

The Bedford Citizen

THE NEWS YOU NEED TO GUIDE YOUR CITY

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FEATURES

LAST NIGHT'S COUNCIL MEETING

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BEDFORD'S NEW LIBRARY

The former Food Lion building on Forest Ridge is to become the long-awaited new Bedford Public Library following renovation.

PUBLIC INFORMATION REQUESTS FOR RESPONSES TO RFP FOR LIBRARY

Because LSSI marked its proposal as confidential, the City has asked the Texas Attorney General's office for a ruling on whether or not the LSSI proposal is a public document under the Open Information Act.

EVALUATION PROCESS FOR LIBRARY RFP RESPONSES

Plans for evaluating responses to the library-related RFPs were announced during last night's City Council work session.

SUNSET PROVISION ORDINANCE

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BOARD AND COMMISSION MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

Following much discussion, the Council voted 4-3 to remove three members from the Library Advisory Board.

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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FEATURES

LAST NIGHT'S COUNCIL MEETING

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Last night's City Council meeting, which began at 6 p.m. and ran almost to midnight, involved a great deal of discussion.

Because it is important to take time and carefully consider last night's events, we will only cover a few items. We will be putting out the highlights of the meeting in our Friday issue and more in-depth coverage next week.

BEDFORD'S NEW LIBRARY

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The former Food Lion building on Forest Ridge is to become the long-awaited new Bedford Public Library following renovation.

Mayor Story began the regular session of last night's City Council meeting by announcing the Council's decision to purchase the 37,000 sq. ft. building from HEB ISD for \$2.25 million. This is at least 7,000 sq. ft. larger than the new construction that voters approved in the City's most recent bond election. The building's proximity to the City's Old Bedford School property, which happens to be across the street from the recently expanded main fire station, will help establish a Municipal Center for Bedford.

Since part of the bond funds approved for the library were used soon after the election to purchase land across the street from the current library, \$7.8 million

remains for the new library. Inflation has had an effect on the feasibility of purchasing a 25,000-30,000 sq. ft. building for that amount. Foundation requirements resulting from the concentrated weight of materials tends to be more costly for libraries than for buildings intended for other purposes.

PUBLIC INFORMATION REQUESTS FOR RESPONSES TO RFP FOR LIBRARY

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The City received one outside response to their Request for Proposals to Outsource the Supervision and Operating Services of Bedford Public Library. Although the City can't enter into a contract with itself, the Library Manager was required to submit a response to that RFP by the same deadline in order to provide a basis for comparisons. There have been several public information requests for the two responses to the RFP.

The library's response is readily available under the Public Information Act, but because LSSI marked its proposal as confidential, the City has asked the Texas Attorney General's office for a ruling on whether or not the LSSI proposal is a public document under the Open Information Act.

EVALUATION PROCESS FOR LIBRARY RFP RESPONSES

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Plans for evaluating responses to the library-related RFPs were announced during last night's City Council work session. Because the public is not allowed

to view LSSI's response, evaluation can be done only during Council executive sessions since those sessions are not open to the public.

The Library Advisory Board was not named as a participant in the decision-making process.

SUNSET PROVISION ORDINANCE

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Because the City Council didn't reauthorize the Beautification Commission, Community Affairs Commission, the Library Board and the Parks and Recreation Board at the end of 2006 as required by a recently recovered 2002 ordinance, last night's Council Agenda items included, "Consider an ordinance reauthorizing the establishment of Boards and Commissions, including the Beautification Commission, Community Affairs Commission, Library Board and Parks and Recreation Board.

The Council voted unanimously to reauthorize those and eliminated the revised ordinance from the city's charter.

BOARD AND COMMISSION MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

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Another item on the agenda for last night's City Council meeting was "Consider a resolution appointing board and commission members to the Library Advisory Board, Beautification Commission, Community Affairs Commission, and Parks and Recreation Board.

Council voted to reappoint all members to the Beautification Commission and Community Affairs Commissions and the Parks and Recreation Board, moving alternates into member positions wherever there were vacancies in member positions.

Following much discussion, the Council voted 4-3 to remove three members from the Library Advisory Board. The three were (former) Library Board Chair dona weisman, (former) Library Board Vice-Chair Bonnie Finn and (former) member Karen Kersey. One of those three had sent a letter to the Mayor last January and the other two sent emails to the Mayor and three Council members last month, all asking for appointment of any other Councilmember as Liaison to the Board. Charles Orea has served in that position since soon after he was elected, has spearheaded investigation into outsourcing of the Library and wrote the successful motion which put himself in charge of development of the core draft of the RFP.

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 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.