March 16, 2021

Borough Council

The Workshop Meeting of the Bedford Borough Council was held on the above date at 3:00 p.m. at the Bedford Ambulance Meeting Room. The following Council Members were in attendance, Sharon Turkovich, Jeff Rinscheid, Bill Blackburn, John Cessna, and Kenny Fetterman. Mayor William Leibfreid, Borough Manager Barbara Diehl and Borough Secretary Beverly Geller were also in attendance.

Council Members Tim Weaverling and Patrick Neff were absent along with Public Services Director Brad Foor, Police Chief Craig Bowman, Solicitor Dean Crabtree and Borough Engineer Timothy Cooper, P.E. of Stiffler, McGraw & Assoc. Inc.

Kevin Diehl of Aerial Communications and Will Deshong of the Bedford Gazette were in attendance.

A conference call with John Ford and Brent Polimene of Verizon to discuss 5G was placed. Topics discussed were the difference between 3G, 4G and 5G. 3G enabled higher data transfer rates for mobile web browsing, image sharing and GPS location tracking over prior analog and digital services. 4G broadband delivers deep web functionality to smartphones. 5G creates a network with quicker downloads to help make businesses more efficient and provide access to information quicker.

5G waves travel shorter distances, but at greater speeds. Previous services travel further distances, but at slower speeds. Larger cell phone towers will be retired once fiber is deployed for 5G with smaller "cells," closer together to intensify the signal within a smaller radius. 5G is not expected in the Bedford area for 5 to 6 years.

Council Member Fetterman shared that there has been controversy over 5G for several years. Countries and municipalities have banned 5G due to adverse health effects. Council Member Fetterman noted that the closer a person is to a cell pack, the effects are worse describing it as being similar to a microwave. Council Member Fetterman described the effects as not enough to cook a person, but within the guidelines of the FCC.

Mr. Ford and Mr. Polimene shared that Verizon's 5G meets Federal, WHO, FCC, etc. regulations. Mr. Polimene shared that there are places in the US that still do not have 4G service. Mr. Ford shared that 5G service cannot be installed without an agreement to install the fiber required.

The call with Mr. Ford and Mr. Polimene ended at 3:42 p.m. with an offer to speak with Council at a future date to continue the discussion or to provide contact information for someone to provide additional details.

Discussion about 5G continued including the installation of a tower installed at the Bedford County Courthouse by Crows Nest and Zito Media expanding Broadband in the county. Also discussed was the impact if the Borough declined 5G service, but 5G is installed in Bedford Township.

Council Member Turkovich exited the meeting at 3:53 p.m.

Mayor Leibfreid asked Council Member Fetterman to forward information on the adverse health effects of 5G.

Kevin Diehl left the meeting at 4:14 p.m.

Manager Diehl shared that Paul Pletcher will be joining the borough as the new mechanic at the Wastewater Treatment Plant starting Monday, March 22, 2021.

Brad Foor, Public Services Director, will be retiring after 29 years of services on Sunday, March 21, 2021.

Manager Diehl shared that the Borough Building Renovation is moving quickly. A walkthrough during the April Council Workshop is planned for Council to see the progress.

Motion was made by Council Member Rinscheid, seconded by Council Member Blackburn, to approve Requisition #11 for the Borough Building Renovation in the amount of $163,880.40. Motion was carried by unanimous vote (4-0).

Council Member Rinscheid shared that research on the Underground Railroad in Bedford has produced two tunnel openings with one being at 133 S. Richard Street and the second at 106 W. Penn Street at the Lutheran Church.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made and carried at 4:30 p.m.

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Borough Secretary