

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA
October 8, 2013**

The Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, West Virginia met in regular session, October 8, 2013 at 12 p.m. in the Municipal Boardroom. Present were Mayor Tom Cole, Vice Mayor Barbara Smith, Directors Chuck McGonagle and Ellen Light, City Manager Jim Ferguson, City Attorney Brian Cochran, CFO Ken Mulkey and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey. Director Michael Gibson was absent.

Mayor Tom Cole welcomed everyone to the meeting.

INVOCATION / PLEDGE

The Invocation was given by Pastor James Palmer of the Mr. Zion Baptist Church, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Director Ellen Light.

MINUTES

Minutes of the September 24, 2013 meeting were approved with corrections on a motion by Director Ellen Light, seconded by Vice Mayor Barbara Smith.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

City Manager Jim Ferguson introduced the Chairman of Gary Bowling's House of Art, Jeri Ball. Ms. Ball announced plans to temporarily close the House of Art at the Bluefield Arts Center and the board is presently seeking a new building for relocation. Two reasons noted for the move were the third floor is not convenient for handicap access and the house wants a more visible location. Ms. Ball presented the Board of Directors with a document stating the accomplishments of the new board and a CD of Gary Bowling's House of Art. An auction has been scheduled for November 16 and many items at the gallery are now discounted. Ms. Ball invited everyone to visit the Halloween House Hillbilly Horror located at the Bluefield Arts Center.

City Manager Ferguson stated seventy (70) building permits were issued in September, totaling \$451,206.

City Manager Ferguson reported American Water Company continues to make improvements around the City. Improvements to main water lines and water hydrants will total over one million dollars when completed.

City Manager Ferguson stated Ron Martin of Grants Supermarket was issued a 250K building permit for parking lot improvements.

City Manager Ferguson stated Public Works continues progress with the sidewalk replacement from Genoa to Clifford Street.

City Manager Ferguson brought to everyone's attention the recent mailing of the quarterly bill for city services and annual vehicle fee. The quarterly bill for city services is the responsibility of the homeowner. The annual vehicle fee is the responsibility of the person

who is registered by the Mercer County Assessor's office. It was necessary to send two separate bills because the homeowner and the vehicle owner are not always the same.

City Manager Ferguson reminded citizens of the following:

- City Offices will be closed on Monday, October 14 in observance of Columbus Day.
- Business owners that have not renewed or received their 2013/2014 business license should contact City Hall at 304.327.5568. Business license renewals were due June 30.
- Halloween will be observed on October 31 from 6pm – 8pm. Those residents participating should turn on their porch light.

City Manager Ferguson recently met with the Bluefield, Virginia Town Manager, Mike Watson. The foundation of the conversation was centered on how the City and Town could work, grow and prosper together. A commitment was made for the City and Town to renew their marriage vows with a 90th anniversary celebration in July, on the state line near the City Park.

ACTION ITEMS

Vice Mayor Barbara Smith made a motion to table the appointment to fill the seat on the Fireman's Civil Service Commission; seconded by Director Chuck McGonagle. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

Director Ellen Light made a motion to reappoint R.W. Wilkinson to the Library Board of Directors for a five (5) year term- October 8, 2013/2018; seconded by Vice Mayor Barbara Smith. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

Director Chuck McGonagle made a motion to reappoint Robert Mustard and Craig Hammond to the Public Housing Commission for a five (5) year term – October 8, 2013/2018; seconded by Director Ellen Light. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

Vice Mayor Barbara Smith made a motion to reappoint Carl "Tripper" Thomas, III to the Planning Commission for a three (3) year term- October 8, 2013/2016; seconded by Director Chuck McGonagle. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARD AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Director Chuck McGonagle said he felt Gary Bowling has been an asset to the City and hopes that a person with an empty building will come forward. Director McGonagle stated he felt Mr. Bowling has been helpful with our tourism and wants to see Mr. Bowling remain in the downtown area if possible.

Director Ellen Light praised Jeri Ball, Kathy Kennedy and the gallery board for all of their hard work and dedication as volunteers to the House of Art. Director Light announced the Bluefield Alliance of the Arts is currently planning the city's 125th anniversary celebration.

Vice Mayor Barbara Smith reminded everyone that October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Vice Mayor Smith presented Fire Chief Jeff Warden with a new tablecloth

to use during ceremonies, to replace the one that has been used since 2010 at the Fireman's table.

Mayor Cole stated that Director Michael Gibson is still recovering at Roanoke Memorial Hospital but has improved. Pete Sternloff stated he had spoken to a family member who reported Mr. Gibson will soon be moved to a rehabilitation center across the street from the hospital. Mayor Cole asked everyone to keep Director Gibson in their thoughts and prayers.

Mayor Cole said the response to "lunch with the Mayor" has been very positive. There has been a good response and he is getting good feedback at the luncheons. Mayor Cole requested that citizens think about and bring to the table possible solutions concerning the issues they wish to discuss.

Mayor Cole stated he wants to keep the lines of communication open with the Town of Bluefield, Va. and the City of Bluefield. Mayor Cole feels both Boards are very interested in working together.

Mayor Cole reminded everyone Halloween will be on October 31 from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants, asked when leaf removal would begin in the City. City Manager Ferguson said Public Works had begun the seasonal leaf pick up and the truck is being dispatched as needed.

Mr. Riley asked how long a vehicle could remain on corners, yards and curbs. Attorney Brian Cochran stated it could depend on the circumstances, sections of Article VII: Parking – Section 40-256 was referenced. Concerned citizens should report illegal parking to the police department or code enforcement.

Mr. Riley expressed his concern about the potential loss of Gary Bowing's House of Art. Mr. Riley stated the Downtown Merchants are willing to help in keeping the business located in Bluefield. Any business that could donate a building and utilities is requested to contact Gary Bowling or a member of the gallery board.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER

Halloween will be observed October 31 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Director Chuck McGonagle moved that the Board retire into Executive Session only to return to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Vice Mayor Barbara Smith. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Thomas J. Cole, Mayor