

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA
February 26, 2013**

The Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, West Virginia met in regular session February 26, 2013 at 6 p.m. in the Municipal Boardroom. Present were Mayor Linda K. Whalen; Directors Mary Frances Brammer, Deb Sarver & Pete Sternloff; City Manager Jim Ferguson; City Attorney Brian Cochran and City Clerk Helen Mitchell. Director Tom Blevins was not in attendance.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE

The Invocation was given by Gene Wyatt, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Linda Whalen welcomed everyone to the meeting.

MINUTES

Minutes of the February 12, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved as presented on a motion by Director Pete Sternloff, seconded by Director Mary Frances Brammer.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

City Manager Jim Ferguson discussed that he had met with the Department of Highways and utility representatives regarding the Martin Luther King Bridge renovation. Manager Ferguson advised that many things need to be completed before the construction can begin, including the complete design and final plan. Ferguson explained that the final engineering for the project is due at the end of the summer with construction bids set to go out in the fall, and if all goes well construction will begin in the spring of next year.

Mayor Linda Whalen asked City Manager Ferguson to ensure that the city is not expected to pay more than originally pledged to the project. Mayor Whalen said, "I think we need to get on record that when we started this project, we were only supposed to pay 20 percent of \$1.5 million, which was around \$300,000." Mayor Whalen explained that after they evaluated the project, they raised the price to \$6 million, and we need to get an agreement to insure that they know we cannot pay 20 percent of \$6 million.

City Attorney Cochran said that \$200,000 was fronted to the city by Norfolk Southern and the city would pay the remaining \$100,000. Attorney Cochran said that part of the agreement with the railroad is that construction has to begin by a certain date, or we have to give the money back. Attorney Cochran advised that the city should look into whether or not an extension on that agreement will be needed.

City Manager Jim Ferguson read a letter from Princeton Community Hospital commending the Bluefield Fire Department on the performance and professionalism that was exhibited when attending a fire at the Behavioral Pavilion in Bluefield, WV.

Manager Ferguson presented the letter to Fire Chief Jeff Warden and extended the city's appreciation to members of the fire department.

Mayor Whalen discussed information regarding extending the home rule pilot program. Mayor Whalen and Director Sternloff encouraged local residents to contact their state lawmakers about extending home rule to more municipalities in West Virginia.

Mayor Whalen said, "It is extremely important that our legislators support this home rule legislation, as it puts ordinances and laws in the hands of local people rather than in the hands of the state. We are asking our legislators to open the door for more cities."

Director Sternloff said, "Cities have more flexibility regarding certain laws within their community, and right now we are a very tightly controlled environment in West Virginia."

City Manager Ferguson asked City Attorney Cochran to look into a recent WV Supreme Court ruling upholding a municipal ban on owning pit bulls within the city limits.

ACTION ITEMS

Treasurer, Ken Mulkey presented a report of balances due to and due from accounts and asked for board approval to make adjustments to the accounts as presented. Treasurer Mulkey said that several adjustments have been made reducing the net position from \$120,000 at month-end on 01/31/2013 to the current balance of \$17,081.87. Mulkey said this balance would continue to be adjusted to zero out the accounts. The accounts that adjustments will be made to and from are listed below:

Balances of Due To and Due from Accounts at October 31, 2012

-	001 003 1990 00000	Stabilization Fund
-	001 035 1990 00000	Task Force Fund
(22.89)	001 039 1990 00000	Holiday of Lights Beautification
2,396.35	001 040 1990 00000	Commission
(2,493.64)	001 041 1990 00000	Blue Gray Horse Show / Ridge Runner Fund
-	001 044 1990 00000	Fine Arts Commission
165.83	001 062 1990 00000	Recycling Grant
26,105.15	001 088 1990 00000	Transit
19,344.79	001 094 1990 00000	Credit Union
6,302.07	001 095 1990 00000	Retiree Insurance Fund
51,797.66	001 000 1010 00000	Cash - General

Balance Changes from October 31, 2012 to January 31, 2013

-	001 003 1990 00000	Stabilization Fund
-	001 035 1990 00000	Task Force Fund
-	001 039 1990 00000	Holiday of Lights Beautification
5,105.88	001 040 1990 00000	Commission
-	001 041 1990 00000	Blue Gray Horse Show / Ridge Runner Fund
-	001 044 1990 00000	Fine Arts Commission

(6.79)	001 062 1990 00000	Recycling Grant
28,716.70	001 088 1990 00000	Transit
-	001 094 1990 00000	Credit Union
-	001 095 1990 00000	Retiree Insurance Fund

33,815.79

Balances at January 31, 2013

-	001 003 1990 00000	Stabilization Fund
-	001 035 1990 00000	Task Force Fund
(22.89)	001 039 1990 00000	Holiday of Lights Beautification Commission
(2,709.53)	001 040 1990 00000	Blue Gray Horse Show / Ridge Runner Fund
(2,493.64)	001 041 1990 00000	Fine Arts Commission
-	001 044 1990 00000	Recycling Grant
172.62	001 062 1990 00000	Transit
(2,611.55)	001 088 1990 00000	Credit Union
19,344.79	001 094 1990 00000	Retiree Insurance Fund
6,302.07	001 095 1990 00000	

17,981.87

Director Pete Sternloff moved to approve the treasurer’s report as presented, seconded by Director Mary Frances Brammer. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

A motion to hold a contest to rename the former Colonial Intermodal Project with a \$200.00 prize being awarded to the winning entrant was made by Director Mary Frances Brammer, seconded by Director Pete Sternloff. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARD AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Director Pete Sternloff commended the Bluefield Beautification Commission on the “Winter Warmer” event and thanked Cole Harley Davidson for providing the space for the event. Director Sternloff said the community came out and supported this event in a big way.

Director Mary Frances Brammer thanked everyone for attending the board meeting, and asked that everyone practice saying something good about the city. Director Brammer asked for support for the Bluefield Beavers.

Mayor Whalen congratulated WVVA on winning the Station of the Year award. Mayor Whalen congratulated Frank Brady for winning the Mel Burka award, which is Broadcaster of the Year, and two station employees for winning creative awards at the WV Broadcaster’s Association Meeting.

Mayor Whalen also congratulated Adventure Radio on taking home more awards than any radio station in the state.

Mayor Whalen congratulated Brandon Eldridge, who is the first student at Bluefield High School who has received a gold medal for wrestling in the state championship.

City Manager Ferguson commented on the economic development plan (Blue Momentum) that the city is supporting. Manager Ferguson thanked Allen Peacock for his presentation regarding Blue Momentum at the Rotary Club meeting.

City Manager Ferguson updated the board on renovations taking place at the Herb Sims Youth Center and the City Auditorium.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Joanne Boileau representing the Children's Home Society asked the city to consider being an applicant for the JAG grant to help support youth mentoring programs. Ms. Boileau said the City was the applicant last year and they were awarded the grant. Ms. Boileau said the mentoring program serves all of Mercer County.

Mayor Linda Whalen asked Ms. Boileau to give all information regarding the grant to the city manager to be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Art Riley representing downtown merchants thanked the police department and City Manager Ferguson for enforcing parking rules in the downtown area.

Mr. Riley also asked the board about plans for the Clean Sweep program in the city.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER

- "Vaudeville Las Vegas" - Summit Theatre - March 1, 2013
- "Driving Miss Daisy" - The Ramsey Auditorium - February 23 - February, 28; Matinee - Feb. 24
- "Black History Month" - Bluefield State College - February 5th thru 27th

Director Pete Sternloff moved that the Board retire into Executive Session only to return to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Director Mary Frances Brammer. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

Hearing no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Helen L. Mitchell, City Clerk

Linda K. Whalen, Mayor