

**Board of Directors
Bluefield, West Virginia
March 11, 2014
12:00 Noon**

The Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, West Virginia met in regular session, March 11, 2014 at 12:00 p.m. in the Municipal Boardroom. Present were Mayor Thomas Cole, Vice-Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith, Directors Chuck McGonagle, Ellen Light and Michael Gibson; also attending were Interim City Manager Dennis Dillow, City Attorney Brian Cochran, Chief Financial Officer Ken Mulkey and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey.

Mayor Thomas Cole welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Invocation and Pledge

The invocation was given by Reverend W. D. Hasty; pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Bluefield, West Virginia. Vice-Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

The minutes from the February 25, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved with a motion by Vice-Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith and seconded by Director Ellen Light.

Discussion Items

Interim City Manager Dennis Dillow gave the following reports:

- Bluefield State College will be offering a survey to determine what community courses they will be offering this coming year. The survey can be found on line at cityofbluefield.com under the news section of the website.
- The Department of Veterans Affairs will be hosting a Veterans Eligibility and Enrollment Event at the Bluefield Recreational/Herb Sims Youth Center on Stadium Drive, March 14th from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.
- The public is invited to a Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day ceremony. The event will be held Sunday, March 30 at 3:00 p.m at the Vietnam Memorial, WV Tourist Information Center, Exit 9, in Princeton, WV. In case of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held at the Memorial Building, 1500 W. Main Street, Princeton, WV (across from the Mercer County Courthouse).
- The Chamber of Commerce has announced the 2014 Four Seasons Women's Conference will be held on March 18 at David's at the Club. This year's theme will be "Take a Chance on Life" and will feature guest speaker Cea Cohen Elliott.
- Interviews for a new code enforcement officer have been taking place at City Hall. Hopefully by the end of the month a new code officer will be hired.

Action Items

Director Ellen Light made a motion to approve the public hearing date set for Small Cities Block Grant for March 25 at 5:30; second by Director Michael Gibson. Unanimously approved and so ordered

Director Chuck McGonagle made a motion to move into executive session, after reports and public comments, to discuss personnel matters, seconded by Director Ellen Light. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

Reports of Officers, Boards and Standing Committees

Director Chuck McGonagle reminded all citizens that the enrollment event for Veteran's eligibility on March 14 is open to all veterans. Any person who is a veteran of the armed forces, during wartime or not, qualifies for the VA benefits. This includes the Mobile Health Clinic that is now available.

Director Ellen Light stated that the 90th wedding anniversary of the two Virginias will be July 12. Committees and subcommittees have been formed and are planning for the "glorious" event. It is also the 125th anniversary for Bluefield, WV. Sue Jackson is coordinator and very interested in suggestions, from citizens, for possible events or activities to help in the celebration. The actual date for the anniversary is November 20 but Ms. Jackson is trying to coordinate with the wedding anniversary. July was chosen due to better weather and hopefully better participation. Anyone wishing to help in the celebration should contact Director Light or Sue Jackson.

Director Michael Gibson stated he had attended a meeting at Bluefield State College, along with Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith and Director Ellen Light. The Business after Hours was scheduled for April 4. They discussed potential ways of funding for the Bluefield State College. The City of Bluefield is continuing to increase its connections with the college. The college is being progressive in ideas for the future and is an asset to the City.

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith commented on Bluefield State College Women's Basketball. The Lady Blues Basketball team has been selected to participate in the ECAC Division II Women's Basketball Championship. The Lady Blues are the #3 seed and will host #6 Lindenwood University for a Quarterfinal Game on Wednesday, March 12 at 7pm in the Ned Shott Gymnasium. We need to support the team, be proud and show support.

Mayor Thomas Cole added that he was "very impressed" with Dr. Krotseng and her staff at Bluefield State College. Dr. Krotseng has a strong desire for the college to play a part in this community. Bluefield State College made a great decision when they brought her "on board."

Mayor Cole announced the Mercer County Spay Association is having spaghetti dinner March 14 from 11:30am – 2:30 pm at the First Christian Church. The animal organizations in our community are doing everyone a service. Please support these organizations.

Mayor Cole announced a community art project called "Bluefield Rising Together." The project will involve borrowing ladders from citizens and organizations that will be joined together to form a temporary sculpture on the grounds of Bluefield College. The sculpture is intended to represent the way the community is a collection of individuals that are connected to support each other. The community is encouraged to participate by lending a

ladder. The sculpture will come together at the entrance of Bluefield College on March 14 - 16th.

Public Comment

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association, shared the following:

- Mr. Riley asked Director Gibson if Bluefield State College had discussed holding classes at the Resource and Development Building in downtown Bluefield. Director Gibson stated that topic was not discussed. Assistant City Manager Josh Cline stated that the opportunity for classes' downtown is in the discussion phase and is a possibility in the future.
- The Downtown Merchants Association will partner with Frontier Communications to schedule a "clean up" for the downtown area on April 23rd. Windows will be cleaned including all of the "orphan" buildings. All merchants are encouraged to participate. Mayor Cole suggested that Mr. Cline add the information concerning clean up on the Bluefield website and request donations for cleaning supplies.
- Mr. Riley requested clarification concerning the Bluefield wedding and Bluefield anniversary events. Director Light stated the Ms. Jackson would like to "kick off" the Bluefield anniversary celebration on July 12th and along with the wedding will extend the festivities for the quasiquicentennial.
- This year's Downtown Merchants Street fair will be held on August 1st and 2nd.
- The Downtown Merchants are hoping the City of Bluefield offers the Clean Sweep again this year.

Announcement

Mayor Cole reminded everyone of the public hearing set for the Small Cities Block Grant in conjunction with Region I Planning and Development Council set for March 25 at 5:30 pm.

Mayor Cole reminded everyone the public hearing for the proposed Municipal Home Rule Pilot Program will be April 1 at 5:30 p.m.

Mayor Cole reminded everyone of "Lunch with the Mayor." Mayor Cole stated this is an informal way for the citizens to discuss issues within the city. The meeting is typically on Monday and more information can be found on the city website.

Executive Session

Director Chuck McGonagle made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Director Ellen Light. Unanimously approved and so ordered.

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Thomas J. Cole, Mayor