

**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA  
August 11, 2015**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, August 11, 2015 at noon in the Municipal Building Boardroom. Present were Mayor Thomas Cole, Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith, Director Ellen Light, Director Michael Gibson and Director Chuck McGonagle; City Manager Dane Rideout, Assistant City Manager Josh Cline, City Attorney Brian Cochran, Community Economic Director Jim Spencer and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey. City Treasurer Kelly Davis was absent.

**INVOCATION – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith 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. Mayor Cole welcomed Regional Representative Kim Gross from Governor Tomblin's office and citizens.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Upon motion and second the following minutes were approved without correction:  
Minutes of the July 28, 2015, Board of Directors Regular Board Meeting

**CITY MANAGER REPORT: DANE RIDEOUT**

**IT AND TREASURY DEPARTMENT** has completed set up for on line payment.

**CITY ENGINEER TONY WAGNER** has met with the Department of Highway and they have given the city permission to close Federal Street approximately five hours for the Lemonade Festival, Bike Criterium, and Blues Concert. Marked parking on Commerce Street should be completed by the end of the month and a metered power pole is being added for downtown events.

**MITCHELL STADIUM** clean up date was a huge success. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith and Director Michael Gibson helped paint along with many volunteers and city employees. The clean up was a joint effort between Bluefield, Virginia and Bluefield, West Virginia. City Manager Rideout is attending the Bluefield, Virginia Town Council meeting tonight to thank everyone for their participation. Seventeen members from the Four Seasons Recovery Center helped clearing brush and debris. The Board of Directors expressed their appreciation for all the hard work the gentlemen did at the park. The scoreboard is now working properly and can fully be utilized by local schools and colleges.

**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT** continues to mill and pave pot holes. Seven hundred and ninety one tons of asphalt paving projects has been completed. Over five hundred and twenty seven (527) tons of garbage has been collected in July

**CODE ENFORCEMENT** Officer Lori Mills has completed fifty one (51) rental inspections and several have been placarded or further action is pending. Building Inspector Gerald Steele reported six (6) houses are ready for demolition the week of August 24; another two (2) may be added at the next Building Commission meeting.

**RECREATION DEPARTMENT** thanked everyone that helped with the clean up on July 30<sup>th</sup>. The Bluefield Cardinals have begun football and cheer practice. Their first game will be Saturday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>. The USA Cycling Team will participate in the First Annual Lemonade Festival Criterium. Cyclists from

around the region will be descending on downtown Bluefield to race their bicycles from 4-8 p.m. on Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup>. The Bluefield Preservation Society is coordinating the Bluefield Blues Festival on Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup>. Tickets can be purchased in advance for \$12.00 or \$15 at the remodeled Granada Theater. Bands featured: The Nighthawks, Tommy Cox Band, Victor Lawson and Boogie Chillen, JC/BC and Carpenter Ants. The Board of Directors encouraged everyone to participate in the festival.

**BLUEFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT** hosted hands on training with Norfolk Southern for all emergency responders in Mercer and surrounding counties. Several firemen have passed the EMT test and are now certified.

**HARDY STREET RECREATION CENTER** will be demolished due to safety concerns. The city is going to gravel the adjoining lot for additional parking, revamp the basketball courts, and use the existing pad to build a pavilion. A historical marker will be placed at the site.

**COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DIRECTOR JIM SPENCER** stated he now has seventy nine (79) businesses for the new city directory.

**BLUEFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT** welcomes Michael Pertee and Brian Copenhaver to the Police Department. They are certified officers and have been hired on a temporary hire awaiting the completion of the civil service exam.

**COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DIRECTOR JIM SPENCER** stated he now has seventy nine (79) businesses for the new city directory. Director Spencer is in the process of completing two online surveys. The first survey, for residents, should be online within two weeks. The second survey, for businesses, is part of the city's Business Retention Expansion Program. Director Spencer would like a better understanding of the needs and wants of the workforce. Director Spencer would like to put together a training seminar for search engine optimization so the Internet can be used effectively and businesses can take advantage of positive social media.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association,** stated the 17<sup>th</sup> Downtown Merchants Street Fair was a big success and enjoyed by all who attended. Mr. Riley asked if the present downtown parking ordinances are being enforced. City Manager Rideout said that he was aware there is a problem. He is working on signage and cost effective parking meters. All meters have been removed from the downtown area and it would be difficult to enforce every parking ordinance at this time. New signage will be utilized but funds must be acquired. City Manager Rideout said a new ATV parking area is being created.

**Charles Blankenship, Bluefield Citizen,** stated Commerce Street improvements are beautiful and the citizens of Bluefield should be very proud of the revitalization efforts of so many people. Mr. Blankenship discussed the new parking lot and thought it could lead to a positive way to capitalize on the ATV traffic. Mr. Blankenship asked the Board to consider three suggestions:

1. Asphaltting certain sidewalks to save money and they would last longer.
2. Greyhound Bus Terminal needs a shelter for those waiting outside.
3. Leaving the American Flag out from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Director Chuck McGonagle stated technically Bluefield does not have a Greyhound Bus Terminal but buses come through town. Director McGonagle said he had rented the building to a privately owned business that closed approximately fourteen months ago. He stated he does his best to keep the door open during inclement weather. The Bluefield Beautification Commission provided a bench and trash can. Director Craig Hammond with the Bluefield Union Mission is wonderful in helping those who come to town and need assistance.

**Al Hancock, Bluefield Citizen,** read an article concerning taxes.

**Catherine Harrison, Four Seasons Recovery Center,** thanked officials for their support and stated their administration is looking forward to working with the city.

**ACTION ITEMS**

City Manager Dane Rideout stated City Treasurer Kelly Davis requested eighty seven (87) accounts totaling \$91,471.77 be sent to collections. **Director Ellen Light made a motion to approve the requested accounts be sent to collections, second; unanimously approved so ordered.**

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

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Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

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Thomas J. Cole, Mayor