

**Council Minutes January 24, 2023**

**STATE OF TEXAS §**

**COUNTY OF TARRANT §**

**CITY OF BEDFORD §**

**The City Council of the City of Bedford, Texas, met in Regular Session at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 2000 Forest Ridge Drive, on the 24th day of January, 2023 with the following members present:**

Michael Boyter  
Amy Sabol  
Dan Cogan  
Nichelle D. Dawkins  
Steve Farco  
Rob Gagliardi  
Rich Steves

Mayor  
Mayor Pro Tem  
Councilmembers

constituting a quorum.

Staff present included:

Jimmy Stathatos  
Caryn Riggs  
Andrea Roy  
Bryn Meredith  
Michael Wells  
Molly Fox  
Cheryl Taylor  
Blake Williams  
Jeff Williams

City Manager  
Assistant City Manager  
Assistant City Manager  
City Attorney  
City Secretary  
Communications Director  
Public Works Director  
Purchasing Manager  
Police Chief

**REGULAR SESSION**

The Regular Session began at 6:00 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER/GENERAL COMMENTS**

Mayor Boyter called the meeting to order.

**INVOCATION**

Councilmember Steves gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledges of Allegiance to the flags of the United States and Texas were given.

**PRESENTATION**

- **City Entryway Plantings and Monuments**

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Assistant City Manager Andrea Roy presented a proposal from Westwood, a firm that does landscape architecture, to address and enhance the City's entryway plantings and monument signs. The scope of services includes providing design guidelines and construction documents for entry monuments and plantings based on an assessment of ten current entryways and two new locations. The initial tasks for the project include a full landscape site assessment, providing a conceptual plan, public presentations, and landscape guidelines. The final task is design construction drawings for potential additional monument signs. She stated the estimated design costs based on the proposal are approximately \$60,000. She further stated the participating groups for the project would include staff, the Beautification Advisory Board, and the City Council.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Roy stated that the funding for this item has not yet been identified. Staff chose Westwood as they are currently working on City projects and their pricing was competitive. She confirmed that the costs for this proposal only include the design. There was discussion on the costs of the proposal, public participation, and potential monument signs at the south entryways into the City.

### **OPEN FORUM**

Cynthia Hightower, 901 Walter Street, Bedford – Ms. Hightower signed up to speak on Item #9. She wanted to discuss a better way to handle construction with City services. She thanked the City for the gift cards for carwashes and recognized McClendon Construction and Councilmembers Dawkins and Gagliardi for their assistance. She discussed the demographics of Bedford south of the freeway and felt those residents were being treated differently. Ms. Hightower stated it was humiliating having the project identified as being in a low-income area. She stated the original work crew treated them poorly, including parking in yards, blocking driveways, and being rude. She discussed how long the project took compared to another street project and weather issues that caused the street to be muddy. Ms. Hightower asked that there be more communication with construction projects to avoid issues in the future. She discussed what she felt was the lack of, or poor, communication from the first work crew compared to McClendon. She asked for respect and an apology to the people on Walter Street, as well as a change in culture in Bedford.

There was discussion on the lessons learned from the project; issues related to the Walter Street project, including that the water and sewer infrastructure improvements were not part of the original submittal to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, which caused delays; the CDBG program in general; and improvements to communication with residents regarding street projects.

### **CONSIDER APPROVAL OF ITEMS BY CONSENT**

City Manager Jimmy Stathatos presented an overview of items on the consent agenda. In response to questions from Council on Item #3 regarding a previous purchase of phones, Purchasing Manager Blake Williams stated the item is for an upgrade to the software, not the hardware.

Motioned by Councilmember Gagliardi, seconded by Councilmember Steves, to approve the following items by consent: 1, 2 and 3.

Motion approved 7-0-0. Mayor Boyter declared the motion carried.

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1. Consider approval of the following City Council minutes:
  - a) January 10, 2023 regular meeting

This item as amended was approved by consent.

2. Consider a resolution authorizing the City Manager or his designee to enter into a three-year software service agreement with iWorQ Systems, Inc. to upgrade the Public Works Department work order system.

This item as amended was approved by consent.

3. Consider a resolution authorizing the City Manager or his designee to enter into a three-year service agreement for the purchase and operation of an upgraded phone system with Data Vox, through the Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) purchasing cooperative, in an estimated amount of \$87,000.

This item as amended was approved by consent.

### PERSONS TO BE HEARD

4. The following individuals have requested to speak to the Council tonight under Persons to be Heard:
  - a) John Washington, 2458 Meadow Park Circle, Apt 146B, Bedford – requests to speak to Council regarding building a skatepark and the ownership of various open spaces/land.

John Washington, 2458 Meadow Park Circle, Apt 146B, Bedford – Mr. Washington presented information regarding skate parks and discussed the inconvenience of having to utilize skate parks in other cities, which could be resolved by building a skate park in Bedford. He stated skateboarding is the third most commonly reported interest for high school students, that there are approximately 8,000,000 skateboarders in the country, that skate parks are the fourth most used recreational spaces in terms of total weekly use hours, and that skateboarding is the third least expensive sport. He further discussed the impact skateboarding has on mental, physical, and social health.

There was discussion on opportunities for possible future park amenities, including a skate park; City Manager Jimmy Stathatos' experience with developing a skate park in another city; an asset audit, to include the City's parks, as part of the Council's strategic plan; and Council hearing from and doing what they can for the youth in the City.

- b) Kent Hopkins, representing the Clubhouse for Special Needs, 2701 Harwood Road, Bedford, Texas 76021 – requests to speak to Council regarding the demands being placed on the buyer delaying their application to buy land on Bedford Road.

Mr. Hopkins withdrew his request to speak prior to the meeting.

### NEW BUSINESS

5. Consider a resolution authorizing the City Manager or his designee to enter into an interlocal agreement with Tarrant County for pavement improvements on Schumac

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### **Lane from Hospital Parkway to Central Drive; and McLain Road between Cummings Drive to Cheek Sparger Road.**

Public Works Director Cheryl Taylor presented information regarding this item. She stated the City partners with Tarrant County Precinct 3 annually on street improvements. This item is for paving improvements on Schumac Lane from Hospital Parkway to Central Drive, and on McLain Road between Cummings Drive and Cheek Sparger Road. She stated the City would be responsible for the cost of asphalt, milling the road, traffic control, and fuel for equipment, and the County would provide equipment and labor at a cost savings to the taxpayers versus paying a contractor to perform the street improvements. The expected start date for the project is the week of February 27 and is expected to be completed in three to four weeks.

Ms. Taylor presented an overview of communications with residents affected by construction, including information being posted on all social media channels, the City's website, message boards, and the Bedford Connection depending on timing. There was discussion regarding striping the center lane of Schumac Lane going towards Hospital Parkway. In response to questions from Council, Ms. Taylor discussed the differences between this project and the Walter Street project, including that it is a cooperative agreement with Tarrant County and not a CDBG-funded project and that it involves a mill and overlay of the streets, not a full street reconstruction. She further stated the streets being improved are not on the City's current five-year Capital Improvement Plan to replace water and sewer infrastructure. There was discussion on CDBG-funded projects in general.

Motioned by Councilmember Gagliardi, seconded by Councilmember Dawkins, to approve a resolution authorizing the City Manager or his designee to enter into an interlocal agreement with Tarrant County for pavement improvements on Schumac Lane from Hospital Parkway to Central Drive; and McLain Road between Cummings Drive to Cheek Sparger Road.

Motion approved 7-0-0. Mayor Boyter declared the motion carried.

### **6. Consider a resolution authorizing the City Manager or his designee to purchase 14 bullet-resistant shields from Galls, LLC through the Texas Purchasing Cooperative (BuyBoard) in an amount not to exceed \$63,000.**

Police Chief Jeff Williams presented information regarding this item. He discussed previous equipment purchases to help assist Police Department personnel with active shooter situations, which have increased 96 percent over the previous three years. He stated the Governor's office released funding for ballistic shields, which will be placed with front-line patrol vehicles and school resource officers. In response to questions from Council, Chief Williams confirmed the shields would be fully funded through the grant and stated they are rifle-rated, while the current shields are only rated for handguns.

Motioned by Councilmember Farco, seconded by Councilmember Gagliardi, to approve a resolution authorizing the City Manager or his designee to purchase 14 bullet-resistant shields from Galls, LLC through the Texas Purchasing Cooperative (BuyBoard) in an amount not to exceed \$63,000.

Motion approved 7-0-0. Mayor Boyter declared the motion carried.

### **7. Consider a resolution of the City Council of the City of Bedford, Texas, ordering a general election to be held on Saturday, May 6, 2023 for the purpose of electing persons to City Council, Place 4 and Place 6, with a term to expire May 2026; authorizing a**

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### **contract for election services with Tarrant County; and establishing the dates and times for early voting for such election.**

City Secretary Michael Wells presented information regarding this item, which is to order the General Election for Places 4 and 6 on the City Council for May 6, 2023. He stated the filing period began January 18 and runs through February 17, 2023. Early voting begins April 24 and ends on May 2, 2023. The early voting and election day polling locations in Bedford are the Library and the Pat May Center respectively; however, voters can vote at any Tarrant County early voting and election day location.

Motioned by Councilmember Steves, seconded by Councilmember Gagliardi, to approve a resolution of the City Council of the City of Bedford, Texas, ordering a general election to be held on Saturday, May 6, 2023 for the purpose of electing persons to City Council, Place 4 and Place 6, with a term to expire May 2026; authorizing a contract for election services with Tarrant County; and establishing the dates and times for early voting for such election.

Motion approved 7-0-0. Mayor Boyter declared the motion carried.

### **8. Consider a resolution adopting the goals of the Strategic Planning Session for calendar year 2023.**

City Manager Jimmy Stathatos updated the Council on items from the previous year's strategic plan. Items that were completed include the following: updating the Council's Mission Statement and Rules of Order and Procedure; developing a street improvement strategic plan; the appointment of a Charter Review Commission; updating the Master Parks, Trails and Bike Plan; improving the audio-visual performance at City Hall; creating a Public Arts Policy Program; finalizing the operational plan for The Center at Generations Park; conducting citizen surveys; evaluating a possible tax rate decrease versus a homestead exemption; using American Rescue Plan Act funding; and creating a Bedford Citizen's Academy.

Mr. Stathatos discussed items that are partially completed, including the following: conducting a Comprehensive Master Plan; updating the Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances; improving code enforcement; discussions on possible new Boards and Commissions; creating a capital asset strategic plan; Bedford Commons; economic development zones; a redevelopment strategic plan; the Performing Arts Center; the second phase of the Heritage Plaza at Generations Park; and City-wide wi-fi.

Mr. Stathatos presented information on proposed items for calendar year 2023, including: creating a redevelopment plan, especially for south Bedford; creating a signature festival; evaluating the Animal Shelter and determining best solutions; evaluating all possible options to provide a senior center; performing an asset audit; evaluating the need for a new city hall, as well as a funding mechanism that would not require new debt; exploring the possibility of building a fire station and training facility; evaluating alternate locations and/or possible construction for a new/enhanced Central Fire Station; evaluating the Multi-family Inspection Program; conducting a conversation/analysis about new boards and commissions; and consider calling for a charter election.

There was discussion on the items that were accomplished, the redevelopment plan including both residential and commercial components, and staff presenting periodic updates on the goals to Council.

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Motioned by Councilmember Dawkins, seconded by Councilmember Gagliardi, to approve a resolution adopting the goals of the Strategic Planning Session for calendar year 2023.

Motion approved 7-0-0. Mayor Boyter declared the motion carried.

### **9. Discussion regarding communication to residents affected by street improvements.** **\*\*This item requested by Councilmember Dawkins**

Councilmember Dawkins requested this item be placed on the agenda for discussion. She thanked Ms. Hightower for her earlier remarks regarding the Walter Street project. She discussed the improvements in communication with the second contractor and the City's street improvement plan. She stated the City's website did not have much information regarding the Walter Street project and asked that a timeline for such projects be put on the website in the future.

Public Works Director presented an overview of communication to residents on typical capital improvement projects. She stated once a contract is awarded, the contractor is required to provide notification to residents up to two weeks in advance. This is typically done through door hangers, with both the company's and the City's logo, as well as their contact number and the main number for Public Works. She stated the project inspector is on site every day and serves as the go-between to residents and the contractor.

In response to questions from Council, Ms. Taylor stated staff communicates to residents if anything out of the ordinary would occur with a project, including with trash and recycling. She stated staff works with the Communications Department by sending the construction schedule to be posted on social media and the City's website. Communications Director Molly Fox discussed a notification service through the City's website and adding construction projects as part of the service. Ms. Taylor stated the utilities were vetted and added to the scope of an upcoming CDBG project, unlike what was done prior to the Walter Street project. There was discussion on the City's involvement on CDBG projects and improving communication for such projects.

### **10. Mayor/Council Member Reports**

Mayor Boyter reported on the ribbon cutting for The Center at Generations Park and stated it was a proud and fantastic moment for the City.

### **11. City Manager/Staff Reports**

#### **a) Sewer concerns at Generations Park**

City Manager Jimmy Stathatos discussed concerns brought forward by a resident at the previous Council meeting about decisions related to the construction of The Center and its impact on the adjacent neighborhood's water and sewer system. He stated he is confident that everything was done correctly in looking at everything and talking to professionals. He discussed the requirement that The Center have an eight-inch sewer line compared to the six-inch lines from the neighborhood as well as the installation of a catch basin to allow the release of backwash from the pools at a controlled rate. He further discussed the addition of a wall and landscaping along the neighborhood due to concerns from residents.

In response to questions from Council, Dennis Haar with Halff Associates, the consulting engineer on the Generations Park project, confirmed there should not be concerns that something was overlooked with the discharge from The Center. He discussed the various options that were explored regarding the sewer, including the surge tank to mitigate discharge from the pool filters. Halff looked at the capacity of the existing system downstream and performed calculations to estimate capacity and ensure that The Center does not discharge more than the system can

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handle. Mr. Haar discussed the eight-inch sewer pipe going into the six-inch pipe and the effects slope has on pipe sizes. In response to further questions from Council, he confirmed that the discharge from the surge tank would not impact the toilets in the adjacent neighborhood as long as there is no blockage, and the pipes remain in good condition. There was discussion regarding the foreign object that had caused a blockage of the sewer line that was discussed at the previous meeting.

In response to further questions from Council, Mr. Haar stated he did not receive any instructions from staff or the City to cut corners regarding the sewer discharge. He stated the system is capable of handling peak sewer discharge from The Center, but not at the same time as the backwash from the pools, which is the reason for the surge tank where the release of the backwash can be scheduled. He discussed the reasoning for selecting the surge tank option, including that it was in the scope of the project. Mr. Haar stated he only outside improvements considered as part of the project were the water lines in Harwood Road and Forest Ridge Drive. He discussed the sewer lines in the adjacent neighborhood, which have post-construction lining that helps seal them and improves flow characteristics. He stated the discharge of water from the previous water park was to the main line on the east side of the creek and that there have not been any further issues since the removal of the blockage discussed previously.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a) **Pursuant to Section 551.072, to deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property – land acquisition for recreation purposes.**

Council convened into Executive Session pursuant to Section 551.072, to deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property – land acquisition for recreation purposes, at 8:07 p.m.

Council reconvened from Executive Session at 8:13 p.m.

### **12. Take any action necessary as a result of the Executive Session.**

Motioned by Councilmember Gagliardi, seconded by Councilmember Dawkins, to authorizing the City Manager. to enter into an agreement for the purchase of the Airport YMCA.

Motion approved 7-0-0. Mayor Boyter declared the motion carried.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Boyter adjourned the meeting at 8:14 p.m.

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Michael Boyter, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Michael Wells, City Secretary

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