



**Town Council
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
July 27, 2021**

The Town Council of Bedford, Virginia, held a regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, July 27, 2021, 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 Tim Black, Vice Mayor Steve Rush, Councilman Stacey Hailey, Councilman Bruce Hartwick, Councilman Bruce Johannessen, Councilman Darren Shoen, and Councilman C. G. Stanley

Town Council members absent: None

Town Staff present:

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

Mayor Black opened the meeting and led all present in saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Black declared that the minutes of the Town's regularly scheduled meeting of July 13, 2021 were approved as presented.

REPORT OF TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager Bart Warner reported:

- Congratulations to Assistant Town Manager Sonia Jammes, the Finance Department staff, and Town Council, for the Town being awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in financial reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association.
- The right-of-way improvement project on Burks Hill Road has begun. Sidewalk work has commenced for Liberty Lake Park, and moving up toward Route 460. Once that work is completed, the reconfiguration of lanes in the road itself will commence.
- Work on Avenel Avenue to replace major water and sewer infrastructure has been completed. Associated resurfacing and paving work is also underway. The efforts of the Bedford Regional Water Authority and Patterson Brothers are appreciated in concluding this project as well as the patience of the neighbors who live along the street.
- Code Official Gary McIver is seeking a qualified individual to fill a vacancy on the Building Code Board of Appeals. If anyone is interested in this vacancy, he/she can contact Mr. McIver directly.
- Condolences are extended to Councilman Hailey and his family on the passing of his aunt, Elizabeth Hailey Moses.
- The police department will observe National Night Out on Tuesday, August 3, 2021. Chief Foreman has given the Mayor a proclamation relating to this event.

Mr. Warner deferred to D. W. Lawhorne for an introduction.

Mr. Lawhorne welcomed Seth Campbell to the Town staff. He joined the staff three weeks ago as the Assistant Director of Public Works and will be shadowing Mr. Lawhorne for a while. Mr. Campbell came to Bedford from the City of Lynchburg where he was a project engineer over the downtown projects. Mr. Lawhorne asked everyone to welcome Mr. Campbell aboard and said he brought a wealth of knowledge with him and everyone looks forward to working with him.

Mr. Warner called Chief Foreman forward for a special presentation.

Chief Foreman began by saying there are many good officers on the Town force. Last week there was a homicide and patrolmen and sergeants all worked together and the investigation was cleared up fairly quickly. It is always terrible when there is a homicide but finding closure for the family is something good.

He wanted to recognize two officers, Investigator Lawhorne and Officer Meade. On April 2, 2021, officers were dispatched to an armed robbery at 1128 East Lynchburg Salem Turnpike. The initial report from dispatch said a black male wearing a mask entered the store showing a gun and robbed the store. Officer Meade was working and headed toward the store looking for the suspect in a silver Kia. Officer Meade observed a silver four-door Kia in front of her at the Burks Hill exit. The driver, a white male, was looking back at Officer Meade and appeared suspicious, so she followed the vehicle. The vehicle pulled off at the East Main Street exit and

Officer Meade followed. While the vehicle was at the stop sign, she noticed the driver was still watching her through his rear view mirror. As she followed the vehicle onto Independence Boulevard, dispatch notified her that the suspect in question was a white male. She advised dispatch that she was behind a silver Kia with a white male driver and the vehicle was trying to avoid her. The Kia turned into the Sonic parking lot and went the wrong way around the Sonic and into the Taco Bell lot, trying to avoid Officer Meade. Officer Meade entered the Taco Bell parking lot to follow the Kia. As the suspect's vehicle exited the parking lot, Investigator Lawhorne was able to get behind the vehicle and a pursuit began through Town. Then the suspect vehicle went back toward the Sonic area and stopped at CVS on Main Street. The suspect fled from the vehicle and Officer Meade and Investigator Lawhorne chased the suspect into the Fairview Cemetery where they were able to take the suspect into custody. Officer Meade's quick response and attention to detail led to the capture of the suspect, ensuring the safety of the Town citizens. Had she not paid attention to the driver's actions and followed the vehicle, the suspect may not have been taken into custody. Her quick thinking and proper use of the radio led to the suspect's capture. Investigator Lawhorne's response to assist Officer Meade was an essential component in the incident. Investigator Lawhorne's skilled driving and careful consideration of the conditions were essential in capturing the suspect. These officers exhibited courage in pursuing a person who had just committed an armed robbery and placed the safety of the citizens above their own safety. These officers exemplify the qualities wanted in police officers and keep Bedford a safe place to live. Chief Foreman thanked Officer Meade and Investigator Lawhorne and gave Investigator Lawhorne a department coin. Officer Meade was not available to attend the Town Council meeting.

APPEARANCES BEFORE COUNCIL

None.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Stanley said he appreciated the quick thinking of the police officers and hats off to Sonia Jammes and staff for the Certificate of Achievement.

Councilman Shoen echoed what Mr. Stanley said and thanked all the police officers for what they do.

Councilman Hailey thanked the police officers and staff for all the wonderful work they do to keep the Town going.

Vice Mayor Rush echoed what was already said and was thankful that they don't live in one of the big cities. The Town's police force does its job and the criminal justice system takes care of deterring crime properly.

Councilman Johannessen said he could not say enough about the Town's police department and everyone is pleased with what they do and he thanked the department.

Councilman Hartwick said he wanted to recognize Officer Meade for what she did to apprehend the murder suspect and Investigator Lawhorne for helping out and thanked the whole police department for keeping him and the Town citizens safe. He felt lucky to live in the Town of Bedford. He also welcomed Seth Campbell to his position in Bedford as Mr. Lawhorne's assistant. He congratulated Ms. Jammes for the good work that led to receiving the award for financial excellence. The Town has a great staff and he thanked them for all their hard work in what they do.

Mayor Black echoed everyone's words regarding Officer Meade and Investigator Lawhorne and it was a job well done. He thanked Ms. Jammes for what she does and keeping Council members straight on the finance side. He welcomed Mr. Campbell aboard and looked forward to his expertise in helping Mr. Lawhorne in the Public Works Department.

Mayor Black read the Proclamation regarding the National Night Out for 2021.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT 2021

WHEREAS, the National Association of Town Watch is sponsoring a unique, nationwide crime, drug and violence prevention program on August 3, 2021 entitled "National Night Out"; and

WHEREAS, the "38th Annual National Night Out" provides a unique opportunity for the Town of Bedford to join forces with thousands of other communities across the country in promoting, cooperative, police-community crime prevention efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Town Police Department plays a vital role in partnership with a variety of agencies in reducing crime, drugs and violence in the Town of Bedford; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that all citizens of the Town of Bedford be aware of the importance of crime prevention programs and impact that their participation can have one reducing crime, drugs and violence in the Town of Bedford; and

WHEREAS, police-community partnerships, neighborhood safety, awareness and cooperation are important themes of the "National Night Out" program;

NOW, THEREFORE I, Mayor Tim Black, do hereby call upon all citizens of the Town of Bedford to join with the Police Department and the National Association of Town Watch in supporting "38th Annual National Night Out" on August 3, 2021.

FURTHER, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT I, Mayor Tim Black, do hereby proclaim Tuesday, August 3, 2021 as "**NATIONAL NIGHT OUT**" in the Town of Bedford.

Mayor Black noted that the Council's conflict of interest training will be held on Tuesday, September 21, 2021 at 3:30 p.m. in Council Chambers. The training will be virtual.

REPORT OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Vice Mayor Rush said the Finance Committee met earlier that day and went over the finances from last year and everything looked good. They will be sitting down to discuss ways to spend the federal dollars that are coming to the Town. Council will be notified when these discussions take place.

Councilman Johannessen said he serves on the Central Virginia District Planning Commission, which had a meeting July 15. Mrs. Traci Blido has left the County staff and is now the Workforce Development Director for the area. She will be missed. There was also a suggestion at the meeting regarding doing a regional property reassessment. The suggestion was received poorly and he thought it was not a good idea and not in the citizens' best interests. There will also be a dinner meeting in Lynchburg for local government community leaders on October 14, 2021 or November 18, 2021.

REVISIONS TO AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice Mayor Rush moved, seconded by Mr. Hailey, to appoint Michael Lockaby as the new Town Attorney.

Mr. Lockaby is associated with the law firm of Guynn, Waddell, Carroll, and Lockaby.

Voted upon and carried by the following roll call vote:

Councilman Hailey	aye
Councilman Hartwick	aye

Councilman Johannessen	aye
Vice Mayor Rush	aye
Councilman Shoen	aye
Councilman Stanley	aye
Mayor Black	aye

The motion carried with seven members voting aye.

Mayor Black welcomed Mr. Lockaby as he took his seat in Council Chambers as the Town Attorney.

Town of Bedford Equal Opportunity Employer Statement

The Town’s written position on Equal Opportunity needs to be updated on a regular basis. When approved by Town Council, the signed written statement is posted on the Town’s Legal Posting Board in the Municipal Building.

Legal counsel has reviewed and approved the updated Equal Opportunity Statement.

ACTION REQUESTED:

Town Council is requested to approve the written statement as the Town’s position on Equal Opportunity.

Mr. Hartwick moved, seconded by Mr. Shoen, to approve the statement as written as the Town’s position on Equal Opportunity Employment.

Voted upon and carried by the following roll call vote:

Councilman Hartwick	aye
Councilman Johannessen	aye
Vice Mayor Rush	aye
Councilman Shoen	aye
Councilman Stanley	aye
Councilman Hailey	aye
Mayor Black	aye

The motion carried with seven members voting aye.

The EOE statement follows.

Town of Bedford Equal Opportunity Employer Statement

The Town of Bedford is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and hereby affirms that it is the policy of the Town to maintain and promote equal opportunity and diversity for all employees, applicants for employment and contractors in accordance with the relevant federal and State Laws.

The Town will not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, ancestry, or citizenship status.

In support of a diverse workforce, decisions as to hiring, promotion and other aspects of the employment relationship will be based solely upon job related qualifications.

The Town will not tolerate any kind of harassment of employees or retaliation against an employee who brings a complaint forward. Allegations of harassment will be taken seriously, promptly investigated, and appropriate action taken depending on the severity of the situation.

Adopted this 27th day of July, 2021.

Councilman Hailey noted as an informational item, there is a petition going around Town by a local group interested in the creation of a Dog Park.

ADJOURNMENT

7:17 p.m.

Tim Black, Mayor

Debra Anderson, Clerk of the Council