

**Board of Directors  
Bluefield, West Virginia  
November 26, 2013**

The Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, West Virginia met in regular session, November 26, 2013 at 6 p.m. in the Municipal Boardroom. Present were Mayor Tom Cole, Vice-Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith, Directors Chuck McGonagle and Ellen Light, City Manager Jim Ferguson, City Attorney Brian Cochran, Chief Financial Officer Ken Mulkey. Absent were Director Michael Gibson and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey.

Mayor Tom Cole welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Invocation and Pledge**

The invocation was given by Vice-Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith, who then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes**

The minutes from the October 22, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved with a motion made by Barbara Thompson-Smith and seconded by Ellen Light.

Mayor Cole announced that City Clerk Bobbi Kersey was absent and the Economic Redevelopment and Planning Director Joshua Cline would be taking minutes for the meeting.

**Discussion Items**

City Manager Jim Ferguson gave the following reports:

- Public works is continuing leaf pick-ups. To date over 150 truckloads have taken place. Demolitions at 45 with goal of 50 by the year-end.
- The sidewalk project nearly completed but for two sections. Issues with utilities caused the delay. With two nice days, the project can be completed.
- The City of Bluefield is preparing for the winter season. There are 800 tons of salt stored at Public Works for snow removal. Goal for snow removal is 24 hours on city streets after a storm. Priority is the primary streets, then secondary streets, and finally alleys, tributaries, and others that feed those streets. Residents and businesses are asked to keep their sidewalks clear, and vehicles should be kept off the street to allow the snow plows to clear the streets.
- Bluefield is coming off a great football season not only at the high school level, but in our recreational leagues. Championships have been won in respective divisions in the Tazewell County Recreation League. Congratulations were given to participants, volunteers and coaches for a successful season. Preparations for recreation league basketball are underway. To date, 30 teams have been established and play will begin on December 14.
- Bluefield turned 124 on November 20, 2013. Building Inspector Gerald Steele shared that 2013 will mark a record year in the last quarter century in improvements. This is marked by number of building permits and the dollar value given on the permit. To date 500 permits for nearly \$10 million have

been submitted. There is a good chance that \$10 million will be hit this month. This number does not include infrastructure and revitalization efforts in the city, which could double the number.

- Bluefield Area Transit will host an Open House at the new facility on John Nash Boulevard on December 17. The facility is a \$3.5 million state-of-the-art facility. A time has not been set yet due to efforts being made to schedule Congressman Nick Rahall to attend.
- Thanksgiving garbage collection will be:
  - Regular Thursday collection will be picked up on Wednesday, November 27
  - Regular Friday collection will be picked up on Monday, December 2
- City offices will be closed Thursday, November 28 and Friday, November 29 in observance of Thanksgiving. The City would like wish everyone a happy holiday season.

### **Action Items**

Mayor Tom Cole moved the meeting to action items and asked for a motion to approve the purchase of a 1999 Ford F450 one-ton truck for \$22,000 to use for snow plowing. A motion was made by Director Chuck McGonagle and seconded by Vice-Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith. The motion was unanimously approved.

The first reading of an ordinance providing for the subdividing and boundary adjustment of parcels of real estate in the City of Bluefield was brought to the floor. Dave Shields, the realtor representing the buyers and sellers in the sale of the property was asked to speak. Mr. Shields shared that the parcel is located at 2514 Bland Road and includes two houses under the same ownership for many years. The rear house is addressed on Grandview Street. The larger home has the Bland Road address. A public hearing was held in a Planning Commission meeting and the ordinance passed with no objections. Mr. Shields abstained from voting on the matter as a member of the planning commission. The seller will retain the small house as her personal dwelling and the buyer will take the larger house and most of the land. Both properties will have adequate setback requirements and square footage requirements to meet for R-1 zoning requirements. A motion to approve the first reading was made by Director Ellen Light and a second was made by Vice-Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith. The motion carried. The second reading will be held at the next board meeting.

The December 10, 2013 board meeting was moved to December 3, 2013. The time will remain at noon. The motion was made by Director Ellen Light, Vice-Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved with no discussion. Mayor Cole asked that an agenda be posted for the meeting on November 27, 2013 at the direction of City Attorney Brian Cochran.

### **Reports of Officers, Boards and Standing Committees**

Director Ellen Light thanked individuals for coming out to the meeting during the Thanksgiving week.

Vice-Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving. She also encouraged residents to take advantage of the Winter Farmer's Market at the Herb Sims Recreation Center on Stadium Drive from 10:00 a.m. until 2 p.m. each Tuesday. There are many good Christmas items available there.

Director Chuck McGonagle reminded citizens of the numerous activities happening between Thanksgiving and Christmas. He cited the improvements on Commerce Street and encourages individuals to drive down Commerce Street at night to see the new lights. Finally, Director Chuck McGonagle encouraged residents to attend the show "Nuncrackers" at the Summit Theatre. Director Ellen Light echoed his encouragement.

Mayor Tom Cole wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving and encouraged everyone to be safe.

### **Public Comment**

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association, made the following points:

- Wished the board and administration a Happy Thanksgiving holiday
- Reminded everyone that there is no parking on Bland and Federal Streets in downtown Bluefield from midnight until 5:00 a.m. to allow the snow plows to clear the streets. Also, there is an ordinance that states building and business owners should clear the sidewalks in front of their businesses after a snow by the afternoon. He asked that individuals be reminded of this.
- December the 2<sup>nd</sup> the Beautification Commission will light the city tree in Rotary Square and everyone is invited to attend. The lighting will begin at 6:00 p.m.
- The Christmas Parade and Blue Holly Day will be December 14. The parade will begin at 1 p.m. and entries will be taken all the way up until the start of the parade that day. Floats will be charge \$25, but all other entries are free. Entry forms can be found at City Hall and on the city's website. The Blue Holly Day activities will open at 11a.m. with an ice skating rink, Santa Clause in the Granada Theater, and more.

### **Announcements and Other**

East River Mountain Town Band will have its 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Concert on Thursday, December 5, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in the Bluefield High School Performing Arts Auditorium. Also, on Sunday, December 8, 2013 at 3 p.m. the band will perform at the McKeever Lodge at Pipestem Resort State Park. Admission is free for the concert. For more information, citizens are asked to call 304.952.1792.

City Board meetings are broadcasted on the Comcast local cable CSPAN channel each Thursday, however with Thanksgiving this Thursday the broadcast of the meeting will be on Wednesday.

December 14 activities held downtown including the Christmas Parade and Blue Holly Day events. That night Santa and his elves will be at the Ridge Runner Train Station at the Holiday of Lights in City Park for children.

Mobile Live Trainer for fire fighting will be held at the Princeton Fire Department with members of all local fire departments invited. Members of the Board are invited to see simulations of various fire fighting scenarios. This will be held on December 6, 2013 at 3 p.m.

The Animal Control Officer received a new truck on November 26, 2013. This comes with much enthusiasm. Mayor Cole stated that a new vehicle comes with a new image for the Animal Control Department as well.

Eva McGuire from Craft Memorial Library shared that December 7 the library will host a Holiday Open House with food items and a performance by Westminster's handbell choir. This event is open to the public. On December 14, the library will offer family friendly crafts and activities throughout the day.

Director Chuck McGonagle made a motion that the board adjourn for an executive session, only to come back to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Director Ellen Light. The motion was unanimously approved.

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Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk  
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Thomas J. Cole, Mayor