

1-11-00 Minutes

A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia, was held in the Council Hall of the Municipal Building at 7:30 p.m., January 11, 2000.

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

Members absent: Vice Mayor E. Thomas Messier.

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

Mayor Shelton opened the meeting and led all present in saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Shelton declared that the minutes of the December 14, 1999, regular Council meeting and the minutes of the December 16, 1999, adjourned Council meeting were approved as distributed.

City Manager Meadows spoke regarding the following items:

- an editorial regarding funding of independent cities
- letter from Charter Communications
- VML Legislative Day – February 10
- Celebration 2000 – crowd estimate: 4,000. Mr. Meadows expressed thanks to: Parks & Recreation Department, Police Department, Public Works Department, Bedford Main Street
- letter of commendation for Fran Hart for work she did with a group that recently toured the City
- during the month of December, approximately 70,000 people passed through Liberty Park to look at the Christmas lights
- the City was well prepared for Y2K and only one minor problem has been found
- in the final stage of interviewing candidates for the position of Director of Planning and Community Development

- included in the Council packet - memoranda from the Board of Zoning Appeals, the Joint Industrial Development Authority, and the City Planning Commission summarizing their activities for calendar year 1999
- The Planning Commission would like to have a joint meeting with City Council at the second meeting in February.
- The staff is in the final stages of negotiating a contract with a firm that will review the City Sign Ordinance.
- Compensation and Classification Study is being conducted at the present time
- Orange Street – the dumpsters across from the Public Works Department should be removed by the end of January. The clean up of Orange Street will continue.
- letter from Bob Sutton, Assistant Resident Engineer with the Department of Transportation confirming that design work should be underway on the East Main Street and Independence Blvd. traffic signal during the second or third week in January - the signal should be installed by March
- A meeting is scheduled with the engineering firm of Thompson & Litton to begin discussion of the Water and Sewer Master Plan Study.
- Engineering work is currently underway to modify the pump station on Big Otter River to have variable flow on a full time basis. The reservoir is in good shape at this time. The staff is reviewing engineering studies on the reservoir which were done in 1987 and 1972 in order to review options to increase capacity at the reservoir.
- Ellen Wandrei, Director of the Museum, has invited Council to tour the renovated City/County Museum before the Council meeting on January 25.
- Bedford Elementary School playground – bids have been taken for the fitness equipment; plans are being finalized for the backstops, the fencing, and the walk and run path that will be around the perimeter of the ballfield
- City offices will be closed on January 17 in observance of the national holiday.

Councilman Rice asked if any progress is being made on establishing soccer fields at the old City Landfill.

The City Manager stated that discussions have been held on that matter, but nothing is actively going on with that right now.

Councilwoman Flood commended the City Manager and staff on the fine job they have done with the development of *The Liberty Messenger*.

Mayor Shelton commended the City Manager and the staff, Fran Hart and the Parks & Recreation Department, Main Street, and all those involved in Celebration 2000.

On behalf of City Council, Mayor Shelton extended condolences and deep respect to the family of the late Campbell Morris.

Councilman Rice moved that the following item be added to the agenda:

Presentation – Richard Walker, President, United Steelworkers Union Local 240

The motion was seconded by Councilman Wandrei.

Councilman Brookshier asked that the record show he abstained from voting in this matter.

The motion was then voted upon and carried, five members voting aye, one member abstaining (Brookshier) and one member absent (Messier).

Dr. Darryl Staat, President of Central Virginia Community College (CVCC), gave an update on six technical programs at the College that serve the manufacturing industry: electronics, engineering technology, industrial electricity, HVAC, and machine tool and welding. The College analyzed the needs for space/equipment for each technical program and determined the total project cost would be \$10,536,450. Dr. Staat reviewed sources of funding and asked that Council consider funding the City's share of the project in the amount of \$29,730.

Elder I. L. Ward, Sr., President of the Bedford Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), stated the NAACP is requesting Council to rename Independence Boulevard to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard.

Elder Ward asked that those present observe a minute of silence in honor of the late Campbell Morris.

Elder Ward reviewed the objectives for renaming the street and stated that the NAACP would offer a remedy for reasonable expenses incurred by the two existing businesses on Independence Boulevard as a result of the street renaming.

The Mayor thanked Elder Ward for his presentation and stated this request would be referred to the Street Committee. The Street Committee will report back to Council.

Mr. Richard Walker, President, United Steelworkers Union Local 240, spoke regarding issues and problems the Union feels it has been experiencing since the strike at Rubatex Corporation began in September. Mr. Walker asked that the following questions be answered: 1. Who paid for the installation of the surveillance cameras that appear to be on the City's and Bell Atlantic's poles? 2. Who pays for the utilities to operate these cameras? 3. Whose property each pole is on that has a surveillance camera? 4. Is the Union allowed to place surveillance cameras on these poles as well? 5. When was the City approached with the installation of these cameras?

Mr. Walker handed out information regarding the rights of employees as set forth in the National Labor Relations Act and reviewed the rights the Union has to go on strike to secure better working conditions. Mr. Walker stated the Union members do not feel they are seeing an equal shake in this as far as in behalf of the City Police Department.

The Mayor asked the City Manager to work towards getting a response to each one of these questions for Mr. Walker and report back to Council.

Mayor Shelton adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.