

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA
August 27, 2013**

The Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, West Virginia met in regular session August 27, 2013 at 6 p.m. in the Municipal Boardroom. Present were Mayor Tom Cole; Vice Mayor Barbara Smith; Directors Chuck McGonagle, Ellen Light and Michael Gibson; City Manager Jim Ferguson; City Attorney Brian Cochran; Treasurer Ken Mulkey and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey.

INVOCATION / PLEDGE

The Invocation was given by James Palmer, President of the Greater Bluefield Ministerial Association, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Vice Mayor Barbara Smith.

MINUTES

Minutes of the August 13, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Director Ellen Light, seconded by Director Chuck McGonagle.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- City Manager Jim Ferguson stated AEP has completed the electrical infrastructure improvements on Raleigh Street and should the street ready to cap with asphalt in the next few days. AEP will cross Federal Street next and then move up Bland Street. AEP will be working in conjunction with Swope Construction with the project that is occurring on Commerce Street.
- The Public Works Department has been busy painting the strips for diagonal parking, painting curbs and weeding. They have cleaned up alleyways, used ninety tons (90) of asphalt to patch holes and have demolished twenty-eight (28) properties. The city has eighty-six (86) condemned properties left for demolition.
- The Rotary Club is working with the Bluefield Beautification Commission in making improvements to the Rotary Green Park located on Bland Road and Genoa Street. A decorative railing is being installed around the park. City Manager Ferguson thanked Mary Raub, the Beautification Commission and the Rotary Club for working together on this project.
- City Manager Ferguson asked Lori Mills, coordinator of the Ridge Runner to give an update on the status of the Ridge Runner. Ms. Mills reported the following:
 - Open April 1st – Sept 30th
 - To date we have had 10,428 riders
 - We were closed 7 days due to rain
 - Hours are from 12 noon – 6:00 pm
 - Open Saturday and Sunday- closed holidays
 - Private train rentals are available – 4 hours (\$250)
 - Sweatshirts are now on sale - \$8.00 or 2 for \$14.00
 - Website - ridgerunner.org

- City Manager Ferguson reported he had spoken to Principal Mike Collins (Bluefield High School), who encouraged all citizens to participate in "Meet the Beavers" at Chicory Square starting at 7:00 pm on Friday, August 28.
- City Offices will be closed on Monday, September 2 for Labor Day.
- City Manager Ferguson addressed issues concerning traffic flow on Commerce Street discussed at last City Board meeting. The No Left Turn signs have been removed and new signs have been ordered. The new signs will read, Caution Slippery When Wet or Icy. Manger Ferguson spoke with Dan Brewer about the possibility of placing a guardrail on the lower side of Commerce Street. Administrator of the Craft Memorial Library, Eva McGuire wrote a letter in favor of keeping the new one-way traffic pattern. Ms. McGuire noted she also felt the one-way traffic pattern will appeal to new businesses and add additional parking on the street.
- City Manager Ferguson shared an article written (8/24) in the Bluefield Daily Telegraph about our Fire Chief Jeff Warden, titled *Proud to Serve*. The Fire Chief was asked to comment on how First Responders / 911 have changed. Chief Warden said there are nineteen (19) fire fighters on staff including him. The department works on three shifts with six (6) men on duty. This is not always possible due to family emergencies, sickness and vacations. If only five men are on duty, it is difficult to offer EMS. Fire Chief Warden said the department serves the Citizens of Bluefield as best they can under the present budget. The department's primary goal is to fight fires. Every fire fighter is trained as a first responder level and will try to stabilize a patient until an ambulance arrives. This department does not have a vehicle that can transport a patient. Fire Chief Warden distributed a handout from IAFF- Metro Chiefs, a nationwide magazine, featuring his crew on the front cover responding to a structure fire. This magazine is distributed to cities with a population of ten thousand or more.
- Portabella's Italian Restaurant will open soon, we possibly the next few days.
- Parks and Recreation Director Dwight Godwin ordered a roll system floor covering for the new gymnasium floor. The cost will be covered with a grant from the Shott Foundation. The new protective covering will allow the gymnasium to be used for various activities.
- The city is moving forward with a sidewalk replacement project on Bland Street and ending at Clifford Street. This project is funded by a grant (\$100,000) received from the West Virginia Division of Highways. Property owners are responsible for maintaining their own sidewalks.

ACTION ITEMS

Director Chuck McGonagle made a motion to approve a contractual agreement with the Tazewell County Board of Education for leasing Mitchell Stadium; seconded by Vice Mayor Barbara Smith. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

Director Ellen Light made a motion to approve a contractual agreement with Bluefield College for leasing Mitchell Stadium; seconded by Director Michael Gibson. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

Vice Mayor Barbara Smith made a motion to approve final payment to Swope Construction in the amount of \$124,498.92 for the Scott Street Parking Center; seconded by Director Michael Gibson. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

Director Ellen Light made a motion to appoint Gary Boyce to the Zoning Board of Adjustments for a three (3) year term (September 2013-2016); seconded by Director Michael Gibson.

Vice Mayor Barbara Smith made a motion to appoint Director Michael Gibson to the Police Citizen Review Board; seconded by Director Chuck McGonagle. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

Director Ellen Light made a motion to appoint Director Chuck McGonagle to the Historic Landmarks Commission; seconded by Director Michael Gibson. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARD AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Director Chuck McGonagle stated he has learned a lot in the last month and looks forward to working with the citizens of Bluefield. Director McGonagle said there are many issues to be addressed and it is going to take some time. He feels this Board is up to the challenge.

Director Ellen Light stated this was a very congenial Board. Director Light said she has received some positive comments, especially the Police Department. She believes the Board is off to a good start.

Vice Mayor Barbara Smith stated that when citizens have questioned her on certain issues she is reviewing the "chain of command." Issues are being resolved and citizens appear to be pleased with the new Board.

Director Michael Gibson followed up on his suggestion to have a Board meeting in the voting districts for citizens. Attorney Cochran stated in order to change the meeting place from City Hall to another location this action item must be properly advertised and placed on the agenda for discussion. This item will be on the agenda scheduled for September 10. Director Gibson stated he felt we should recognize Bluefield State College on their accomplishments. Director Gibson said he would bring more information to the next work session for discussion.

Mayor Tom Cole stated the correct title for the football game this week was the "Beaver-Graham Game." Mayor Cole said he is excited about the opportunity to serve in the position as Mayor. Mayor Cole said there are some challenges but sees a lot of positive things that are happening for the City of Bluefield. Mayor Cole feels that the City of Bluefield has a lot of great people working for it and who are dedicated to seeing the city move forward.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER

- Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants, reported the following:
 1. Has the city heard any response from the National Guard application? City Manager Ferguson stated placing the ad in the Bluefield Daily Telegraph was the first part of the application process. The ad allows demolition contractors to state if they have any opposition or voice any concerns. A decision will not be made until the first of the year.
 2. Is there any advancement on the Martin Luther King Bridge project? City Manager Ferguson said he going to meet and visit the site with the West Virginia Department of Highways next week. Construction is not to begin until 2014.
 3. The last summer concert in Chicory Square will be Friday, August 30. The Bluefield High School Band will be performing at 12 noon. The public is invited.
- Richard Dillon congratulated the new City Board. Mr. Dillon said he felt the Police Department and Fire Department were doing a great job for the citizens of Bluefield. Mr. Dillon said citizens need to support the Bluefield Rescue Squad.
- Steve Taylor, Randall Kidd, and David Hall expressed concerns regarding a "trash and parking problem" at an apartment complex in their neighborhood. Code Enforcement Officer Lori Mills said she had experienced similar problems with the tenants and they have been cited several times. Mayor Cole said the city would look into what could be done about the issue.
- **Aug. 31:** 1st Annual Lemonade Festival - Downtown Bluefield, WV. The Bluefield Preservation Society is excited to present the daylong celebration with several activities, attractions and events. Just a few of those highlights include a farmers market, a flea market, food court, antique car show, a lemon queen pageant, also, there will be a lemonMADE cook-off and prizes will be awarded for the best in four categories including a parade and much more...

Concerts will include...

"The Kingsman Quartet" - Performing at Chicory Square, Bluefield, WV. Time: 12 noon. The concert is free of charge to the public.

"Blue Highway" - Granada Theater, Bluefield, WV. Time: 7 p.m. Admission: \$25. Tickets on sale! Concert Sponsored by: Cole Buick-Chevrolet-Cadillac-GMC, Bill Cole Auto Mall, Cole Harley-Davidson.

"Pearls of Wisdom" By 4PALS Productions - Performing at The Ramsey, Bluefield, WV. Time: 2 p.m. Admission: \$15. Tickets available at the door.

For more information and a complete schedule of the events: (304) 589-0239 or www.bluefieldpreservationsociety.com.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Thomas J. Cole, Mayor