

January 24, 2017

A work session of the Council of the Town of Bedford, Virginia, was held in the Council Hall of the Municipal Building at 5:30 p.m., January 24, 2017.

Members present: Mayor Robert T. Wandrei; Vice Mayor Tim Black; Councilman Stacey L. Hailey; Councilman Bruce M. Johannessen (arrived at 6:00 p.m.); Councilman Steve C. Rush; Councilman Bryan Schley; and Councilman James A. Vest

Members absent: None

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

Mayor Wandrei opened the meeting.

Brian McCrodden, Bedford-Franklin Regional Rail Initiative (BFRRRI), gave a power point presentation on the background of the Initiative and updates: the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) did a study which was released just before Christmas 2016; the positive features of having a station in Bedford; the maximum time limit for a stop; offset track and high platform; issues remaining - ridership projections and negotiations with Norfolk Southern; it would be at least 2019 before service could start according to the DRPT.

Mayor Wandrei thanked the BFRRRI for the work they have done.

Councilman Vest reported he is Council's representative on the BRFFI and said that positive things are happening since meeting with the DRPT. He thanked those people serving on the BRFFI and said they are continuing to do an excellent job in trying to get a rail station in Bedford.

A brief discussion ensued with members of Council asking questions regarding costs and ridership.

The Town Manager reported there are a number of vacancies on different boards which were advertised on January 4. He said a number of responses have been received for the various vacancies. Mr. Kolakowski said there is one person up for appointment at this point for the Economic Development Authority that is on the agenda of the regular meeting, Elmer Hodge. He asked if Council wanted to discuss filling the vacancies.

Mayor Wandrei asked, with the exception of Mr. Hodge, that this be deferred until the next meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding the location and dates for a visioning retreat.

Councilman Johannessen arrived at 6:00 p.m.

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Council members concurred to hold the retreat on March 11 at 8:00 a.m. The first choice of location is the Bedford Welcome Center; second choice of location is Liberty Lake Park. Staff will make the arrangements.

Assistant Town Manager Warner spoke about the request by David Guy regarding his desire to open a fortune telling business, which is prohibited under the Town Code. Mr. Warner said that in a review of the Town Code a couple of years ago, the department heads had recommended fortune telling as one of the items which could be amended and removed from prohibition. Mr. Warner said he cannot respond to Mr. Guy's request as long as it is prohibited in the Town Code. He said that part of the Code would need to be repealed removing the prohibition and there is a public hearing process associated with that. Mr. Warner said that Council could repeal it and allow it in pretty much any area. He said the staff would recommend that Council consider addressing fortune telling as a use in a Commercial Zoning District, which would keep it out of residential areas. Mr. Warner said that specifically the staff would request Council to repeal the prohibition but identify fortune telling as a conditional use in the B-2, General Business District, Zone. Mr. Warner said that in researching this request the staff found out that other municipalities govern fortune telling in much the same way as pawnbrokers and precious metal dealers and Council could do the same at its discretion.

Chief of Police Foreman said he and former Chief Day discussed repealing the prohibition, but he has not looked into it at this time.

Mr. Warner recommended that Council amend the Town Code to lift the prohibition for fortune telling but that fortune telling be identified as a conditional use in the B-2 zoning district. Mr. Warner said he would need to talk to the Planning Commission about this.

Mayor Wandrei said Council should make a recommendation that the Planning Commission study the matter and report back to Council.

Mr. Warner said this business would be located at 1000 Lynchburg-Salem Turnpike, adjacent to the Auto Zone, and across from Walmart.

Mayor Wandrei said the next step would be to have the Planning Commission study the recommendation after having appropriate public hearings on the matter.

Mr. Warner said he understood Council's desire to having input from the Planning Commission in anticipation of Council's repeal.

D. W. Lawhorne, Public Works Director, reported on the following: the ADA compliant handicap playground at Liberty Lake Park is fully completed and up and running; at Edmund Street Park and Greenwood Park handicap swings were installed; landfill - 2016 statistics: handled 3,400 tons of solid waste, 786 tons of brush and wood, 564 tons picked up at curbside from residential; 57 tons at the residential drop off site; 83 tons brought in by the Electric Department from trimming operations in the Town, the

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remaining was brought in by contractors; 117 tons of leaves, 42 tons of debris picked up by the sweeper; 148 tons of recycling. Other statistics: 84 funerals.

Sonia Jammes, Finance Director, reported on the following: department heads and administrator had the first round of budget discussions last week; she is in process of making changes to the recommended budget and the second round of budget discussions will be held on January 26; Council should get the proposed budget prior to February 14; the budget retreat is scheduled for February 21; health insurance increase; perpetual care fund; wires received - Virginia Department of Transportation highway maintenance funds in the amount of \$351,481, State Aid Law Enforcement funds in the amount of \$62,887, reimbursement for the Centertown Plaza in the amount of \$56,714. Ms. Jammes reviewed expenditures.

Ms. Jammes answered questions from members of Council.

The Mayor asked Ms. Jammes to review the cemetery fees as part of the budget process.

Chief of Police Foreman spoke about being in the planning stages of the 3 on 3 basketball tournament at Edmund Street Park to be held in March. The Chief reviewed preliminary statistics for mental health calls, which included overtime hours and transporting patients. The Chief explained the process for handling people under temporary detention orders. He then reviewed crime statistics.

Electric Director Wagner thanked Council members for approving the new Power Cost Adjustment (PCA). Mr. Wagner said a notice about the PCA has been included in the utility bills and the notice has also been posted on the Town's website and Facebook page. With the recent rains the hydro plants are off line due to high water. Mr. Wagner reported that the speed increase is scheduled to be delivered in late February or early March. He said the terms of the interconnection agreement have been agreed to. Mr. Wagner spoke about the following: the results of a preliminary impact study have been received and it indicates that the Town will have no voltage or flicker issues with the Hydro Plant; the peaking capacity is on schedule; the control system project at the Hydro Plant is moving forward; the new PCA will go into effect with billings beginning February 1, 2017; a new structure was delivered to replace a structure at the Centerville Substation; there were some storm related outages from the weather on January 22 due to trees coming across the lines because of the high winds and all of the rain that fell; an orientation was held on January 20 regarding the background of the utility, how it is operated, and some of the key factors; a list of the energy resources for 2017 has been given to Council; AMP Ohio is making plans to replace the First Energy contract, if necessary, as First Energy is on a credit watch.

Assistant Town Manager Warner reported on the following: Council will recognize those employees who met certain employment milestones in the previous calendar year at the regular Council meeting; staff is working on an RFP for a pay study - it will be delivered to Council for review within the next month; the Housing Authority is working on guidelines for a grant it administers; the Economic Development Authority is working on

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tracking spreadsheets for those programs; the site assessment work has been initiated related to Bedford Middle School so when Council is ready to discuss possibilities the preliminary engineering and architectural studies will be ready; the Town's operating software has been upgraded - Christie Crouch and Sonia Jammes are working with the vendor to resolve an impasse in terms of the design of the Town's new website; the staff is looking at some project tracking software.

Mayor Wandrei adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.