

June 28, 2011

An adjourned meeting from the June 14, 2011, called meeting of the Council of the City of Bedford, Virginia, was held in the Council Hall of the Municipal Building at 6:00 p.m., June 28, 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; and Vice Mayor Robert T. Wandrei

Members absent: None

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 and stated the purpose of the meeting was for interviews of candidates for the City School Board.

Ms. Tara Warner explained that she would like to be a member of the City School Board because she has three children and two will be in the Bedford County Public School system. Ms. Warner said she feels that as a parent and a citizen that the City School Board needs to be an advocate for City students and explained she would like to be an advocate.

Members of Council asked questions of Ms. Warner regarding how she will make decisions concerning School Board issues; what most needs to be changed in the school system; the long-range plans of the school board; in what way would she make the school system better and how would she implement things to make a better system; how would she approach getting along better with the County Board and having her influence heard on the County Board; what would be her role in encouraging the Superintendent to be more proactive with the City School Board; is she willing to make sure that the voice of the City School Board is heard at the level of the County School Board as well as the County Supervisors.

Ms. Warner stated her decisions will be made by listening to the citizens and to the parents and also listening to the elected officials as to what is best for the City students. Ms. Warner explained that an issue she is concerned about is the inequity across the attendance zones, whether real or perceived. The City School Board should push that question to understand what the course offerings are, what the facilities are, and what, in general, the resources are across the attendance zones to make sure the City schools are in the same boat as the others. Ms. Warner said a long-term plan would be to ensure that the City residents are getting the best possible educational opportunities available. Ms. Warner stated one way to improve the system would be to focus on those good practices that are occurring in the school system. She explained it is her opinion that the model of small schools is appropriate and said that she was not in favor of mega schools. Ms. Warner said the City School Board needs to be a more active participant in the County School Board meetings and in County School Board business. She also said she expects the County School Board Superintendent to attend the City School Board meetings. Ms. Warner said the expectation needs to be set that the Superintendent also works for the City School Board and, therefore, there is information that needs to be shared with the

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City School Board on certain things. Ms. Warner said she is ready, as a parent and a citizen and as a member of the City School Board to make sure that the best educational opportunities are available and will do what it takes.

Ms. VanDerwerker explained she is seeking appointment to the City School Board as she is a parent with a child at Liberty High School, and as a member of the community she wants students to come out of the schools ready to be participating and capable members of the community. She explained that she is the City representative to the Bedford County School Board and that position creates an opportunity to share information between the two boards.

Members of Council asked questions of Ms. VanDerwerker about what is being done in the Bedford County Public School, specifically the City Schools not making AYP for the last three years, to address 21st Century Skills, communications, critical thinking problem solving, and creativity and innovation; as the City School Board has limited power, how aggressive an approach should the City School Board take to influence changes; does she feel that all three school zones are equally and fairly served by the programs and facilities; is there a decline in the vocational educational area; what would Ms. VanDerwerker do to have the School Superintendent attend the City School Board meetings; what kind of relationship should a member of the Bedford City School Board have with the community and how should a Board Member represent the community on the City School Board; if Ms. VanDerwerker is not appointed to the City School Board, would she remain until the end of her term as the City representative on the County School Board or resign and let whomever is appointed move up.

Ms. VanDerwerker explained the schools are struggling with the balance between wanting to do the 21st Century things and needing to make AYP. Ms. VanDerwerker said there has to be a balance and the City School Board has chosen to tread lightly in the past – the City Board can ask pointed questions; the schools that have more kids who take the higher level classes end up with more of those classes because they can fill those seats; she said there is a decline in vocational education in some ways and in some ways not – some students are not returning to vocational education because they have to make up classes they did not pass in order to graduate; Ms. VanDerwerker said the City School Board meetings need to be moved from Mondays as that is the night the County Board of Supervisors meet; a City School Board member should listen to what the community is saying but there are other things to be considered also, such as Federal and State laws governing the ways schools are run, and financial considerations; Ms. VanDerwerker said that she would not resign as the City representative on the County School Board if she is not appointed to the City School Board as people are going to need a lot of knowledge and the information and experience she has is very valuable to the Board.

Councilman Rush moved that Council adjourn into closed session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (a)(1) of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, to discuss personnel matters. Councilman Murray seconded the motion, which was voted upon and carried by the following roll call vote:

Councilwoman Flood	aye
Councilman Murray	aye

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Councilman Rush	aye
Councilman Stanley	aye
Councilman Vest	aye
Vice Mayor Wandrei	aye
Mayor Tharp	aye

Council adjourned into closed session at 6:36 p.m.

Council reconvened into open session at 7:07 p.m.

The Clerk of Council read aloud the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Bedford hereby certifies that (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Council.

On motion by Councilman Stanley, seconded by Councilman Murray, voted upon and carried by a roll call vote, Council adopted the resolution. Roll call vote follows:

Councilman Murray	aye
Councilman Rush	aye
Councilman Stanley	aye
Councilman Vest	aye
Vice Mayor Wandrei	aye
Councilwoman Flood	aye
Mayor Tharp	aye

Mayor Tharp adjourned the meeting at 7:08 p.m.