

The Bedford Citizen

THE NEWS YOU NEED TO GUIDE YOUR CITY

Vol. 1 No. 11

June 29, 2007

CITY COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

This issue is devoted to an overview of the highlights of last night's City Council meeting. A more in-depth article about each item marked ** will appear in a future issue of The Bedford Citizen.

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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. [Read more](#)

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

HELP TEXAS' CHILDREN WIN!!!

With just one daily visit to <http://www2.firstbook.org/whatbook/index.php> between now and July 31, you can help Texas win 50,000 brand new books for children in its low-income communities.

OneBook, an organization which has been providing brand new books to children in low-income communities nationwide for the past 15 years, will award 50,000 new books to the state receiving the most votes in their "What Book Got You Hooked?" contest.

Go to <http://www2.firstbook.org/whatbook/index.php> to read more about the contest, see what titles are being shared, which state is in the lead, and - of course! - to cast your vote.

As of midnight last night, Texas was in 4th place, so be sure to tell your friends about the contest. Visitors are permitted to vote once every 24 hours through July 31, so hurry! The sooner you vote, the sooner you can vote again!

JUNE 26 CITY COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

RECONSTRUCTION OF CENTRAL POOL

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James Hughes, Director of Parks, Recreation and Special Events, said that reconstruction of Central Pool isn't expected to be complete until at least mid-August due to two significant factors. Lots of time has been lost due to bad weather that wasn't anticipated when reconstruction plans were made. In addition, staff recently discovered that pool dimensions used in planning the reconstruction, taken from original pool records, were inaccurate and therefore led to incorrect pool-volume calculations. Construction and equipment needs for the larger-than-calculated pool must be upgraded in order to meet State

regulations. Additional funding for the project is expected to be available from the Parks and Recreation Board's water bill income.

TOWN HALL MEETING REGARDING DRILLING FOR GAS**

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Item requested by Councilman Whistler.

Drilling for gas in the Barnett Shale gas field will be the topic of a Town Hall Meeting at the Old Bedford School Monday, July 23, at 7 p.m. The meeting will include a presentation, discussion of criteria for the development of the gas drilling ordinance, and an opportunity for the public to comment on the issues.

In-depth coverage of each item marked ** will appear in a future issue of The Bedford Citizen.

GAS DRILLING ORDINANCE**

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Councilman Whistler listed what he believes to be important criteria for the development of the gas drilling ordinance and, based on a study of what other metroplex cities are doing, made recommendations for each. Councilman Orea suggested that a proposed ordinance be developed so that residents could also comment on that at the Town Hall Meeting. City Attorney Stan Lowry recommended that the Council consider carefully whether gas drilling should be treated as a zoning issue or as a permitting issue, indicating that the zoning ordinance approach would permit the Council to have approval of a well.

MOSQUITO AND BAG WORM TREATMENTS

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Item requested by Councilman Whistler.

James Hughes, Director of Parks, Recreation and Special Events, explained that the City has been using for years special "briquettes" designed to reduce the mosquito population before the pests actually become airborne. The briquettes, placed in all public drainage channels and in other public areas where there is ponding water, effectively kill all larvae for a 30-day period. The following is taken from the city's web site at <http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/> :

The reasons the City no longer uses

spraying to control mosquito populations are all supported by the Tarrant County Health Department.

- ◆ The "adulticide" spray is toxic and requires that citizens be forewarned to stay indoors when spraying is being done.
- ◆ The driver of the spraying equipment must wear special gear to protect himself. The spray can seriously impair the health of individuals with chronic breathing illnesses such as asthma or bronchitis.
- ◆ It is common for such individuals to have to seek immediate medical aid if they come in contact with the airborne spray.
- ◆ The spray is very localized and only is effective for a very few minutes. Spraying only kills adult mosquitoes that are active while the spray is airborne.
- ◆ There is absolutely no "residual" effect of spraying. Mosquitoes not killed by the spray can develop immunity that is passed onto the future generations, thereby reducing the future neutralizing the overall positive effects of spraying.

Mr. Hughes also explained that, although there's no city-wide policy for treatment of bag worms along rights-of-ways, drainage areas, etc., City staff tends to treat the pests on all other City properties whenever necessary.

In-depth coverage of each item marked ** will appear in a future issue of The Bedford Citizen.

POLICE DEPT'S RECENT CAPITAL MURDER INVESTIGATION

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Police Chief Flory described events of an investigation and arrest that occurred in Bedford earlier this month. Following an apparent robbery at the D&S Food Mart on the afternoon of June 11, a clerk at the store was found dead. Video footage of the incident, captured by the store's surveillance system, led to a tip within two hours after it was broadcast on evening news programs. Tips, leads, witness reports and concentrated efforts within the department led to the arrest of three men in less than three days. The three are being held in lieu of \$1 million bail each on a capital murder charge. One of the men also is a suspect in a March 31 aggravated robbery at Viva Food Store in Bedford. The other two are brothers who were convicted less than 10 years ago of conspiracy to commit aggravated robbery from Furr's cafeteria in North Richland Hills; they also are suspects in a June 4 aggravated robbery at the One Stop Pantry in Watauga. Police said video footage of the incident captured by the store's surveillance system showed that one or two of the men were making a purchase and the clerk had the cash register open when one man shot him for no apparent reason. Chief Flory explained that the Arlington police department was especially helpful in providing equipment and assistance with the video footage. Additional help came from law officials in Hurst, Watauga, Fort Worth and the U.S.

Marshal's office.

ITEMS APPROVED BY CONSENT

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The Council approved the following items by consent:

- ◆ Ordinance 07-2858, amending the City's comprehensive zoning ordinance to rezone Lot 1R, Block 1, Stonegate Addition from Heavy Commercial to Heavy Commercial/Specific Use Permit/Automotive Repair (six-month limit, with requester having the option to extend the SUP to 2 years after that time);
- ◆ A resolution suspending the July 30, 2007, effective date of the proposal by Atmos Energy Corp., Mid-Tex Division, to implement the interim GRIP rate adjustments for gas utility investment in 2006; authorizing participation with the Atmos Cities Steering Committee (ACSC) in a review and inquiry into the sufficiency of the filing and the basis and reasonableness of the proposed rate adjustments; authorizing intervention in administrative and court proceedings involving the proposed GRIP rate adjustments; requiring reimbursement of reasonable legal and consultant expenses; and requiring delivery of this resolution to the company and legal counsel;

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- ◆ Authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Betsy Price, Tarrant County Tax Assessor-Collector, and Tarrant County for assessment and collection services of ad valorem taxes levied by the City of Bedford;
- ◆ A resolution authorizing the City Manager to accept the proposal and arrangement letter from Rylander, Clay & Opitz, LLP, for audit services;
- ◆ A resolution awarding a bid to R.E.C. General Contractors Inc. and authorize the replacement of the Stormie Jones Park Walking Path for a cost of \$53,403;
- ◆ A resolution to accept bids and authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Four B Paving, Inc., for the 2007 Street Crack Sealing Program in the amount of \$688,700;
- ◆ A resolution to abandon a one-foot portion of a five-foot utility easement in Lot 20, Block 1, Village of Oak Park Addition to the City;
- ◆ A resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a professional services contract with J. Richard Perkins, P.E., for the following: (1) periodic staff review of plats and construction/site plans for private developments within the City; (2) periodic review of construction plans from other engineering consultants under contract with the City for the

design of public improvements; (3) consulting, review, oversight, and general administration of ongoing City projects and other public works projects as determined by the Public Works Director.

BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION AWARDS**

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The Council unanimously passed a resolution authorizing the Beautification Commission to recognize three Bedford businesses in accordance with the Commission's Business Recognition Program. Winners and their awards are:

- ◆ The Todd Smith Law Firm, 1608 Airport Freeway, for Overall Appearance;
- ◆ Razzoo's Cajun Café, 2504 Airport Freeway, for Overall Appearance and Superior Landscaping;
- ◆ Carl's Steak House, 337 East Pipeline Road, for Overall Appearance and Best Improved.

Award ceremonies will take place at each business on the morning of July 28.

TMLDA ACHIEVEMENT OF EXCELLENCE AWARD, 2006**

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Bedford Public Library received an award from the Texas Municipal League Directors Association (TMLDA). See Monday's issue.

BECA AWARDS**

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Several Public Works employees were given Bedford Employee Commitment Awards (BECA). See Monday's issue.

MILITARY LEAVE POLICY

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The Council approved unanimously a resolution approving a Military Leave policy as amended to reflect changed requested at the previous Council meeting.

RFP REGARDING OUTSOURCING THE LIBRARY**

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Item requested by Councilman Orean.

The Council voted 4-2 to accept the final version of the Request for Proposals (RFP) to outsource management of the library, with one change that was recommended by City Attorney Stan Lowry before the vote. They also voted 4-2 to distribute the RFP. Both motions were made by Councilman Orean, seconded by Councilman Whistler and opposed by Councilpersons Lori Nail and Roy Savage.

CITY'S SCHEDULE OF FEES

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The Council voted unanimously to amend the City's Code of Ordinances Appendix A, Schedule of Fees, by adding a "Residential Roof/Reroof" fee to "Misc Bus Fees" and setting a flat rate fee of \$50. Until now, the

permit classification has had a variable fee under the permit valuation table. Following review of how surrounding cities handle the issue, Staff recommended the flat rate.

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT CASE A-013**

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Item requested by Councilman Whistler.

No action was taken on this item. It will appear again on a future agenda.

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS ON CITY BUSINESS

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As part of her report, Councilwoman Nail thanked Councilman Orean for his work on developing the RFP for outsourcing management of the library and explained to residents that she voted against approving and distributing that RFP because she is listening to the residents and has heard them saying that they are pleased with current management of the library and opposed to outsourcing it.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

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City Manager Beverly Queen read from a letter written by a mother who praised Richard Robinson, a Splash employee, for keeping a watchful eye on her children while they were at Splash. She said that when she approached Splash, she went to the fence to talk with one of her children and Mr. Robinson was quick to come over

*In-depth coverage of each item marked ** will appear in a future issue of The Bedford Citizen.*

and ensure that her child was not talking to a stranger.

Ms. Queen reminded everyone that a tree on Memory Walk would be dedicated on Thursday, Jun. 28 to the memory of Mark Dawson, a long-time member of the Bedford Fire Department.

She also reminded everyone that 4th Fest will take place next week.

OPEN FORUM

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Raymond Champney explained that he had written a letter to all of the Council regarding his concerns about a local business and related ordinances but, after receiving a response from Councilman Whistler, felt it necessary to clarify the points he was trying to make in case any of the others had not understood his comments. He concluded by asking that the Council review the City's ordinances to ensure they properly reflect the wishes of the community.

dona weisman reported that 40-50 people had participated in the library's Community Focus Groups, including Mayor Story and Councilmen Savage, Turner and Whistler. She explained that Library Manager Maria Redburn was reviewing the citizen input received during that evening and would use the information to help determine purchases, services and long-range plans for the library.

Bob Cochrane observed that the Council had chosen Rylander, Clay & Opitz, LLP

because they were already familiar with the city and wondered why they were \$6,000 more expensive than the next highest bidder? He encouraged drilling for gas and expressed his hope that the City would get the word out about the Library receiving the award. He closed with an observation that in the Joint Workshop, and in all of the Persons to be Heard and Open Forums, only two persons had spoken in favor of issuing the RFP while "over 100 and perhaps over 200" had spoken against it. He then pointed out that, in spite of all the talk about listening to the citizens, the Council still approved issuing the RFP for outsourcing the responsibility for library management.

A resident whose name we did not get told the Council about his concern that drivers turning onto Central from Memphis Drive are inside the flashing school zone signs and cannot know if they are flashing or not. He went on to say that after receiving a ticket for failure to comply with the speed limit on the signs, he tried to search the records to find out if anyone else had received a ticket for the same offense and location but wasn't permitted to do so. In spite of that he received a letter from an attorney just three days after he received the ticket. He did not think it was right that the attorney should have access to the records when he did not.

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 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:

- ◆ *The Bedford Citizen* does not share nor sell its mailing list information.
- ◆ 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 and must include the author's name, address, email address and phone number.

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