

March 29, 2011

An adjourned meeting of the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia, from the March 22, 2011, regular meeting was held in the Council Hall of the Municipal Building at 6:00 p.m., March 29, 2011.

Members present: Mayor W. D. Tharp; Councilwoman Mary L. Flood; Councilman Guy E Murray, Jr.; Councilman Steve C. Rush; Councilman C. G. Stanley, Jr.; Councilman James A. Vest

Members absent: Vice Mayor Robert T. Wandrei

Staff present: City Manager Charles P. Kolakowski; City Attorney W. W. Berry, IV; and Clerk of the Council Teresa W. Hatcher.

Mayor Tharp opened the meeting.

The City Manager stated that City e-mail addresses have been set up for Council members for their use for official purposes. Mr. Kolakowski said that if members preferred, information could be delivered to them instead of through e-mail.

Corey Crompton explained the use of the City e-mail address and the procedure for Council members to use it. Mr. Crompton said that it is very important that any City business/communications be done through City e-mail.

Mr. Crompton reported the City received a letter from Shentel Cable Company regarding lineup changes (removing channel WGN); however, the letter did not include Bedford as one of the systems affected. Therefore, the City was not given the advance notification required by FCC rules.

The City Manager stated the City is treating this as a service outage issue and this matter can be discussed at the next Council meeting.

City Manager Kolakowski said the purpose of this meeting was to get a general consensus on formulating the budget.

- Electric - achieving goals for revenue and costs are under control – looking in 2011-12 to keep the rates stable, possibly making some customer charge adjustments – looking at costs month to month and where the revenue goes

The Public Services Director has been conducting a street light survey and has found a lot of lights that no one has been paying for and the lights have now been turned off.

- Water & Sewer – looking at one to two percent increase; continuing rehabilitation of water and sewer lines
- Municipal Building – the need to provide handicapped accessibility to the main floor of the building and provide parking and access including an automatic door.

March 29, 2011

Plan to start design and engineering in the current year's budget and have the work start as soon as possible in the new fiscal year.

- Sidewalks – the goal is over the next 18 months to have all of the sidewalks repaired and up to standards
- Bus to Rail – there is a proposal in the State budget to have a bus service from Roanoke to Lynchburg and possibly to Blacksburg with a potential to stop in Bedford to provide service to the train running out of Lynchburg – the idea is to show there is enough demand to justify eventually having a train running to Bedford to Roanoke to Blacksburg and be interconnected with the Amtrack system through Lynchburg. The additional train through Lynchburg has been an enormous success. The City's share for the demonstration project would be \$9,500. The City Manager said this would be viewed as an economic development incentive.
- Health Insurance Costs and Employee Compensation – health insurance costs have a significant impact on employees – the City Manager stated he would like to make a proposal for the budget to include a level of salary increase that would cover most, if not all, of the increase for the employees. The Mayor said Councilman Vest suggested a 3% increase. It was the consensus of Council to begin budget discussions at the 3% level.
- Downtown Improvements – The City Manager stated he had tasked Mr. Warner with developing a plan to use \$400,000 in grant funds during the next fiscal year.
- Brownfields Redevelopment Study Grant – there is a grant program available through the State for up to \$200,000 where the City can receive the money and do initial studies on various properties throughout the City. The City would be looking for the seed money to get an engineering firm to put together a proposal to submit to the State in the proper form. This would enable the City to do initial studies on various properties where people have concerns on what kind of activity has been going on there in the past to determine any contamination, problems, or the fact that there are no problems.
- Fireworks – Mr. Warner reported that the City is in the second year of a five year agreement with a company to provide fireworks at a cost of \$14,000 per year. Bedford County has paid for half of the cost.

The Mayor asked if the Stoney Creek Reservoir could be used for any sort of recreational purposes, such as canoeing, fishing, etc.

The City Manager stated it could be done with limited access on a limited basis and it would have to be very controlled.

Mayor Tharp adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.