

11-13-03 Minutes

A called meeting of the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia, was held at the Babcock House in Appomattox, Virginia, at 1:00 p.m., November 13, 2003.

Members present: Mayor E. Thomas Messier; Councilwoman Mary L. Flood; Councilman Jeffrey B. Hubbard; Councilman Thomas M. Padgett; Councilman C. G. Stanley, Jr.; Vice Mayor W. D. Tharp; 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.

The purpose of the meeting was for City Council to hold its annual planning retreat.

The Department Heads reviewed various topics and reported on projects as follows:

- Clarke Gibson, Director of Public Works, spoke regarding the following items: water and sewer projects, automated meter reading system, water and sewer moratorium, landfill capacity. Mr. Gibson also spoke concerning the following items: sidewalk projects, Bedford Middle School elevator project.
- Nanci Drake, Tourism Director, reported on the number of visitors, phone calls for information, and hits on the website of the Bedford Area Welcome Center. Ms. Drake also spoke regarding: advertising, grant funds received, staffing concerns for the new Welcome Center.
- Randy Nixon, Director of Parks, Recreation & Cemeteries, reported on the following: mowing and maintenance of flowerbeds in the City; cemetery and grave purchases; summary of participation in recreation programs.

Discussion ensued regarding the cemetery rates, the need for rules concerning flower arrangements, and a wreath program.

- Elizabeth Berry-Mosley, Planning & Community Development, reviewed the following items: GIS on the City's website; bike trail around the D-Day Memorial, economic development – enterprise zone; Region 2000; industrial access road funds - \$223,000, will probably have to return the funds to the State; Community Development Block Grant, updating Centertown Plan, Washington Street area; increasing building permit fees; reactivating the City Industrial Development Authority; Comprehensive Plan; Wayfinder signs, Burks Hill Road Neighborhood Plan; traditional neighborhood overlay district draft; East Main Street ribbon cutting.

Council took a break from 2:45 p.m. until 3:00 p.m.

- Chief of Police Graham spoke regarding the following items: emergency management, homeland security, terrorism, hurricane Isabelle, and communications. Chief Graham also spoke regarding the deer management program – 93 deer have been eliminated in this year’s program. The program has been temporarily discontinued due the budget being depleted. Chief Graham reported that the Police Department has achieved state accreditation and will receive a certificate at the November 25 Council meeting. The Chief spoke of: crime trends in the City: drugs, increase in larcenies and breaking and entering; a traffic grant; regional jail retirement system.
- City Treasurer Joanne Caldwell reported on the following: utility billing conversion, training on new cash register system and other items.
- Gene Ratzlaff, Electric Utility Director, spoke regarding the following: update of controls at the power plant; contract for wholesale power.
- Barbara Parker, Director of Human Resources, reported on the following items: employees monthly lunch with City Manager; insurance committee; customer service presentation by City Manager to employees; employee appreciation lunch; new financial software; employee handbook; basic computer training for employees; the City’s employment application is online; pay and classification study; Regional 2000 healthcare coalition.
- Rosie Jordan, Director of Finance, reviewed the following: new computer technician; upgrade for utility billing system; procurement manual and purchasing; review purchasing limits; RFP for auditing services; proposed budget schedule for the 2004-05 budget.

Discussion ensued regarding Council receiving copies of the audit before the meeting at which the audit is presented to Council. Councilman Wandrei asked that Council be provided with monthly financial statements on a regular basis.

- James Ervin, Network Administrator, spoke regarding the following: complaints received regarding the cable television provider, Charter Communications; analysis of the City’s telecommunications system; wireless network access.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.