

**Board of Directors  
Bluefield, West Virginia  
October 14, 2014  
12 noon**

The Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, West Virginia met in a regularly scheduled meeting October 14, 2014 at 12 noon in the Municipal Building Boardroom. Present were Mayor Thomas Cole, Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith, Directors Ellen Light, Chuck McGonagle and Michael Gibson, City Manager Dane Rideout, Assistant City Manager Josh Cline, Attorney Brian Cochran and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey.

Mayor Thomas Cole welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Invocation and Pledge**

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes**

The minutes from the September 23, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Cole introduced and welcomed City Treasurer Kelly Davis.

City Clerk Bobbi Kersey administered the oath of office to City Treasurer Kelly Davis.

**Discussion Items**

City Manager Dane Rideout discussed items regarding department updates that were distributed in a handout at the work session:

**City Hall** is getting a facelift. The interior walls are being painted and the carpets are being cleaned.

**Code Enforcement**

1. Tudors Biscuit World will be renovating the Wendy's location on Cumberland Road. A permit has been obtained for work to begin.

**Engineering**

1. Appalachian Power Company has proposed to the West Virginia Public Service Commission an increase for residents (22%) and municipalities (17%). The City of Bluefield approximated usage is approximately one half million dollars in electricity. City Manager Rideout requested Appalachian Power to conduct a citywide energy audit to look at ways to save money on electricity, including the possible use of LED lighting and changes to the way water is pumped from the Kee Dam. City Manager Rideout will be proposing ways to bring efficiencies to the City of Bluefield.

**Public Works**

1. All maintenance has now moved under city works. Usage of equipment and manpower will now be consolidated. City Manger Rideout requested that citizens be

aware of leaves that are blocking or clogging storm drains and to keep the drains clean.

### **Police Department Updates**

1. Normal day to day activities and patrols provided to the citizens of Bluefield in the past month:
  - a. Calls for Service        803
  - b. Arrests                    59
  - c. Citations                 515
  - d. Parking                    67
  - e. \$10,183.00 Collected in fines.

\* A complete list of City Wide Updates is available at City Hall in the City Clerk's office.

City Manager Rideout stated that on October 6 in a Home Rule meeting in Bridgeport, West Virginia, it was announced that the City of Bluefield has been selected to be part of the Municipal Home Rule Pilot Program Phase II. City Manager Rideout and the Board of Directors congratulated Assistant City Manager Josh Cline for his hard work and dedication in providing the City of Bluefield with this opportunity.

Assistant City Manager Josh Cline reported the following:

- Formal notification will come in the very near future from the Home Rule will notify the City of Bluefield which initiatives were approved from the plan submitted.
- The City of Bluefield Board of Directors will then select which items to begin work. A draft of the ordinances must be submitted to the Home Rule Board for approval.
- The Home Rule Board is planning to meet mid-November to begin reviewing ordinances.
- Once the ordinance receives the approval of the Home Rule Board, the city will begin its normal process of two readings and a public hearing to implement the ordinance change.

It is important to note that this ordinance cannot be amended once implemented. If so, it becomes null and void.

City Manager Dane Rideout presented an overview of PublicStuff, a digital communications system for residents that allows them to quickly communicate to staff issues of concern and in turn allows staff to quickly and transparently solve those problems. City Manager Rideout encouraged citizens to explore the use of PublicStuff on the Tallahassee, Florida website or visit <https://www.publicstuff.com> for more information.

City Manager Rideout presented an overview of Mindmixer, which is a "virtual town hall," providing a forum for communities to share ideas, discuss and create plans for the future. More information can be obtained on [www.mindmixer.com](http://www.mindmixer.com).

City Manager Rideout requested the City Board review areas of priorities for the new city treasurer such as:

1. What is the current position on expenses and revenues in accordance with the City budget?
2. Review the FY budget plan and so that it coordinates with the comprehensive plan.
3. Reimbursable salaries
4. B & O strategy overhaul
5. City Fees
6. Reconcile the City Budget

City Manager Dane Rideout asked Assistant City Manager Josh Cline to review the following Comprehensive Plan Timeline:

#### October 2014

- Monthly progress meeting with Patrick Ford
- YouTube series on "How local government works"
- Mindmixer questions start and new questions drop every Monday

#### November 2014

- Monthly progress meeting with Patrick Ford
- First public meeting to discuss purpose and vision of comprehensive plan
- Second public meeting to complete a SWOT analysis

#### December 2014

- Monthly progress meeting with Patrick Ford

#### January 2015

- Monthly progress meeting with Patrick Ford
- Third public meeting to discuss activities and priorities of the comprehensive plan

#### February 2015

- Monthly progress meeting with Patrick Ford
- Fourth public meeting to discuss recommended ideas drafted
- Budget developed for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

#### March 2015

- Monthly progress meeting with Patrick Ford

#### April 2015

- Monthly progress meeting with Patrick Ford
- Fiscal Year 2015-2016 budget sent to state

#### May 2015

- Monthly progress meeting with Patrick Ford
- Comprehensive plan is completed and presented to the community
- Media blitz on plan
- Begin work to adopt ordinance changes
- Implement any new procedures with staff

June 2015

- Continue work on adopting new ordinance changes

July 2015

- Plan in full swing with the start of the new fiscal year

City Manager Rideout requested that the public be a part of the process in the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

City Manager Rideout discussed raising the deposit fee for special trash pick-ups from \$15 to \$50. The City is losing money when people who are renting property in Bluefield pay only the \$15 deposit and then leave the city limits without paying the remaining cost of the special trash pick-up. The average cost for a special trash pick-up is \$50. The estimated annual financial loss to the City of Bluefield is \$15,000. Mayor Cole suggested one option would be allowing citizens to pay the special deposit fee using a credit card or a set amount cash deposit that could be refunded if necessary. City Attorney Brian Cochran reminded everyone property owners are responsible for regular city fees and that only a fee for special trash and the sway car dumpster was being considered. The City Board members stated they felt the question of raising the special trash fees would be a good question to start on MindMixer for public input.

City Manager and Mayor Cole stated that the morning work meetings are open to the public. Director Ellen Light said that the Board is discussing whether to do away with the morning work session and have all discussion at the board meetings. Director Light stated that the open work session allows everyone to add their input and the meetings often last three (3) hours. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith stated that the work sessions are open to the public and hopes more citizens would attend. Director Michael Gibson stated they should do away with the work session and if full discussion during the board meetings prove to be time consuming the board could reevaluate. City Manager Rideout said he brings up to five pages or more agenda items and the discussions can be lengthy. The Board can utilize the technology if the work session is held in the conference room and the meeting is open to the public. City Manger Rideout recommended keeping the work session at 9 a.m. in the conference room. Citizen Mary Alice Kaufman stated citizens are more aware of the public 9 a.m. meeting and keeping up with social media the public should be aware of what is going on in the City. Mrs. Kaufman said that a work session prior to the board is a way to get the "final" factual issues to the citizens. Mrs. Kaufman stated that sometimes a solution or solutions being discussed are necessary to resolve issues that can be introduced to citizens. Mrs. Kaufman said she felt if citizens are truly "looking and listening," she did not see any problem with the 9 a.m. work meeting. Citizen Bonnie Patterson stated that the work sessions are not perceived to be part of the Board meetings and in her opinion communication is much better with the public. Citizen Art Riley commented that social media is "great" but many of our citizens watch the taped Board Meetings on Thursday night offered by Bluefield State College. The Board is spending three hours in a morning work session and the odds are there is little discussion at the board meetings and that is what the citizens would like to hear. This way the Board would only have one discussion if the work session was stopped.

The matter of the work session was not an action item and is open to discussion. The Board would like discussion and input from the citizens. This is another item to be put on MindMixer.

City Manger Dane Rideout requested a comparison of holding the Board of Director meetings at 12 noon vs. 6 p.m. and the difference in attendance between the two meetings.

Director Ellen Light stated at the 6 p.m. meeting the average attendance is 6 citizens and 7.4 citizens at noon. Mayor Cole suggested this be a MindMixer question. Citizen Bonnie Patterson suggested that if the Board has an evening meeting, to be held at 5 or 5:15 p.m. so business citizens could come right after work.

### **Public Comments**

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchant's Association, gave the following reports/questions:

1. Has anyone been attending the Appalachian Power meetings concerning the rate increase? City Manager Dane Rideout stated he has spoken with John Shott on two occasions. City Manager Rideout stated he is not sure if the meetings at the State level have begun but has given information to Mr. Shott concerning what a rate increase means for the City of Bluefield.
2. Mr. Riley noted bids on the Martin Luther King Bridge are due by November 18 according to the advertisement in the Bluefield Daily Telegraph.
3. Has anyone followed up on the Bluefield Avenue Lyn Electric and Texaco clean up? Mayor Cole said he is going to follow up on this issue.
4. The Bluefield Christmas parade will be December 13 at 1:00 p.m. The theme this year will be *Christmas in Bluefield*. The Bluefield Preservation Society will be hosting *Blue Holly Days*.

### **Action Items**

Director Ellen Light made a motion to reappoint Harold Wells and Craig Hammond to the Housing Authority Commission for a five-year term, second; unanimously approved so ordered.

Director Michael Gibson made a motion to appoint Kitt McCarthy, Marc Meachum and Julie Johnson to the Planning Commission for three-year terms, second; unanimously approved so ordered.

Mayor Thomas Cole read a Proclamation Declaring October as Alpha Delta Kappa month.

### **PROCLAMATION OF OCTOBER AS ALPHA DELTA KAPPA MONTH**

**WHEREAS**, Alpha Delta Kappa International Honorary Organization for Women Educators is an international organization for women educators and the organization has declared October as Alpha Delta Kappa month, and

**WHEREAS**, the major goals of Alpha Delta Kappa include giving recognition to outstanding educators, building a fraternal fellowship among educators adding to their effectiveness in promoting excellence in education, establishing high standards in education, and promoting educational and charitable projects and activities enriching the lives of individuals everywhere and assisting these individuals into happy, constructive, and fulfilling lives, and

**WHEREAS**, the local chapter meets these goals each year.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Directors proclaims October as Alpha Delta Kappa month in the City of Bluefield.

**Given under our hands this the 14<sup>th</sup> day of October 2014.**

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Thomas J. Cole, Mayor

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Ellen Peters Light, Director

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Barbara Thompson Smith, Vice Mayor

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Charles "Chuck" McGonagle, Director

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Michael Gibson, Director

**Attest:**

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Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Director Michael Gibson made a motion to approve the PROCLAMATION DECLARING OCTOBER AS ALPHA DELTA KAPPA MONTH, second by Director Ellen Light; unanimously approved so ordered. Mayor Thomas Cole presented a copy of the proclamation to Mrs. Mary Alice Kaufman.

Mayor Thomas Cole read a Proclamation for National Teen Driver Safety Week.

**PROCLAMATION OF NATIONAL TEEN DRIVER SAFETY WEEK**

**WHEREAS**, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has determined that the leading cause of death among teenagers is motor vehicle accidents, exceeding the rate of suicides, homicides, and all other causes of death among that population group; and

**WHEREAS**, the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and State Farm Insurance Company undertook research on the causes of motor vehicle accidents and, after concluding that many such accidents were preventable, prevailed upon Congress to establish "National Teen Driver Safety Week" in October, the month of the greatest number of teenage accidents; and

**WHEREAS**, State Farm Insurance Company is offering a promotion called "Celebrate My Drive" through which it is offering five \$100,000.00 grants and forty-five \$25,000.00 grants to schools similar in size to Bluefield High School, with a requirement that a minimum of 10% of the grant be used for teen driver safety initiatives; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors believes that the residents, businesses and non-profit organizations of Bluefield should join with municipalities across the State of West Virginia and the country to observe "National Teen Driver Safety Week."

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Directors proclaims the week of October 18 -26, 2014 as "National Teen Driver Safety Week" in the City of Bluefield and calls upon all residents, businesses, schools, churches and other organizations to join with Brandon Disney State Farm and Bluefield High School to participate in "Celebrate My Drive," and initiate other activities and programs to promote teen driver safety.

**Given under our hands this the 14<sup>th</sup> day of October 2014.**

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Thomas J. Cole, Mayor

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Ellen Peters Light, Director

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Barbara Thompson Smith, Vice Mayor

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Charles "Chuck" McGonagle, Director

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Michael Gibson, Director

**Attest:**

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Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith made a motion to approve a Proclamation for National Teen Driver Safety Week, second by Director Michael Gibson; unanimously approved so ordered. Mayor Thomas Cole presented Brandon Disney with a copy of the proclamation.

Bluefield High School is participating in 2N2 (2 eyes on the road, 2 hands on the wheel) and will have a chance to win a \$100,000 grant from State Farm. The more driving commitments made the better the chance of winning the money and hosting a chart-top musical artist concert. To support Bluefield High School

1. Log on to [celebratemydrive.com](http://celebratemydrive.com)
2. Indicate you want to support (school name)
3. Commit to drive safely

For more information [www.facebook.com/CelebrateMyDrive](http://www.facebook.com/CelebrateMyDrive)

Director Chuck McGonagle made a motion to go into executive session only to return to adjourn, second; unanimously approved so ordered.

**Announcements**

- The City Board of Directors is interested in hearing from the residents, business owners, employees and visitors to Bluefield. To hear directly from you in a casual setting, "Lunch with the Mayor" was established by Mayor Tom Cole. Mayor Cole or a City Board of Directors member will meet with four individuals at a local establishment on Mondays at noon for lunch and general conversation. Individuals on the City website may request to be added to the list by completing the form. For additional questions please call Joshua Cline at 304.327.5568.
- **HALLOWEEN** will be observed on Friday, October 31 from 6:00p.m – 8:00p.m. Participating households should turn on their porch light during trick-or-treat hours and for everyone's safety we ask trick-or-treaters to only visit those homes or those decorated for Halloween.
- **The City of Bluefield Calendar** - for a more detailed list of events and activities in Bluefield and the surrounding area visit the [cityofbluefield.com](http://cityofbluefield.com) website.

**Adjournment**

The City Board went into executive session.

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Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

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Thomas J. Cole, Mayor