

Bedford, Ohio

April 25, 2011

Community Ward Meeting for Wards 5 & 6 was held at Bedford City Hall on Monday, April 25, 2011. Mayor Pocek called the meeting to order at 7:04 P.M.

Present: Council Members: Mayor Daniel Pocek, Marilyn Zolata, Paula Mizesak, Stan Koci, Greg Pozar, Don Saunders. Also Present: Clerk of Council Lorree Villers. Administration: City Manager Henry Angelo, Finance Director Frank Gambosi, Service Director Clint Bellar, Police Lt. Robert Kohn, Economic Development Director Mike Mallis, Park and Recreation Director Randy Lewis, Fire Chief Dave Nagy, Building Commissioner Phil Seyboldt.

Mayor Pocek welcomed all residents in attendance tonight and introduced Lorree Villers as the new Clerk of Council.

Ward 5 Councilman Pozar urged everyone to pay close attention to Senate Bill 5 because depending on its outcome it could affect the City's services to residents because of the budget cuts that may have to occur. He noted it cost approximately \$105,000 per day to run the City. He explained if each home paid \$2,400 in taxes the City received only \$600 and the balance went to the schools, library and other places. He added the City Manager, Mayor and Council were being fully conscience of the decisions that needed to be made.

Ward 6 Councilman Saunders said this ward was the heart of Bedford. He announced he was running for re-election this year. He reiterated the City funds were going to be limited because of the State budget cuts. He was very pleased that the City had an excellent record for getting grants to help with several projects. He welcomed any and all concerns from the residents.

Mayor Pocek explained if the tax budget passed there would be \$700,000 decrease over the next two (2) years. He also noted that the City's population was decreasing. In 1963 the population was 17,000 residents and to date there were currently 13,074 residents. He added there were 364 home foreclosures but only 65 were vacant. He thanked the residents for passing the Safety levy, which was very important.

City Manager Angelo assured everyone that the City staff worked very well as a team. He also thanked the residents for passing the Safety levy. He added there were eleven (11) employee positions that will not be filled in 2011. He added the City had made several cut backs such as: overtime, the sharing of the ladder truck with Maple Heights, the snow removal program to save on salt costs and other additional spending. Mr. Bellar said two (2) years ago, the majority of Cuyahoga County cities joined in a sensible salting program where salt was applied at only stop signs, main intersections and secondary roads.

Mr. Angelo showed a PowerPoint presentation highlighting all city departments and briefly explained their functions.

Police Department: Mr. Angelo said the Police Department was beginning to host regular meetings in an effort to hear the public's thoughts and concerns. Some of the topics that were brought up for discussion was dogs not being on a leash and running at large, animal defecation, and semi-trucks unloading cars on Broadway and Rockside. He also pointed out the new design for the police cruisers.

Building Department: Mr. Angelo said the Building Department oversaw the home rehabilitation program. The City was successful in obtaining two grants to assist in this program. He spoke of grants that the City received which helped with the rehab of Presidential District, Lincoln and Woodrow homes.

He explained if a house was purchased in Bedford and the buyer agreed to live in Bedford for five (5) years they would receive a 10% discount. He said some of these houses just needed simple fixes not major renovations. He said the City was going to apply for a third round of Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds. He listed several homes that were currently for sale: Belle, West Grace, West Glendale, Washington, and two on Lincoln. Two other homes for sale are on Heather and Darlington, which are being sold "as is".

New Website: Mr. Mallis explained to the audience the new website [www.bedfordoh.gov](http://www.bedfordoh.gov). He said the City staff was currently working on designing their own department webpages. He thought the launch date would be the end of April 2011. He explained the City staff would be able to update their own department pages in-house so the information would be current. Some of the features included an emergency notification message box, e-news sign-up, calendar information, and latest news to improve community outreach. He added the City currently had a Twitter account and we were currently working on setting up a City Facebook page.

New Water Bill: Mr. Angelo explained the current water bill had an area located on the bill that allowed the City or other organizations to get additional information to approximately 5,000 residents. He pointed out this was a good way to get information to a large amount of residents for a fee. He also explained on the back of the water bill there was a listing of ways to pay the bill and tips on how to find a water leak in your house. He stated even non-profit organizations could insert a flyer in the water bill mailing, which also had a fee because the City could not absorb the costs to advertise.

Presidential District Reconstruction and Enhancement Project: Mr. Angelo was happy to announce that the City was one (1) of only two (2) cities in the county to be awarded a \$276,000 grant through Cuyahoga County's CDBG program. He said the total project cost was approximately \$300,000, which included the resurfacing of Woodrow and Adams Street in 2010 and the installation of welcome banners and historic street signs the spring of 2011. He said the City wanted to brand this area of the City.

Rockside Road Reconstruction: Mr. Angelo stated the City was not happy with the quality of work that Karvo Construction did in 2010, which would be fixed at their expense in 2011. He added the whole project was a four (4) month process that included three (3) sections of the City; Broadway to Center, Center to Northfield and Northfield to Bartlett. He explained the concrete below the intersection of Center & Rockside was in very poor condition and the contractor wasn't able to stay on schedule in 2010 so the contractor was not able to finish what was expected of them.

Broadway Culvert Repair: Mr. Angelo explained the City was awarded a \$600,000 grant to replace the deteriorated culvert on Broadway near the Subaru and Honda dealerships. He said the construction for this area would be finished in July 2011. He announced the traffic flow would be one (1) lane in both directions until the project was completed.

Railroad Crossing Enhancement Project: Mr. Angelo said this project involved \$750,000 in upgrades to North Park, Willis and Powers. He said the project was scheduled for the three (3) weekends in June because the train would run only Monday through Friday. He said the roadways would be closed during the construction and detours will be posted throughout the City. He added South Park and Monroe crossings would be permanently closed.

Recreation Department: Mr. Angelo said the City was currently preparing for a \$35,000 grant application to revitalize the Palmetto Tot Lot area. He added the City had previously received two (2) others grants for upgrades.

Auto Mile District: Mr. Angelo said the City had applied for a \$150,000 grant through the County to enhance the Auto Mile District and to "brand" the Auto Mile area. He explained this project would include multiple monuments, digital signs and landscaping. He said the dealerships had spent approximately \$4,000,000 to \$5,000,000 in upgrades and they were committed in staying in Bedford and there were approximately 1,700 employed at these dealerships.

Vincentian Convent: Mr. Angelo noted the Villa has been up For Sale since April 2010 and currently had no listing price but he understood the property was appraised in November 2010. He said the City was still waiting to hear of the appraisal value. He added the City had been working with the Sisters of Charity, headquarters in Cincinnati, Ohio, and most of the nuns had been relocated to that area. He informed everyone that the Cleveland Diocese had nothing to do with this closing.

World Changers: Mr. Angelo explained at the end of July 2011, 200-250 students would be rehabilitating some of the Bedford area homes. He said there were no economic guidelines for these projects but rather a question of need. He hoped this group could finish approximately 20 projects in the following areas: Bedford, Bedford Heights, Walton Hills and Oakwood. He noted the school system had agreed to house the 200+ students. The types of projects to be done by the students would be some painting, handicap ramps, gutters, steps, roofs and these types of improvements. He added that there was no City funds involved but the City was accepting donations for the costs of materials; however, the homeowner would most likely have to contribute to the cost of supplies.

Prescription Drug Program: Mayor Pocek explained the prescription drug program offered in partnership with the National League of Cities, which was a free program available to Bedford residents. He said there was an average of a 20% savings for the residents for their prescriptions. He said there were no income requirements or standards for this card and the cards were available at City Hall, local banks, the library, and recreation center. He added local pharmacies that were participating were CVS, Walgreen's, Wal-Mart and Giant Eagle. He urged everyone to take advantage of the savings.

Mr. Bellar and Mrs. Zolata also explained that Dominion also had a monthly program that residents could sign-up for a monthly fee for other home repairs.

Mayor Pocek opened the meeting to questions from citizens.

Mr. O'Neil had concerns about the rental property next door to him. He was very unhappy that his complaints hadn't been addressed for several months. Mr. Seyboldt explained that the City does cite the landlords but sometimes they don't show for their court hearing and this drug the problem out longer than necessary. He added that it sometimes took several months to get the landlord into court if they even showed. He said the City was at the mercy of the Court. Mr. O'Neil thought the City hadn't addressed his complaints accordingly. Mr. Pozar assured Mr. O'Neil that he had walked the property personally and understood the reason for his complaints and passed on the information to the appropriate departments.

There were several concerns about the flooding of the residents' basements. Mr. Angelo said he was aware that there were 45 residents' basements that had flooding problems and the City was working on a solution. He urged the residents to let the City know if they had any flooding issues. Mayor Pocek added the average age of the City sewer system was 100 years old. Mrs. Mizesak also asked the residents not to

throw their branches and/or blow their grass clippings into the streets so the debris won't clog the City's storm sewers. The Mayor thought the residents should know the dates of when the City was doing brush pick-up so take advantage of this service.

There was discussion regarding the removal of the Adams Street construction street sign. Mr. Bellar and Mr. Mallis explained the sign had to stay in place until the permanent street signs were in place. Mr. Bellar also explained there was a "punch list" that had to be completed before the project was to be considered finished.

Mr. Plusak was very pleased with the professional and responsible services the recreation department provided for his family and the residents. He added the parks and recreation staff did a great job.

Another resident had concerns about the skate boarders at Central School playing their music after dark. Lt. Kohn stressed that the Police Department can't do anything or increase patrols if the residents don't call the Police Department. He added that the Police Department would increase patrols in this area.

Ms. Williams requested motion sensor lights be installed on the path on City Hall property. Mr. Angelo suggested all residents should walk on the sidewalks where the lights were installed for their own safety.

Mr. O'Neil had another concern because he noticed the majority on the residents on his street did not use the blue recycling bags. Mr. Angelo said residents were aware of the bags but this would be on the City water bill and the City website. Mayor Pocek and Mr. Angelo explained that the residents were also not allowed to leave their garbage cans out and the violators would be given a warning and a citation.

Mr. Seyboldt explained there was a Rental Inspection Program where the property would be inspected when the tenant changed. He said the landlord submitted to the city the information of their tenants.

Mr. Dick Bender explained that his neighbor was training two (2) pit-bull dogs in the middle of the street while holding up traffic. Lt. Kohn again stressed the residents need to call the Police Department when things like this happened. Mr. Bender said he didn't want to call the police in fear of retaliation. The City understood his position.

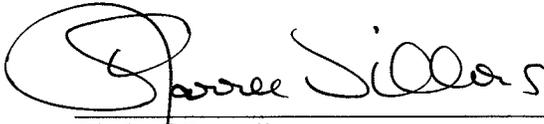
Lt. Kohn said the Police Department was being more aggressive with the kids that were walking in the middle of the streets daring or being defiant to the motor vehicle drivers. He said the kids were being cited and then having to appear in Juvenile Court and if they were cited over the summer months they would be suspended from school after the new school year begun. He noted the schools were working in conjunction with the police department on this negative behavior. He stressed the Police Department had "0" tolerance for this type of poor attitude. Mayor Pocek said the City had asked the schools to warn the kids in hopes that they would think twice before acting in this manner.

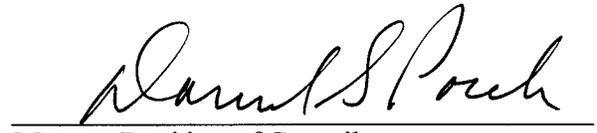
Mr. Pozar explained the impact the State shortfall could have on the City. He hoped this would not affect the City services to the residents. He added that the City had some difficult decisions before them.

Mr. Saunders explained the City was the same as the everyday normal household and it was a tough economy. He stated Bedford had overcome the bad times and would move forward. He was proud to say that Bedford had the highest bond rating in Cuyahoga County and he strongly suggested the residents rely on Council, the Mayor and the City Manager to take care of City business.

Mayor Pocek and Mr. Angelo closed the meeting thanking all the residents for their support.

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 P.M.

  
Clerk of Council

  
Mayor – President of Council