

**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
MAY 26, 2015**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, May 26, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building Boardroom. Present were Mayor Thomas Cole, Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith, Director Ellen Light, Director Chuck McGonagle and Director Michael Gibson; City Manager Dane Rideout, Assistant City Manager Josh Cline, City Attorney Brian Cochran, City Treasurer Kelly Davis, Community Economic Director Jim Spencer and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey.

INVOCATION – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – CALL TO ORDER

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith requested a silent prayer for Dr. John Nash and his wife (who were killed in a car crash on May 23rd) and then invoked divine guidance for the conduct of the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Mayor Thomas J. Cole called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Upon motion and second, the following minutes were approved without correction:
Minutes of the May 12, 2015, Public Hearing (Fire, Garbage, and Street Fee Ordinances)
Minutes of the May 12, 2015, Board of Directors Regular Board Meeting

PRESENTATION

None

CITY MANAGER REPORT: DANE RIDEOUT

Mayor Cole, City Manager Rideout and Community Economic Director Jim Spencer

traveled to Washington, DC and met with elected officials concerning the King Coal Highway/I-73-74 corridors. They presented and discussed a strategic plan for Bluefield and the surrounding area. The development of the highway would be an economic driver for jobs and revenue. Mayor Cole stated he was very proud of the very impressive presentation delivered by City Manager Rideout and Community Economic Director Spencer.

Martin Luther King Junior Bridge is on schedule. City Engineer Tony Wagner is meeting with the state engineers concerning safety issues on Route 52 and the need for a temporary traffic light.

Second Chance Concert clean up will be a joint effort between Bluefield, West Virginia and Bluefield, Virginia. Town Manager Mike Watson and City Manager Rideout are working together to make this a successful event.

Boxwood Nursing Home has completed the exterior of the building and is now working on the interior. Boxwood pulled a permit for \$500,000 to install a new water pressure system. Boxwood is expected to open in October 2015.

ShoreTel phone system will be operational in a few days at City Hall. Once the new system is paid

off, the city hopes to see a savings of approximately \$30,000 a year.

O'Reilly's is on schedule and making major improvements.

Commerce Street has been paved after the gas leak. During construction repairs, it appears a power line was nicked and power is off on six poles. The problem is being corrected.

AEP will be in the downtown area working on vaults.

Public Works has been paving on Union Street. They used the new milling attachment on the Bobcat. Approximately 24 tons of asphalt was laid on Union Street. Some of the streets are beginning to fracture and has complicated the paving. Public Works will concentrate in District One next, due to the high traffic area once bridge construction begins. The data from *Fix it Bluefield* is helping identify locations needing repairs.

Beautification Commission was thanked for their dedication and hard work planting flowers around town.

Code Enforcement is working hard to enforce the pit bull ordinance. Working closely with the Mercer County Commission there is now a process in place. Fifteen non-registered pit bulls were removed from the city in the last two weeks.

Police Department announced today at 2:00 p.m. the Heads Up Mercer County Application is now ready to be downloaded on Smart Phones. Thank you to Policeman Dean Pennington for working with FEMA to secure a grant for this application. This is a mass notification for all of Mercer County that allows citizens to be informed in case of any emergence.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DIRECTOR REPORT: JAMES SPENCER

Director Spencer stated he encourages businesses to complete the My *Bluefield* form that is available on the www.cityofbluefield.com website and is a free service to all businesses located in the City of Bluefield. The website is a way for all local businesses to showcase their goods and services. Director Spencer requested that businesses go to the city website, click on the business tab and complete/submit the form under *My Bluefield* to him. Director Spencer stated he and Assistant City Manager Josh Cline met with senior Bluefield High School students, which participated in Student Government Day, to perform a SWOT analysis on the City of Bluefield. The students were "unfiltered" and gave many suggestions and ideas. The comments and recommendations will become part of the city's comprehensive plan. Director Spencer met with representatives of AEP to discuss a system called LOIS (location one information system). This is a system where the city can list buildings and properties and market their availability. A large-scale development group was in last week for the second visit to the city and a developer from Myrtle Beach is arriving tomorrow. Director Spencer discussed possible ways of bringing people into the area and making them aware of what is available. Placing videos on transit to portray the history and events in Bluefield is being discussed.

PUBLIC COMMETS:

Charles Blankenship, Grandview Street, thanked the city for mowing some yards that were over grown and he had placed on *Fix it Bluefield*. He thanked the city services and the people who are

doing an excellent job in these positions. Mr. Blankenship thanked the Board for working to make the city a better place to live. He does not want fee increases but understands that it is a necessary action that this Board has inherited. Mr. Blankenship feels there are a lot of positive things in Bluefield.

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association:

- Thanked Community and Economic Director Jim Spencer for putting together the business directory.
- Asked if anyone had requested the State to pave Princeton Avenue and fix the guardrails. City Manager Rideout said City Engineer Tony Wagner is constantly talking to the DOH and has a punch list. One priority is to correct the drainage problem on Cherry Street near Bluefield Regional Hospital. Another problem area is the intersection from Stadium Drive to Cherry Street.
- Asked if anything was going on at the old Lin Electric because it looked as if core drilling was taking place. City Manager Rideout stated this was not a priority and he had not focused on the site.
- Asked if the Board was still considering staggering elections. City Attorney Brian Cochran stated he has been working on this issue. If passed, those in the next election would be aware of what term limit they would run for and it would require a charter change. Hopefully, it would pass through the alternative method by ordinance. If not, there would be a special election.
- Chicory Square Concerts will begin at noon. The Bluefield Middle School Band will play this Friday.

Al Hancock, Shenandoah Avenue, he appreciated and thanked the Board their hard work. Mr. Hancock also thanked Board members who attended the Memorial Day service.

ACTION ITEMS

Financial Director Kelly Davis reported she had presented documentation at the work session to the Board. Financial Director Davis stated the third and final revision to the General Fund Budget increased estimated revenue by \$456,615. The revision estimates an additional \$68,019 in taxes; an additional \$10,125 in fines and forfeitures; an additional \$38,000 in license and permits; and additional \$86,550 in charges for service; and additional \$106,555 in grants, contributions and other intergovernmental receipts; and an additional \$147,366 in miscellaneous revenues such as finance charges, reimbursements and the sale of fixed assets. The total increase in anticipated revenue is \$456,615; thereby, increasing the overall General Fund Budget to \$10,556,039. Financial Director Davis highlighted some of the expenditures. **Director Ellen Light made a motion to approve General Fund Budget Revision #3, second; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Financial Director Kelly Davis requested approval to send approximately ninety (90) accounts for collection. **Director Michael Gibson made a motion to send approximately ninety (90) accounts to collections, second; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

City Attorney Brian Cochran stated the next item on the agenda was authorization to enter into a contractual agreement with West Virginia-American Water Company. City Attorney Cochran stated this contract with WV-American Water was in regard to Kee Dam. Since 1968, they have purchased

water from the city and reimbursed the city for the debt service. That bond has been paid and the contract is being renegotiated. City Attorney Cochran recommended this item be tabled until some terms and provisions are clarified. **Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith made a motion to table the authorization to enter into contractual agreement with West Virginia-American Water Company, second; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole read the **SECOND AN ORDINANCE ENACTING CHAPTER 3, MUNICIPAL HOME RULE; SECTION 3-1, PURPOSE; SECTION 3-2, RESERVED; SECTION 3-3, SEVERABILITY; INTERPRETATION; CONFLICT; SECTION 3-4, CONTRACTS WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS; SECTION 3-5, DISPOSITION OF MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS; SECTION 3-6, CONVEYANCE OF CITY PROPERTY WITHOUT AUCTION; AND SECTION 3-7, ENFORCEMENT OF EXTERNAL SANITATION AND COMMON NUISANCE VIOLATIONS, PENDING APPROVAL BY THE WEST VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL HOME RULE BOARD AND CONSISTANT WITH THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD'S PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WRITTEN PLAN.** Director Ellen Light made a motion to approve the **SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE ENACTING CHAPTER 3, MUNICIPAL HOME RULE; SECTION 3-1, PURPOSE; SECTION 3-2, RESERVED; SECTION 3-3, SEVERABILITY; INTERPRETATION; CONFLICT; SECTION 3-4, CONTRACTS WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS; SECTION 3-5, DISPOSITION OF MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS; SECTION 3-6, CONVEYANCE OF CITY PROPERTY WITHOUT AUCTION; AND SECTION 3-7, ENFORCEMENT OF EXTERNAL SANITATION AND COMMON NUISANCE VIOLATIONS, PENDING APPROVAL BY THE WEST VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL HOME RULE BOARD AND CONSISTANT WITH THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD'S PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WRITTEN PLAN,** second; unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Cole read the **SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, CHAPTER 34, STREETS, SIDEWALKS, AND OTHER PUBLIC PROPERTIES; ARTICLE II. CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR; DIVISION 3, SPECIAL SERVICES FOR STREET MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT, AS SET OUT HEREINAFTER BY THE AMENDMENT TO SECTION 34-115.** Director Chuck McGonagle made a motion to approve the **SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, CHAPTER 34, STREETS, SIDEWALKS, AND OTHER PUBLIC PROPERTIES; ARTICLE II. CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR; DIVISION 3, SPECIAL SERVICES FOR STREET MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT, AS SET OUT HEREINAFTER BY THE AMENDMENT TO SECTION 34-115,** second; unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Cole read the **SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, CHAPTER 2, ADMINISTRATION; ARTICLE III, FINANCE AND TAXATION; DIVISION 2, SPECIAL CHARGES FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES; SUBDIVISION II, FIRE PROTECTION, AS SET OUT HEREINAFTER BY THE AMENDMENTS TO SECTIONS 2-169 AND 2-172 AND THE ENACTMENT OF SUBSECTION (C) OF 2-172; AND BY THE AMENDMENT OF SUBDIVISION III.** Mayor Cole stated this ordinance was amended at the last meeting. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith stated that after getting more

information concerning the number of residential customers in the 0 to 2,000 square feet the city will lose much needed revenue. Vice Mayor Smith recommended the Board study the fire fee ordinance and a motion not be made. **Mayor Cole asked for a motion to approve the SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, CHAPTER 2, ADMINISTRATION; ARTICLE III, FINANCE AND TAXATION; DIVISION 2, SPECIAL CHARGES FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES; SUBDIVISION II, FIRE PROTECTION, AS SET OUT HEREINAFTER BY THE AMENDMENTS TO SECTIONS 2-169 AND 2-172 AND THE ENACTMENT OF SUBSECTION (C) OF 2-172; AND BY THE AMENDMENT OF SUBDIVISION III** reading Hearing no motion the second reading for the fire ordinance died.

Mayor Cole read the **SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, CHAPTER 32, SOLID WASTE; ARTICLE II, GARBAGE COLLECTION, FEES, PROHIBITED ACTS; SECTIONS 32-23, REMOVAL SERVICE FEES, AS SET OUT HEREINAFTER BY THE AMENDMENT OF SUBSECTIONS (a) AND (e)), AND BY THE AMENDMENT OF SECTION 32-24.**

Director Michael Gibson made a motion to approve the **SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, CHAPTER 32, SOLID WASTE; ARTICLE II, GARBAGE COLLECTION, FEES, PROHIBITED ACTS; SECTIONS 32-23, REMOVAL SERVICE FEES, AS SET OUT HEREINAFTER BY THE AMENDMENT OF SUBSECTIONS (a) AND (e) AND BY THE AMENDMENT OF SECTION 32-24, AS AMENDED, second; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Director Ellen Light made a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Thomas J. Cole, Mayor