



**Town Council  
Adjourned Council Meeting Minutes  
June 16, 2020**

The Town Council of Bedford, Virginia, held an adjourned meeting on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Municipal Building at 215 East Main Street, Bedford, Virginia.

**Town Council members present:**

Mayor Steve Rush, Vice Mayor Tim Black, Councilman Stacey Hailey, Councilman Bruce Johannessen, Councilman Bryan Schley, Councilman Darren Shoen, and Councilman C. G. Stanley

**Town Council members absent:**

None.

**Town Staff present:**

Town Manager Barrett Warner; Assistant Town Manager Sonia Jammes; Town Attorney William W. Berry, IV; Chief of Police Todd Foreman; Director of the Electric Department John Wagner; Director of Public Works D. W. Lawhorne; Clerk of Council Debra B. Anderson; and Recording Secretary Julia Peters

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Mayor Rush called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Ordinance – Appropriating Funds – Fiscal Year 2020-2021**

Section 58.1-3005 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, requires that Council shall, on a regular basis, make an appropriation of funds for expenditure by the Town. The attached ordinance directs that the funds as set out in the budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 be appropriated and set aside to the appropriate funds, and authorizes the Town Manager to expend the funds in accordance with said budget and in accordance with prior appropriations. The ordinance denoting the original appropriations has been posted in accordance with §2-54 of the Town Code.

## **ACTION REQUESTED:**

Town Council is requested to adopt the ordinance appropriating funds as set out in the budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and authorize the Town Manager to expend the funds in accordance with said budget.

Councilman Johannessen moved, seconded by Councilman Schley to adopt the ordinance appropriating funds as set out in the budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and authorize the Town Manager to expend the funds in accordance with said budget. In addition, the cost of living raise for employees will be 1% beginning July 1, 2020, and the additional 1% cost of living raise and bonus for employees as well as the funding for outside agencies will be revisited at the second Council meeting in January 2021. Discussion followed.

In response to a question by Mr. Hailey about how would waiting until January to approve the outside agency funding affect the matching grants some of these agencies receive from the State, Mr. Warner said he would have to check on when those grants are issued, and specifically the Bower Arts Center grant and whether it would impact their operation.

Vice Mayor Black said the Council has had heated debate on these topics and for the sake of the record, he will explain why he will not be voting for the motion tonight. He has concern for the short-term economic climate in the community. In April, unemployment was 9.9% in Bedford County and as of May 23, there were 688 ongoing unemployment claims in the 24523 zip code and the number may grow due to some potential closures and potential retail establishments not reopening. Some restaurants have still not opened back up. The electric utilities are seeing some stress right now with people struggling to make their payments. The meals tax has to collect an average of \$119,000 per month to meet next year's budget. The last time the Town met that amount, it was December, so it is not just a short-term trend, it has been six months since that number was met. Businesses of all types continue to struggle, as is evident when the Town has financially assisted over 40 businesses. He has seen the numbers but feels there will be some revenue stress this year.

Mr. Black's second concern is regarding the long-term growth of personnel costs, including salaries, health insurance, retirement benefits, worker's compensation, and payroll taxes. In 2015, these costs were 46.6 cents per dollar but based on last week's adopted budget, the personnel costs will be 52.51 cents per dollar. That totals an increase of \$900,000 in the General Fund in six years. He thinks it is a sustainability problem that partly was caused by increasing staff and partly caused by the increase in health and retirement costs which are not going to slow down in the foreseeable future. It is not a reflection on the jobs that employees do, he sincerely appreciates all that they do, and has gone to bat for them every time, except for tonight, which is tough. His decision is driven by the numbers and he hopes everyone can respect his opinion on it.

Mayor Rush agreed with Vice Mayor Black but he feels it is his job to meet a compromise and get the budget passed and appropriated. Council will take a hard look at it in January, and if the money is not there, it will be Council's decision whether to fund further.

Mr. Shoen said he was in complete agreement with Mr. Black but knows a budget has passed and Council has to allocate the funds, so for the purpose of compromise, he will support the motion.

The motion was voted upon and carried by the following roll call vote:

Vice Mayor Black	nay
Councilman Hailey	aye
Councilman Johannessen	aye
Councilman Schley	aye
Councilman Shoen	aye
Councilman Stanley	aye
Mayor Rush	aye

The motion passes with six members voting aye and one member voting nay.

The ordinance is as follows:

#### **Ordinance No. 20-8**

### **AN ORDINANCE DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2020**

**BE IT ORDAINED** that the Town Council of the Town of Bedford, Virginia, hereby directs that the funds as set out in the budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 for the Town of Bedford are appropriated and set aside to the General Fund, to the Solid Waste Fund, to the Electric Fund, to the General Capital Projects Fund, to the Solid Waste Capital Projects Fund, and to the Electric Capital Projects Fund, as shown in said budget, and that the Town Manager is authorized to expend the funds in the General Fund, Solid Waste Fund, Electric Fund, General Capital Projects Fund, Solid Waste Capital Projects Fund, and Electric Capital Projects Fund in accordance with said budget and in accordance with prior appropriations. The cost of living raise for employees will be 1% beginning July 1, 2020, and the additional 1% cost of living raise and bonus for employees and the funding for outside agencies will be revisited at the second Council meeting in January 2021.

Mr. Warner noted that the Creative Community's Partnership Grant's report is not due until February 1, so taking action at the second meeting in January should not impact it.

Mr. Hailey stated that Mr. McCormack has started cleaning up the Bedford Middle School property and it is starting to look half-way decent with some progress visible.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

7:12 p.m.