

**Council Minutes August 10, 2021**

**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 10th day of August, 2021 with the following members present:**

Michael Boyter	Mayor
Amy Sabol	Mayor Pro Tem
Cindy Almendarez	Councilmembers
Dan Cogan	
Ruth Culver	
Rob Gagliardi	

constituting a quorum.

Staff present included:

Jimmy Stathatos	City Manager
Cliff Blackwell	Assistant City Manager
Bryn Meredith	City Attorney
Michael Wells	City Secretary
Kenny Overstreet	Public Works Director
Stephanie Ayers	Human Resources Director
Andrea Roy	Development Director
Jeff Williams	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**

Senior Pastor Dr. Andrew Nunley III of First United Methodist Church Bedford gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**OPEN FORUM**

Nobody signed up to speak during Open Forum.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF ITEMS BY CONSENT**

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City Manager Jimmy Stathatos presented an overview of the items on the consent agenda.

In response to questions from Council on Item #2, City Manager Jimmy Stathatos stated the Hurst-Eules-Bedford Independent School District pays \$85,000 per officer. Police Chief Jeff Williams stated the payment has been the same for several years and staff is examining making the costs more equitable in the future. He stated the officers are fully committed to working at the schools except for two to three weeks out of the year. Assistant City Manager Cliff Blackwell confirmed that there has been no cost recovery analysis done on the contract.

In response to questions from Council on Item #4, Human Resources Director Stephanie Ayers stated the City offers two High Deductible Health Plans (HDHP), by which employees must meet their deductible before benefits are paid, including prescriptions. The clinic is a \$40 copay for employees to visit a doctor for illnesses. She confirmed the rates have not changed, and stated the total cost depends on number of participants in the clinic, which is an optional benefit. Mr. Blackwell stated the City annually budgets less than \$400,000 for the clinic and it was originally implemented to prevent claims going against premiums.

Motioned by Councilmember Culver, seconded by Councilmember Gagliardi, to approve the following items by consent: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Motion approved 6-0-0. Mayor Boyter declared the motion carried.

- 1. Consider approval of the following City Council minutes:  
a) July 27, 2021 regular meeting**

This item was approved by consent.

- 2. Consider a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with the Hurst-Eules-Bedford Independent School District to provide three School Resource Officers for the 2021/2022 school year, in the amount of \$255,970.74, paid for by the District.**

This item was approved by consent.

- 3. Consider a resolution authorizing the City Manager to extend the current agreement with Reynolds Asphalt and Construction Company for the 2021 Street Mill Overlay/Reclamation at Various Locations Project from August 31, 2021 to September 30, 2021 utilizing the City of Grand Prairie's contract for services price agreement through the Master Interlocal cooperative purchasing agreement.**

This item was approved by consent.

- 4. Consider a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with Texas Health Physicians Group (THPG) for employee clinic services effective September 1, 2021.**

This item was approved by consent.

- 5. Receive the 2021 Ad Valorem Tax Roll from the Tarrant Appraisal District as certified by the Chief Appraiser Jeff Law.**

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This item was approved by consent.

### **6. Receive the certified anticipated collection rate from the Tarrant County Tax Assessor Collector for the City of Bedford, Texas.**

This item was approved by consent.

### **PERSONS TO BE HEARD**

#### **7. The following individuals requested to speak to the Council under Persons to be Heard:**

- a) William Dahlstrom (representing Gator Investments), 2323 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75201 - requests to speak to Council regarding the ordinance that restricts the location of establishments that can sell alcoholic beverages.**

Jonathan Vinson, Jackson Walker, L.L.P., 2323 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas – Mr. Vinson stated he was there in place of William Dahlstrom who was at a hearing in another City, and that they represent Gator Investments. He gave a background of the company and stated they are highly experienced operating and managing high-end retail centers, including two in Bedford. Mr. Vinson discussed Section 3.1 Schedule of Uses in the Zoning Ordinance related to package liquor stores, which are only permitted by a specific use permit (SUP) in the Master Highway Corridor Overlay District (MHC). He stated these regulations impact Gator Investment's two shopping centers in Bedford. He felt the regulations were highly restrictive geographically and have anti-competitive effects, and that the citizens are not well served by limiting stores to the MHC. He discussed modern, high-end liquor businesses and that they did well during the pandemic as people were limited in going to restaurants. He stated the City's 2010 Comprehensive Land Use Plan designates the areas Gator owns as commercial and that there are other commercial properties outside the MHC. He asked that Council task staff to look at the issue and possibly amend the ordinance to allow package liquor stores in commercial zoning districts perhaps with a SUP.

James Goldsmith, owner of Gator Investments, 7850 NW 146th Street, Miami Lakes, Florida – Mr. Goldsmith discussed the history of Gator Investments. He stated they choose suburban locations and cater to middle class and ethnic areas. He discussed their purchase of the Harwood Central Village Shopping Center in 2010 and that they convinced Kroger to stay and modernize their store. He stated that shopping centers need to have diversified tenant mix. He discussed their purchase of the Bedford Central Shopping Center and that they got Big Lots to renovate and modernize their store. He stated Gator does not want little package liquor stores but one that will occupy 5,000 square foot store and cater to the community. Unlike the bigger liquor stores, he does not want to compete with stores like Kroger regarding food, so they need a specialized operator. He discussed a liquor store drawing people to other parts of the shopping center and stated having a liquor store is critical and it hurts them competitively not being allowed to have them. He discussed the impact of the pandemic and inflation on food sales at restaurants compared to grocery stores.

In response to questions from Council regarding filling the empty storefronts, Mr. Goldsmith stated they have been getting businesses that would not make it and that they need ones that are sustainable. He discussed pre-pandemic occupancy of the shopping centers and older shopping centers having too much shop space for the anchor store.

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There was discussion on the impact of a liquor store on filling empty storefronts and regulations in other cities

Tarak Brahmabhatt, 957 Park Ridge Drive, Plano – Mr. Brahmabhatt stated he owns 14 Fossil Creek Liquor stores and he recently opened one in the City of Hurst. He discussed the SUP regulations to limit the number of liquor stores in cities in which they have opened stores. He stated they have a good opportunity for the site in Bedford.

- b) Sharon V. Burke, 3217 Versante Drive, Bedford, Texas 76021 - requests to speak to Council regarding airbnbs, littering, and thanking, honoring, and celebrating first responders.**

Ms. Burke was unable to attend the meeting.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- 8. Consider a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with AETNA for the City's employee medical and dental benefits effective October 1, 2021.**

Andrew Weeger with HUB International, the City's benefits consultant, presented an historical overview of the City's medical benefits. The City released a request for proposal (RFP) for medical providers the previous year and medical benefits were moved from Cigna to Aetna/Texas Health Aetna (THA), resulting in a 13 percent reduction in overall premiums. The buyup Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) was eliminated due to low membership and an Accountable Care Organization plan (ACO) plan through Aetna's high performing network was implemented. He stated there was not a need to issue another RFP as there are options to renew within the contract.

Mr. Weeger presented information on the health plan's performance. The loss ratio the previous year with Cigna was 74 percent and is now currently 68 percent; however, that number is probably closer to 75 percent with runout claims included. He presented an overview of the medical plans currently offered by the City, which are two High Deductible Health Plans (HDHP) including a THA plan and an Exclusive Provider Organization (EPO) plan. HUB proposes reintroducing copay plans that align with their municipal benchmarks, including a THA plan and an EPO plan. He stated currently there are 216 employees enrolled in the HDHP THA plan and 70 in the HDHP EPO plan.

Mr. Weeger stated the City currently has a total premium of almost \$2,700,000 and if there were no plan design changes, there would be a 1.4 percent increase to premiums. He discussed the City's current contributions with Aetna and to employees' Health Savings Accounts (HSA). He stated the City is funding 85.5 percent and the municipal benchmark is approximately 83 percent. He presented an overview of the proposed contributions, including recommended increases to HSA contributions to be in line with other cities. With all the changes, including the two new proposed plans, there would be a 9.1 percent increase in premiums, with the City still funding at 85.5 percent.

Mr. Weeger stated HUB recommends renewing with Aetna for dental insurance, for a 4.9 percent in premiums. Improvements to the plan include increases to the annual dental maximum and the orthodontia lifetime maximum. He discussed other lines of coverage that were in rate guarantees or had a rate pass so were not up for renewal.

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There was discussion regarding HUB’s municipal benchmarking; the net savings in premiums over the previous two years; scenarios for employees changing insurance plans; employees being able to contribute to their HSAs; and that the recommendations are accounted for in the upcoming proposed budget.

Motioned by Councilmember Culver, seconded by Councilmember Gagliardi, to approve a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement with AETNA for the City’s employee medical and dental benefits effective October 1, 2021.

Motion approved 6-0-0. Mayor Boyter declared the motion carried.

**9. Mayor/Council Member Reports**

No reports were given.

**10. City Manager/Staff Reports**

City Manager Jimmy Stathatos stated the budget work session is scheduled for the following Thursday at 5:00 p.m. He discussed the approval of the health insurance.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a) Pursuant to Section 551.072, to deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property:**
  - a. Real property for redevelopment purposes**

Executive Session was not held.

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

Executive Session was not held.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Boyter adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

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Michael Boyter, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Michael Wells, City Secretary