

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA  
February 14, 2012**

The Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, West Virginia met in regular session February 14, 2012 at 12 p.m. in the Municipal Boardroom. Present were Mayor Linda K. Whalen; Directors, Mary Frances Brammer, Tom Blevins, Deb Sarver and Pete Sternloff; City Manager Andy Merriman; City Attorney Brian Cochran and City Clerk Helen L. Mitchell.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE**

The Invocation was given by Director Mary Frances Brammer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Linda Whalen welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the January 24, 2012 meeting were unanimously approved as presented on a motion by Director Mary Frances Brammer and seconded by Director Pete Sternloff.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

City Manager Andy Merriman advised the Board that an application would be submitted to Region I for the Small Cities Block Grant for demolition purposes. Manager Merriman asked the Board to set a public hearing for the Small City Cities Block Grant for Tuesday, February 28, 2012 at 5:30 p.m.

Director Pete Sternloff moved to set the public hearing for February 28, 2012 at 5:30 p.m., seconded by Director Tom Blevins. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Whalen explained that when Governor Manchin was elected, he requested that the Small Cities Block Grant Funds be utilized only for new sewer and water projects.

Whalen said the City makes application for demolition funds each year but they are not awarded.

City Manager Merriman advised that the City was looking into purchasing the property located at the corner of Princeton Avenue and Bland Street.

Manager Merriman explained that the purchase of the property would allow the City to install signage for the Coal Heritage Trail in the area, and also pursue a beautification project that would include an urban park concept. Merriman asked the Board for permission to allow staff to begin exploring the property deed and other legal review for the purchase of this property.

Director Tom Blevins moved to allow City Manager Merriman to move forward with the deed research and legal review for the proposed purchase of the property located on Princeton Avenue and Bland Street, seconded by Director Pete Sternloff. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

City Manager Merriman advised that the action item for authorization to apply Matz/Colonial property as required match for the Intermodal Project had been tabled for the meeting today because a meeting had been set up for Wednesday with State Transportation Secretary Paul Mattox. City Manager Merriman said that hopefully a different credit can be applied as the city's required match for the project instead of the property.

David Hafley representing Parsons and Brinckerhoff the firm selected to develop the design for the Intermodal project explained to the Board that \$120,000 was needed to drawdown the grant of \$600,000 in federal funds that was secured in 2009 by U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall for the transit center project.

Mr. Hafley advised that time was running out for the city to drawdown the federal funds. Hafley said that he and city officials would be meeting with Secretary Mattox to ask for an award of \$120,000 in toll-revenue tax credits to Bluefield. If the toll-revenue tax credits are approved, it would expedite the drawdown of the federal funds and the grant would not be at risk of being lost.

After discussion, City Attorney Brian Cochran recommended that a motion be made to amend the action item to include the title as being the First Reading of an ordinance authorizing the City of Bluefield to encumber additional real estate for the purpose of matching funds for the proposed Intermodal project.

Director Pete Sternloff made a motion to amend the action item regarding the Matz/Colonial property as required match for the Intermodal project to include the title as being the First Reading of An Ordinance Authorizing the City of Bluefield to Encumber Municipal Real Estate for the Purpose of Matching Funds for the Proposed Colonial Intermodal project, seconded by Director Tom Blevins. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

City Manager Merriman asked the Board to approve a request from Three Springs Owners Assoc, Inc. dated January 12, 2012 to dedicate to the City of Bluefield certain portions of Three Springs Drive.

Director Pete Sternloff moved to approve the request from Three Springs Owners Assoc., Inc to dedicate certain portions of Three Springs Drive to the City of Bluefield, seconded by Director Mary Frances Brammer. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

City Manager Andy Merriman read into the record the Second Reading of an Ordinance Vacating, Abandoning and Annuling a Portion of that Certain Tract or Parcels of Land, being a 20 Ft. x 300 Ft. Alley between Pine and Spruce Streets; and a Portion of an Alley being an Approximate 20 Ft. Wide and approximately 209.93 Ft. long on the North side of the Alley, and approximately 207.08 Ft. long on the South side of the Alley, and being part of the Alley running from Pine Street to Cherry Street, all situated in the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia, and being more particularly described below.

A motion to approve the second reading of the ordinance as presented was made by Director Pete Sternloff, seconded by Director Tom Blevins. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

City Manager Merriman advised that the next action item was a request for approval to fill the position of an Economic Development Director.

City Attorney Cochran advised this motion should include the wording that this position would report directly to the Board and not the City Manager.

Director Pete Sternloff made a motion that approval be given to fill a position of Economic Development Director with this position reporting directly to the Board of Directors and not being under the supervision of the City Manager, seconded by Director Tom Blevins. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

## **REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARD AND STANDING COMMITTEES**

City Manager Merriman advised that bids will be out later this week on the Scott Street Parking Garage demolition.

Director Mary Frances Brammer thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Director Brammer said on this day of love; tell somebody that you love them.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Art Riley representing downtown merchants asked questions regarding the amount of money left in the Coal Heritage Grant. City Manager Merriman advised when this information is available, he will advise the Board.

Mr. Riley asked if the position of Economic Development Director was a budgeted position. Mayor Whalen replied yes.

Mayor Whalen asked for a motion for the Board to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues.

Director Tom Blevins moved that the Board retire into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues and they may or may not return to regular session, seconded by Director Mary Frances Brammer. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER**

- 2012 Winter Warmer - Sponsored by Bluefield Beautification Commission - Cole Harley Davidson – tickets - February 18, 2012 - 3 p.m. – 7 p.m. - \$25.00. For information call (304) 320-2654
- Vaudeville at the Summit - Bluefield Area Arts Center - February 17-19 & 24-26

The Board returned from Executive Session and hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Helen L. Mitchell, City Clerk

Linda K. Whalen, Mayor