

# The Bedford Citizen

THE NEWS YOU NEED TO GUIDE YOUR CITY

Vol. 1 No. 6

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## ABOUT THIS E-NEWS

The mission of this electronic newspaper (e-news) is to increase citizen awareness of current events and thereby increase their involvement in our government's decision-making process.

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## LIBRARY COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP

The Bedford Public Library Advisory Board invites you to participate in a Community Focus Group for the library Tuesday, June 19, 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Help us identify the Bedford Public Library's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and obstacles to progress.

Information gathered will be used to develop library services for the citizens of Bedford.

Free activities for school-aged children will be available in the Bonnie Finn Room to allow parents to participate in the Community Focus Group.

*If you find this e-news helpful and informative, please help us grow by passing it along to others.*

## FEATURES

### RECOMMENDED READING

By Stu Updike

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I want to recommend three links for you to read. Each presents important information to consider on several different facets of the gas drilling question.

The first takes you to a well-balanced article from the *Washington Post*. One important bit of information that they contribute to our knowledge base helps explain the City Council's eagerness to bring gas drilling to Bedford. In addition to permit fees, etc., the City could earn royalties on all property to which the City holds mineral rights: city hall, the library, the Boys Ranch, the sports complex, the linear parks and all of the streets. A little quick math puts this possibly in the vicinity of \$1 million per year. Read the article at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/29/AR2006072900638.html>

The second link accesses a *Fort Worth Weekly* article which, discusses some of the less-desirable aspects of drilling, such as the fact that Texas law separates the mineral estate from the surface estate and gives priority to the mineral estate. This is called the "split estate". Since the ownership of the mineral estate is not specified on the surface owner's documents in residential transactions, how does one find out who owns the mineral estate? We're working on that.

Gas drilling has the potential to generate significant revenue for the City and its residents, however the *Fort Worth Weekly* article makes it clear that there must be solid restrictions without loopholes. For this second article, go to

<http://www.fweekly.com/content.asp?article=4418>

The final link will take you to a Mar. 27, 2007, presentation made by XTO Energy on Barnett Shale Legislative Day in Austin. It includes a table of the minimum distances, noise limitations, road maintenance agreement requirements, and landscaping and screening requirements used by nine nearby cities. During the June 12 Council meeting, Councilman Whistler said he'd like to see the City adopt the less restrictive 300' minimum distance between a well and a residential structure as opposed to the 1,000' minimum used in some cities.

View the presentation at

[www.tipro.org/documents/XTOBArnettShaleday.pdf](http://www.tipro.org/documents/XTOBArnettShaleday.pdf)

*Prior to retiring in April, 2007, Stu Updike completed 27 years as a regional airline pilot. He has lived in Bedford since 1993.*

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## KEEPING UP WITH AND SPEAKING AT CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

By dona weisman

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Generally, Bedford's City Council meets in regular session on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at City Hall. Work sessions are frequently scheduled before regular sessions; executive sessions occur between the work and regular sessions or after the regular session, depending on available time. Special sessions are called and scheduled by a majority of the Council as needed.

The City Secretary prepares the meeting agendas and, for Council Members and City Manager, collects copies of all proposed resolutions, ordinances, petitions and protests, and other proposals she has received by noon of the Wednesday before the Tuesday of the meeting. Those items become the Council Packet that is delivered to Council Members by 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the Tuesday of the meeting. A copy of that packet is usually available for public review, by the following Monday, at City Hall and at the Library.

Anyone wishing to be heard at a Bedford City Council meeting must notify City Secretary Shanae Jennings in writing at either Bedford City Hall, 2000 Forest Ridge Drive, Bedford 76021 or [sjennings@ci.bedford.tx.us](mailto:sjennings@ci.bedford.tx.us) no later than noon on the Wednesday before the next regular session. The request must include the topic to be discussed as well as the sender's name, physical address and

telephone number.

Anyone listed under Persons to Be Heard may ask questions of the Mayor and can expect responses while the item listing their name and topic is being addressed. In addition, Council members may ask questions of those persons during the time that their item is being addressed. Photographs, charts or other items may be used to help get one's point across.

The City Secretary lists the items she receives for the agenda in the order that she receives them, although persons requesting to speak to the council are listed under Persons to Be Heard, which precedes both Old Business and New Business on Bedford Council Agendas.

Council Agendas are usually posted at <http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/council/agendas.htm> by 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the Tuesday of the meeting.

The Council usually addresses items in the order in which they are listed on the agenda, but a majority vote can cause an item to be approved without discussion, moved to a different spot on the agenda and/or tabled until a future date.

Unless a Council member authorizes a member of the audience to speak regarding a specific agenda item, only Council members may speak. The person who requested to be heard is the only audience member who may speak while his item is being addressed.

If a person is not listed on the agenda as a Person to Be Heard but wants to make a comment or request to the Council, he may do so during Open Forum, which occurs at

the end of each Council meeting. A person may speak on any topic during Open Forum, but the Council cannot discuss issues raised nor make any decisions on the issue at that time. Issues raised may be referred to City staff for research and possible future action.

Generally, it's best to try to resolve issues through City staff before taking them to Council meetings since, provided the issue is presented during Persons To Be Heard, Council will usually ask what staff has done about the issue so far. Issues raised during Open Forum receive no verbal response from Council.

When a regular session includes a Public Hearing, anyone may speak at that point without having given prior notice. It's wise for residents and business owners to review agendas regularly, in case an issue that concerns them positively or negatively arises, and be prepared to participate in the Public Hearing or at Open Forum.

Whether speaking during Persons to Be Heard, Open Forum or a Public Hearing, the speaker must introduce himself by name and address, for the record, before addressing the Council.

Work and regular sessions of council meetings are videotaped by Cable Channel 16 and air on the following Thursday and Monday, after each Council meeting, at 6:00 p.m. The VHS video recordings are usually available for three-day check out from the library as of the second week following the date of the meeting.

City Council meetings are always subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act (see <http://www.oag.state.tx.us/opinopen/openla>

[ws.shtml](#)), and related paperwork, presentations and recordings may be acquired by sending an Open Records request to the City Secretary (contact information provided above). For information requestors should know, go to <http://www.oag.state.tx.us/opinopen/requestors.shtml>

*dona weisman has been a Bedford resident since 2000 and a member of the Bedford Library Advisory Board since 2003. She has been a degreed librarian for 25 years and served as a public library consultant with the Texas State Library System for over a third of that time.*

## **OPINION/LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

### **BRAVO**

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Bravo on the e-newsletter! It keeps me better informed on what's going on at city hall.

Now I am trying to understand why, when the majority of citizens are opposed to it, the city is pursuing the outsourcing of library management. We have a competent, friendly, helpful staff there now, made up of people who are part of the community.

I would hope the city listens to the majority of its citizens on this issue. We don't want our library managed by some outside source.

Janet Long

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## NOTABLE DATES

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### Beautification Commission Meeting

(Library/Open to Public)  
817/952-2300  
Mon., June 18

### Zoning Board of Adjustment Meeting

Tues., June 19, 6:30-8 p.m.

### Community Focus Group (Library/Free)

817/952-2332  
Wed., June 20, noon

**Deadline** to Sign Up for Next Tuesday's  
City Council Agenda

Wed., June 20, 7 p.m.

### Library Advisory Board Meeting

(Library/Open to Public)  
817/952-2332  
Thurs., June 21, 7 p.m.

### Friends of the Bedford Public Library Meeting (Library/Open to Public)

817/952-2332  
Tues., June 26, 7 p.m.

### City Council Meeting (City Hall)

Thurs., June 28

### Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting

817/952-2125  
Sat., June 30, 2-4 p.m.  
Tues., July 3, noon

**Deadline** to Sign Up for Next Tuesday's  
City Council Agenda

Wed., July 4, noon-11 p.m.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Fest

(Boys Ranch Activity Center/Admission &  
parking fees)  
<http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/Departments/tourism/fourfest.htm>

Wed., July 4, noon-11 p.m.

City Offices Closed for Holiday

Thurs., July 5, 7 p.m.

### Parks & Recreation Board Meeting

(City Hall / Open to Public)  
817/952-2300  
Thurs., July 5

### Teen Court Advisory Board Meeting

(City Hall/Open to Public)  
Tues., July 10, 7 p.m.

### City Council Meeting (City Hall)

Thurs., July 12

For Boys Ranch Activities Center activities,  
go to

[http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/Departments/parks\\_recreation/recreation.htm](http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/Departments/parks_recreation/recreation.htm)

For Library activities, go to

<http://www.eventkeeper.com/code/events.cfm?curOrg=BEDFORD>

For Senior Center activities, go to

[http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/Departments/general\\_government/sc\\_calendar.htm](http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/Departments/general_government/sc_calendar.htm)

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## ABOUT THIS E-NEWS

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The mission of this electronic newspaper (e-news) is to increase citizen awareness of current events and thereby increase their involvement in our government's decision-making process. As a result, *The Bedford Citizen* will focus on providing Bedford's residents with the information they need in order to cast an informed vote. We also will include occasionally some helpful and entertaining information.

*The Bedford Citizen* is currently a volunteer effort which we expect to be circulated from friend to friend via email in its PDF format. If you find it helpful and informative, please feel free to pass it along to others.

During this introductory period, the subscriptions are free. This will allow us to gauge the demand and work out the bugs. Eventually, we plan to charge a fee for subscriptions. This will allow us to avoid the conflicts of interest that can arise from accepting paid advertising.

Initially, we plan to publish an issue every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, subject to volunteer availability and the amount of news to report.

To subscribe, please send us an email at [Be.A.Citizen@earthlink.net](mailto:Be.A.Citizen@earthlink.net) Please include your name, address and email address.

*The Bedford Citizen* welcomes free of charge:

- ◆ News articles from any volunteer writers, provided we judge the articles are relevant to our readers and the facts can be substantiated

- ◆ Position papers from political incumbents and candidates provided these position papers clearly state that person's position and they do not attack any other party

Our policies are as follows:

- ◆ Paid advertising is not accepted.
- ◆ Except when identified as editorials, letters to the editor or opinion pieces, stories will contain only facts that can be verified. Writers should expect to be asked to provide documentation before articles are published.
- ◆ All submitted articles must deal with issues relevant to Bedford's residents and not exceed two pages, as published in this format.
- ◆ Only one letter to the editor or opinion piece will be accepted from a single household during any 30-day period.
- ◆ Public service announcements will be included as space allows.
- ◆ The staff of the Bedford Citizen will be the final judge.
- ◆ Submissions must be received at least 72 hours prior to publication.
- ◆ Submissions should be sent to [Be.A.Citizen@earthlink.net](mailto:Be.A.Citizen@earthlink.net) and must include the author's name, address, email address and phone number.