

Minutes 10-22-2002

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., October 22, 2002.

Members present: Mayor G. Michael Shelton; Vice Mayor E. Thomas Messier; Councilman Thomas M. Padgett; Councilman C. G. Stanley, Jr.; and Councilman W. D. Tharp.

Members absent: Councilwoman Mary L. Flood and Councilman Robert T. Wandrei.

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 and led all present in saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Mayor stated that two weeks ago, citizens from Bedford visited the Republic of France including the Normandy area.

Mayor Shelton recognized Donnie Ray McKinney who was in attendance at the meeting for a project with the Royal Rangers group from his church.

The Mayor welcomed and introduced visitors from Normandy, France: Jean-Pierre Richard, Mayor of Trevieres, Raymond Mouquet, Mayor of St. Laurent-sur-Mer, Philippe Ygouf, President of the Omaha Beach-Bedford Association.

Mayor Shelton stated a statue will be unveiled at the D-Day Memorial on October 23. The statue is a replica of a statue in Trevieres and is only the second statue to come from France to the United States, the first being the Statue of Liberty.

Vice Mayor Messier spoke of his recent visit to France. The Vice Mayor presented numerous gifts received during the trip, which included: a flag flown in St. Laurent-sur-Mer, France and a flag of Ivy Bridge, England.

The following is a copy of the speech delivered by Jean Marie Oxeant, Mayor of Vierville-sur-Mer:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The beach of our peaceful village constituted the west part of OMAHA BEACH. The most difficult fights of 6th June 1944 passed off on its sand and cliffs.

The Charlie and Dog sectors were designated to the 29th U.S. Infantry Division, whom a lot of soldiers were native of Virginia.

Neither historian, nor witness, I have not the ambition to describe the operations of D-DAY. Born 10 years after the liberation of Normandy, all my knowledge from these historical events is due to my parents, the people of Vierville and also the veterans welcomed at Vierville all through these years or met at Bedford in Virginia in 2000 and 2001.

The modest reports have been increasing since 1994. All through this time, the veterans from the 29th U.S. Infantry Division have been confiding their tortured and nightmarish souvenirs.

They have not forgotten: their suffering endured during these hours of hell at OMAHA BEACH and the fighting in France and Germany, where many of their friends disappeared.

Young American ordinary citizens, left their family, their friends, their job to become soldiers and to fight so far away from their homeland, against men who enslaved Europe and planed "The Holocaust".

The operations of D-DAY and the following summer were gigantic; it was necessary to plan a long preparation. A perfect knowing of its areas and defences was essential.

At the first time, behind the scenes, women and men helped these operations to be successful during the nazi occupation.

Few but determined, constantly threatened, their clandestine work combined with the military allied recognition revealed an extreme quality.

The members of the resistance putted on different organisations to participate to the liberation of their homeland but also to prepare its administration by french citizens, when liberty would be obtain.

Modestly but with determination, we have always wished to associate the roles of all these men and women, french citizens from the resistance and all the american soldiers who fell. They were all involved against barbarity.

Nobody was spared: while young american men fell on the beach, french members of the resistance, prisoners, were massacred by the occupation troops.

Behind you, below the monument of the 29th U.S. Infantry Division, was erected a monument, humble but well present, in memory of a chief from the french resistance.

Are associated, on the site of these terrible fightings, men who, without knowing each other, worked all together for PEACE, LIBERTY and the respect of human dignity, values we have to keep on defending nowadays, in France, in the United States of America and all over the world.

20 October, 2002

Jean Marie Oxeant

Mairie de Vierville-sur-mer

Councilman Padgett stated that the visit to France was an educational and emotional trip.

The Mayor declared a five-minute recess for the audience to view the gifts.

Mayor Shelton declared that the minutes of the called Council meeting held on September 24, 2002, and the minutes of the regular Council meeting held on September 24, 2002, were approved as distributed.

City Manager Meadows asked that the agenda item regarding the deer management issued be deferred to a later meeting.

The City Manager reported on the following:

- Events: the Council retreat will be held on October 25 and 26 at Mountain Lake; Clean-up week is being held this week; KBBC Cleanup Day is October 26; "Make A Difference Day" will be held on October 26; household hazardous waste can be disposed of at the City landfill on November 9; auction of surplus property – November 16.
- The reservoir is 29 inches below the spillway and has recovered over one foot during the last two weeks
- Due to the State's budget problems, the Bedford Division of Motor Vehicles Office is slated to close.

Mayor Shelton spoke regarding the closing of the DMV in Bedford. The Mayor stated that Council should take a very strong position on this issue and discuss the development of a statement from Council to the General Assembly at the Council retreat.

Mr. Robbie Johnston, Charter Communications, introduced members of his staff. Mr. Johnston presented a proposed new lineup of cable TV channels. Kirk Averett reviewed high-speed modem capabilities of the system.

The Mayor introduced a reporter from the Lynchburg News and Advance, Dionne Waugh.

On motion by Vice Mayor Messier, seconded by Councilman Padgett, voted upon and carried, Mr. Jeffrey B. Hubbard was appointed to the City School Board for a term to expire on June 30, 2003.

The City Manager stated the City has developed a new electric rate tariff for large industrial users, which will provide savings for customers who have a capacity of 5,000 KW or more per month. The tariff was developed in order to encourage large industrial users to increase their consumption, in exchange for a lower electric cost per unit. Wheelabrator Abrasives, Inc., is the only industry to qualify under this tariff. The City Manager asked that Council adopt the tariff, Schedule I-4, for large industrial users, with the new rate being effective for services billed at the next billing date after the execution of the agreement for electric services dated October 23, 2002.

On motion by Councilman Padgett, seconded by Councilman Stanley, voted upon and carried, Council adopted the Schedule I-4 rate tariff for large industrial users.

Mr. Keith Cook, Secretary of the Bedford Electoral Board, briefed Council on the new provision in the State Code that permits City elections to be moved from May to November. Mr. Cook stated this change allows the locality to change its Council elections to coincide with state (odd-numbered years) or national (even-numbered years) general elections in November. The Electoral Board views the following as factors that would affect the decision to change the date of Council elections: voter participation; financial; state/local issues; terms of office for incumbents.

Mayor Shelton stated this item will be discussed at the upcoming Council retreat.

Mayor Shelton adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m. until October 25 at 12:00 noon at Mountain Lake for the Council retreat.