

The Bedford Citizen

THE NEWS YOU NEED TO GUIDE YOUR CITY

Vol. 1 No. 18

July 18, 2007

FEATURES

"PERSON TO BE HEARD" DEADLINE

Anyone who intends to speak at next week's City Council Meeting as a "Person to Be Heard" must submit a written request no later than today at noon.

BUDGET: PROGRAM SUMMARY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

When Ralph Good spoke during the Open Forum segment of last week's City Council meeting, he pointed out that the City's 2007-2008 budget session is about to start ... One area of particular concern for him in the *Program Summary* is the *Performance Measures* section, which deals with planning for, achieving and measuring performance gains, especially gains from improved training and technology.

BEDFORD CITIZEN UPDATE

During our first month of publication, we've been able to work out a sort of schedule that our readers can expect.

UPCOMING BEDFORD ACTIVITIES

Calendar of upcoming activities for Monday, July 23 – Sunday, July 29

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.

FEATURES

"PERSON TO BE HEARD" DEADLINE

[Back to the top](#)

Anyone who intends to speak at next week's City Council Meeting as a "Person to Be Heard" must submit a written request no later than today at noon. The request must include the speaker's name, address and phone number as well as the topic of discussion. It may be emailed to the City Secretary at sjennings@ci.bedford.tx.us or mailed to

Bedford City Hall
ATTN: City Secretary Shanae Jennings
2000 Forest Ridge Dr.
Bedford, TX 76021.

BUDGET: PROGRAM SUMMARY AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

By Stu Updike

[Back to the top](#)

When Ralph Good spoke during the Open Forum segment of last week's City Council meeting, he pointed out that the City's 2007-2008 budget session is about to start and said that he had attended most, if not all, of the Council budget work sessions for the last five years.

One area of particular concern for him in the *Program Summary* is the *Performance Measures* section, which deals with planning for, achieving and measuring performance gains, especially gains from improved training and technology. In his opinion, this portion of the City's budget has been neglected in previous years.

He cited two areas which he felt were deficient in earlier budgets. First, he felt that, while desirable goals were sometimes set, there usually was no explanation of how those goals would be achieved.

He was concerned, also, that expressing performance measures only as percentages leaves one wondering what the absolute numbers actually are.

"If you study and compare each Program Summary," he said, "you will find that most of them have only minor changes over the past few years, and some of those programs have changed for the *better*."

Mr. Good shared three success stories that, he says, have gone un-reported in their Performance Measures:

- ◆ A few years ago, our City spent between \$400,000 and \$600,000 on technology that would increase police officers' time on patrol. Rather than making many trips to and from the station during their shifts, they could make their reports on their computer during their shift. These reports would then bypass the records clerks and go directly into the records. This allowed two clerks to be reassigned to free up two police officers.
- ◆ The Fire Department internally studied and outsourced their billing and collections for ambulance services. At the time that change was implemented, the resulting annual revenue was expected to be \$400,000.

- ◆ The Library has increased operating hours to include Sunday, without increasing staff.

Mr. Good believes that budget reports must include such productivity ingredients as:

- ◆ A statement of the plan
- ◆ Assignment of responsibility
- ◆ Assignment of a priority within the system
- ◆ Reporting of results
- ◆ Assessment of the results and corrective action, as necessary

"If you leave any of these out of the equation, you spoil the results." he said. "Technology is the engine that has powered the productivity gains in our economy. It cannot be a substitute for change, which requires human activity.

In a follow-up interview, Mr. Good emphasized that his goal is *not* to cut jobs. Instead he supports the use of technology to help the City's employees be more efficient and productive.

"My hope is that the Council will insist that every department have a productivity improvement program." That program, he believes, should evaluate the use of training and new technology to enhance the performance of the City's staff.

He recommended, also, that the success stories be reported generally and in the *Performance Measures* section of the *Program Summary*.

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

HELP NEEDED DESPERATELY!!!

Texas has dropped back to 4th place in the "What Book Got You Hooked?" contest sponsored by OneBook. With just one daily visit to <http://www2.firstbook.org/whatbook/index.php> between now and July 31, you can help Texas climb to number one and 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. Visitors are permitted to vote once every 24 hours through July 31, so hurry! The sooner you vote, the sooner you can vote again!

BEDFORD CITIZEN UPDATE

By Stu Updike

[Back to the top](#)

During our first month of publication, we've been able to work out a sort of schedule that our readers can expect.

On the Friday before a Council meeting, we'll include either the agenda for that meeting or a link to it.

On the Monday before a Council meeting, we'll include the *Agenda In Brief*.

Every Wednesday, we'll include a listing of *Upcoming Bedford Activities* for the following week.

On the Friday following a Council meeting, we'll include the highlights of that week's meeting.

We'll try to include agendas and highlights for Special Sessions of the City Council as they become available, and we're hoping to keep you posted about Public Hearings whenever they're scheduled.

As we say in *ABOUT THIS E-NEWS* in every issue, this is an introductory period during which we're working out the bugs and providing subscriptions free of charge. Yesterday someone asked us when we'll start charging for subscriptions. We don't know, but when that time comes, we'll refer you to a website where you can subscribe. We'll let you know at that time, also, when the free subscriptions will end.

Don't forget that we welcome articles, editorials/opinion pieces and letters to the editor. For details, see *ABOUT THIS E-NEWS* in any issue of *The Bedford Citizen*.

MURDER MYSTERY DINNER & SHOW

The Mann family's getting together for the holiday. Melody's providing the music, Sugar's bringing the treats, and all the Mann Clan's gonna have fun, fun, fun! But, wait! Someone's spiked the punch, and Bid Bad Mann's surprise package may unravel the family fortune! Looks like there's gonna be a murder for the holiday!

Family Reunion, Old Bedford School's latest Murder Mystery Dinner & Show, is scheduled for this coming Sat. Jul. 21 at 7 p.m. For more information, like how to purchase tickets, call 817/952-2290 or go to www.oldbedfordschool.com.



THURSDAY CLUB HOUSE @ THE LIBRARY

Weekly Club House programs this month are sure to entertain, amaze and even educate kids. The free, hour-long programs, intended for school-aged children, begin at 1:30 p.m. in the library's Bonnie Finn Room each Thursday. Registration is not required. Tomorrow, Zooniversity presents *The Traveling Zoo*.

For more information, contact Jeanne Green at 817/952-2370 or jgreen@ci.bedford.tx.us.

UPCOMING BEDFORD ACTIVITIES

Monday, July 23 – Sunday, July 29

Town Hall Meeting re: Gas Drilling Issues

Old Bedford School; Open to Public;
817/952-2101
Mon., Jul. 23, 7 p.m.

Sprouts Story Time for the active child
Library; Open to Public; FREE
Tues., Jul. 24, 10-10:20 a.m.

Story Book Club Story Time
for the child who's ready to sit and listen
Library; Open to Public; FREE
Tues., Jul. 24, 11-11:20 a.m.

Summer Movie Madness
Library; Open to Public; FREE
Tues., Jul. 24, 2-3:30 p.m.

City Council Meeting
City Hall; Open to Public; 817/952-2101
Tues., Jul. 24, 7 p.m.

Rhythmweb presents *The Drum Guy*
Children's Summer Reading Club Activity
Library; Open to Public; FREE
Thurs., Jul. 26, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting

City Hall; Open to Public; 817/952-2125
Thurs., Jul. 27, 6:30 (work session) &
7 p.m. Regular Session

An Evening with the Author: Tim Madigan

Tickets available for purchase 817/952-
2370
Old Bedford School
Fri., Jul. 27, 6:30-9 p.m.

Beautification Commission Award Presentation
Sat., Jul. 28

Saturday Matinee @ BPL
Library; Open to Public; FREE
Sat., Jul. 28, 2-4 p.m.

Unless otherwise noted, find more
information at these sites:

Boys Ranch Activities Center activities
http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/Departments/parks_recreation/recreation.htm

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

Senior Center activities
http://www.ci.bedford.tx.us/Departments/general_government/sc_calendar.htm

ABOUT THIS E-NEWS

[Back to the top](#)

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 or 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.