. Craig Meadows; City Attorney W. W. Berry, IV; and Clerk of the Council Teresa W. Hatcher.

Mayor Shelton opened the meeting. The Mayor indicated the purpose of meeting was for a planning session.

City Manager Meadows gave an overview of the agenda for the retreat.

The City Manager reviewed the following Operating Departments' Issues and discussion ensued:

- **General/Financial Administration**

- the hiring of a Director of Finance & Administration, which will be a department head level position
- Y2K issue - areas have been identified and are being addressed. The City Manager will work toward developing an Emergency Operations Plan in preparation for any possible problems that may occur.
- The City Manager indicated the following policies and procedures need to be addressed, reviewed, and updated, if necessary: Personnel Policy Manual, pay and classification update, health insurance coverage, property and casualty insurance, potential of refinancing some debts, general and financial administration.
- update the City's web page
- improving communications: within the next twelve months start an employee newsletter and some sort of external communication with the citizens
- televising Council meetings - it was the consensus of Council that the City Manager check into the cost of televising Council meetings

- obtaining an audio feed from the local radio station for TV Channel 12
- preparing and distributing a packet of information for new utilities customers

- **Public Safety**

- cost of maintenance of the new radio system
- E-911 Center agreement - the City Attorney will have the proposed agreement ready in the near future; discussion ensued regarding a request by the County to make appointments to the Board to represent the users of the system.
- Regional Jail is in operation
- Dispatchers have been moved to the new 911 Center. The Chief of Police will be requesting an additional secretary/clerk in the Police Department.
- Blue Ridge Chief's Association is conducting a salary survey
- continue vehicle replacement program. The City Manager is to take an inventory of all City vehicles and furnish this information to Council.
- Fire Department, age issue for driving a fire department vehicle upon reaching age seventy. The City Manager will review the relationship between the City and the Fire Department.

- **Public Works**

- capital replacement items: a. Keep pressure on the Virginia Department of Transportation on the widening of East Main Street; b. Stop light at Independence Boulevard and East Main Street
- spring paving schedule; discussion of the pros and cons of slurry seal
- sidewalk priority list
- landfill - increase in tipping fees because of continuing debt service. Discussion of exploring all options and alternatives for continuing to operate a landfill; discussion of asking Joyce Engineering, consulting firm for the landfill, to provide alternatives for the City to continue operating a landfill; also contacting the Roanoke Valley Resource Authority
- potential uses of the old landfill, possibly by the Recreation Department

Council took a break from 10:10 a.m. until 10:25 a.m.

- **Parks and Recreation**

- The City Manager reviewed the Short Range Goals of the Recreation Advisory Board: a. discussion of the Board's goal of securing more full time maintenance staff at the cemeteries. There was a discussion of cemetery operations. Mayor Shelton suggested that the Cemetery Committee review this issue at some point in the future; b. discussion of the Board's goal of expanding facilities to include more recreation options. Mayor Shelton asked for the Board to further prioritize its list of goals.

- Discussion ensued regarding the fields at Bedford Elementary School.

- **Community Development**

- the community development group wants to continue to focus on the Centertown area; some aspects of the comprehensive plan for Centertown have not been completed

- continued emphasis on economic development - continue to work cooperatively with Bedford County

- landscaping needs in parts of the City - working with the Keep Bedford Beautiful Commission on some of the entryways and maintenance issues

- review the Zoning Ordinance to see if updates or revisions need to be made; talk about a minimum housing ordinance

- sign ordinance is in the process of being rewritten by the Planning Commission

- **Solid Waste**

- recycling program is losing money because there is no market for the recyclables; the program is mandated

- **Water and Sewer**

- expansion of Water Treatment Plant is on schedule, should be completed by September

- construction related items: sewer line to serve the Clearview area; in the process of developing a service plan for Liberty High School; repairs to the Helm Street water storage tank; upgrade the Big Otter River

emergency pump station; the pump station is 40-50 years old and has never been rebuilt

- sewer service request for Dillon's Trailer Park will be upcoming
- plan to implement the next step of the proposed water and sewer rate increase, which was discussed last year

- **Electric**

- continue to monitor activities on deregulation in the General Assembly and keep Council apprised
- renew emphasis on customer service
- concern that the City needs to be reinvesting in the electric system
- there is an immediate need to upgrade the lines to the Industrial Park/460 East area
- stay active in telecommunications issue
- discussion of a communications problem during a recent electric outage

- **Schools Issues**

- facilities
- a. new middle school gymnasium should be completed by April
- b. the need to establish a policy for use of school facilities; Vice Mayor Messier suggested that the Property Committee review the policy
- the City Manager is to ask Fran Hart, City Recreation Director, about a grant application submitted by the County Recreation Department for an after-school program at the new gymnasium
- discussion of a request by the City School Board for a comprehensive site plan that is a boundary-to-boundary study of the Bedford Middle School considering all of the property and not just the existing buildings, with the intention of moving the sixth grade students to the Middle School. It was the consensus of Council that the staff prepare an RFP for a comprehensive site plan for the Middle School.

- Public hearing to be held by the City and County School Boards on February 1 regarding moving the sixth grade to Bedford Science and Technology Center because of overcrowding. It was the consensus of Council that the Mayor speak at the public hearing and state that the plan by Jim Zug and Pat Sherman for the sixth grade is a good approach to relieving the overcrowding and Council could support it.

- **Discussion of Industrial Park/Courthouse Issues**

- Industrial Park update: the contract for the roadway and infrastructure has been awarded to Counts & Dobbys, the low bidder on the project. The work is supposed to be completed by July. The City Attorney stated that a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission is proposed for February 23 to consider an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance allowing in an M-1 zone, temporary use, for government and court house use. Discussion of the Huff property ensued. The City Manager and City Attorney will contact Mr. Huff regarding his property.

- **Discussion of Special Appropriations**

- the requests will be summarized and given to Council for consideration. Discussion ensued.

- **Miscellaneous Issues - City Manager**

- D-Day Memorial - zoning for the memorial site and buffer zone, memorial district (PMD); City will maintain ownership of the buffer zone. Discussion ensued regarding the entrance road to the school and memorial area and having the Highway Department review the entrance situation.

- **Miscellaneous Issues - Council Members**

- Members of Council expressed their pleasure with the selection of Mr. Meadows as City Manager.

- the cable television system was briefly discussed

Mayor Shelton adjourned the meeting at 1:25 p.m.