

Bedford City Council met in a Special Work Session at Bedford City Hall on Thursday, January 26, 2017 at 6:08 p.m.

Present: Council Members: Mayor Stan Koci, Sandy Spinks, Walter Genutis, Marilyn Zolata, Donald Saunders, Greg Pozar and Paula Mizesak. Absent: None. Also Present: Clerk of Council Lorree Villers. Administration: City Manager Michael Mallis and Law Director John Montello. Tom Speaks and Krista Rodriguez, Impact Group. Residents: Beth Housiaux-Stewart, 93 Avalon, Kathy Williams and a few others.

Tom Speaks and Krista Rodriguez, Impact Group, were present to give an update from the Focus Group & Phone Poll regarding the income tax increase levy. The hiring of Impact Group was to provide marketing and strategic services to promote all aspects of the income tax levy. Mr. Speaks explained there was 320 respondents with a strong and positive response from the residents that wanted the quality of life to continue in the City. Overall the Police at 75% and Fire at 82% safety services were very important to the residents with the Recreation Department swimming pool at 15% being the least important. A self-explanatory PowerPoint presentation that showed the percentages for each question asked is attached for reference.

Discussions were held that it was impossible to inform each and every resident that the City was considering an income tax increase. It was determined that not all the residents were aware of the following: the Focus Group previously held on January 10, 2017, the recent phone poll survey, the dwindling financial situation the City was facing for various reasons, the need to get a plan in place to address the crumbling infrastructure needs, the much needed programs for streets and sidewalks replacement and the need to hire three more Police Officers. The option of whether this would be a five (5) year increase or permanent increase was not made clear. The City was not going to reduce the rubbish fee at this time; however, it could be addressed in the future. It was determined there was a slight difference in cost between a ½% increase and a ¾% increase. Mr. Mallis explained the City was not in the position to borrow anymore funds until 2022 and 2025. Everyone knew at the end of the day there were only two options: an income tax increase or employee lay-offs, reductions of services and closing of some items at Ellenwood Recreation Center. Mr. Speaks pointed out according to the results the ½% income tax increase was more favorable so asking for a ¾% increase might affect the final outcome. Council and the Administration had already determined the employees to be laid-off, the services to be cut and the programs that would be cut. It was determined at the end of the day it was up to the voters on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mayor Koci informed Council the two items on the Special Council agenda needed to be considered for amendments and finalized this evening:

ORDINANCE NO. 9467-17 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 178.012 "PURPOSES OF TAX; RATE" AND 178.013 "ALLOCATION OF FUNDS" OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES INCREASING THE INCOME TAX RATE BY THREE QUARTER PERCENT (3/4%) TO THREE PERCENT (3%) EFFECTIVE ON JULY 1, 2017 IN THE CITY BEDFORD AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

RESOLUTION NO. 2509-17 A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE CUYAHOGA COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS TO PLACE UPON THE BALLOT OF THE PRIMARY ELECTION TO BE HELD ON MAY 2, 2017, A QUESTION TO THE BEDFORD ELECTORATE TO INCREASE THE RATE OF THE BEDFORD CITY INCOME TAX BY THREE QUARTERS PERCENT (3/4%) TO A TOTAL OF THREE PERCENT (3%) FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYMENT OF CURRENT EXPENSES AND THE GENERAL OPERATION OF THE CITY OF BEDFORD AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Mayor Koci explained Council had to pick one out of the three options that was presented to them this evening at the Work Session: #1) the original Ordinance and Resolution as it was presented for the two readings which was a ¾% increase to 3% which included three additional Officers with no tax credit, #2) a ¾% increase to 3% which included three additional Officers with a tax credit increase, or #3) a ½% to 2 ¾% with no additional Officers and with no tax credit. Before Council were the three options to choose from; they needed to determine what direction they wanted to go. It was determined option #2 would be the direction. (See attached options)

Motion made by Pozar and seconded by Mizesak to go into executive session to discuss Litigation. The roll was called. Vote – Yeas: Zolata, Koci, Genutis, Mizesak, Saunders, Spinks, Pozar. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.

At 7:04 p.m., Bedford City Council, City Manager Mike Mallis, Law Director John Montello, Finance Director Frank Gambosi, Tom Speaks and Krista Rodriguez went into executive session to discuss Litigation per Mr. Montello.

Motion by Saunders and seconded by Spinks to adjourn executive session. The roll was called. Vote – Yeas: Genutis, Pozar, Saunders, Zolata, Spinks, Koci, Mizesak. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.

Executive Session adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Discussion of the Special Meeting agenda was concluded.

Special Work Session adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

  
Clerk of Council

  
Mayor – President of Council