

**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
FEBRUARY 9, 2016
NOON**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, February 9, 2016 at noon in the Municipal Building Boardroom. Present were Mayor Thomas J. 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, Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer, City Attorney Brian Cochran, City Treasurer Kelly Davis, and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey.

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.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Director Light moved that the minutes for the January 26, 2016 be approved as presented. With no objections the minutes were approved.

PRESENTATION

Community Connections Executive Director Greg Puckett asked the board to partner with the agency for a new prescription drug drop off box. The box would allow citizens to safely dispose of unused and outdated medicine at the Bluefield Police Department. The contents will be taken to a site in Beckley where they will be destroyed. Mayor Cole asked if the Bluefield Police Department and the Mercer County Sheriff's Department could alternate travel and transport time. Director Puckett agreed and an arrangement may be possible. Community connections Executive Director Greg Puckett requested the Board pay half the cost of the \$900.00 drop off box. Director Ellen Light made a motion to enter into an agreement with Community Connections to pay \$450.00 for the prescription drug drop off box, second; unanimously approved and so ordered.

OATH OF OFFICE

Fire Chief Rick Cary introduced the following:

- Fireman Josh Bishop is the newest member of the Bluefield Fire Department. Upon completion of his three-year journeyman ship program, Josh will have over 6,000 hours on the job training and an additional 420 hours of training. City Clerk Bobbi Kersey administered the oath of office.
- Lieutenant Miller joined the Bluefield Fire Department on April 5, 2010. Fire Chief Cary stated Lt. Miller possesses a passion for his job that has been contagious and has spread to others in the department. Lt. Miller was described as self-motivating and self-disciplined. City Clerk Bobbi Kersey administered the oath of office and Fire Chief Cary awarded his lieutenant pin.

CITY MANAGER REPORT: DANE RIDEOUT

Snow Removal remains a top priority. Equipment is still up and running there is a new supply of salt. The men have been working around the clock removing snow and treating the streets with salt and gravel mix.

Four (4) Day Trash Schedule is working out great and allowing issues that have been placed on the back burner to be addressed; such as the old parking lot posts are being removed.

City Treasurer Kelly Staff and Treasury Staff were recognized for their “deep dive” investigation into insurance. The staff is making sure city facilities and vehicles are properly insured.

Parks and Recreation Director Charles Riddlehuber and his staff are “cleaning up” the center and making it safe and code compliant. Many upgrades are taking place such as new LED lighting that will be more cost efficient. The upgrades are possible due to a foundation grant. The public is invited to visit the youth center to see the transformation.

Bluefield Police Department Det. Adams and his staff were recognized for their professionalism during a recent incident at the Quality Inn.

Bluefield Fire Department was recognized for their quick response to a recent home report that ultimately involved saving two lives due to a carbon monoxide issue.

K9 Ludo has been returned. Ludo had a “fatal flaw” for a police dog. He was scared of gunfire. Ludo has been replaced with Caesar, whose name will be changed.

Sixth Month Review will be held on February 16th at 6:00 p.m. at the First Christian Church. This will be the third review covering July 1, 2015 thru December 31, 2015. Six Bluefield Police Officers will be recognized and will receive combat heroism awards, from the state, for their response during the downtown bank robbery this summer. Everyone is encouraged to attend and participate.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR JIM SPENCER shared results from an online Downtown Merchants Association Survey. The survey consisted of twenty (20) question about various marketing techniques such as: social media, billboards, websites, newsletters, email, etc. Seventeen businesses responded to the survey. Director Spencer shared and presented city brochures that had a common “brand” or “theme”. He proposed a city-sponsored marketing seminar to help existing businesses with ways to market and promote their services. Director Spencer detailed plan to help market and promote existing businesses.

1. What is the first thing you do when company is coming? Clean House
2. Schedule Marketing Seminars for Businesses in the City.
3. Continue with Business Visitation Program and make sure businesses are aware of technical support the City provides free of service. (Web Site and Social Media review and suggestions).
4. Develop a consistent brand in the City’s marketing material.
5. Continue to develop videos to market the City.
6. Develop a newsletter and email blast campaign.
7. Advertising co-op (For example, the Country Register).
8. Use the new mybluefield.org web page to market the City and the local businesses.
9. Take advantage of **free** advertising.
10. Track the results to find what works best and make adjustments where needed. Get aggressive and think outside the box.

Director Spencer stated he would attend the Downtown Merchants Association meeting tonight and present the power point to area businesses. The new Bluefield website should be ready by April.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association, stated that the downtown merchants would welcome Director Spencer and the city in any effort to market their businesses. Since a billboard is not the marketing tool that should be used,

Mr. Riley requested that guidance and ideas be moved forward- sooner than later.

County Commissioner Greg Puckett commended the Board for wanting to rebrand and remarket the City of Bluefield. The *Keep Mercer Clean Campaign* will be March 20 through April 30th this year.

ACTION ITEMS

City Treasurer Kelly Davis reported at the close of January 2016, the 7th month of the fiscal year, revenue collected totaled \$6,691,870 or 71.51% of the projected amount of \$9,357,815. Expenditures total \$6,306,385 or 58.23% of the projected budget of \$10,830,741. City Treasurer Davis requested approval of the January monthly financial report. Director Michael Gibson made a motion to approve the January 2016 monthly financial report and it was unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Thomas Cole read the **First Reading of AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, CHAPTER 44 ZONING, ARTICLE I. GENERAL, SECTION 44-48, PLANNING COMMISSION CONSTITUTED; AS SET OUT HEREINAFTER BY THE AMENDMENT TO SUBSECTION (a) MEMBERSHIP.** City Attorney Brian Cochran stated this ordinance relates to the membership of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on January 26th and recommended to the Board the following amendments. Currently there are thirteen (13) members; eleven (11) voting members and two (2) vacancies. The recommendation to this Board is to establish the City of Bluefield's municipal representatives as voting members of the eleven-member Planning Commission. The Planning Commission would be an eleven-member commission instead of thirteen. **Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith made a motion to approve the First Reading of AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, CHAPTER 44 ZONING, ARTICLE I. GENERAL, SECTION 44-48, PLANNING COMMISSION CONSTITUTED; AS SET OUT HEREINAFTER BY THE AMENDMENT TO SUBSECTION (a) MEMBERSHIP. second; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole read the **First Reading of AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, CHAPTER 44 ZONING, ARTICLE I. GENERAL, SECTION 44-3, DEFINITIONS; AS SET OUT HEREINAFTER BY THE AMENDMENT TO THE DEFINITION OF "FAMILY".** City Attorney Brian Cochran stated currently the City Code provides that six unrelated persons may reside together in a single housekeeping unit. The Planning Commission met in a public hearing on January 26th and makes the recommendation that the total number of persons not related by blood or marriage be limited to four persons. Member Tripper Thomas of the Planning Commission recommended that the definition include those persons that are adopted. That amendment would be added to this ordinance if passed by the Board. Director Ellen Light made a motion to approve **First Reading of AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, CHAPTER 44 ZONING, ARTICLE I. GENERAL, SECTION 44-3, DEFINITIONS; AS SET OUT HEREINAFTER BY THE AMENDMENT TO THE DEFINITION OF "FAMILY"** with the amendment to include adoption, second; unanimously approved and so ordered. The purpose of this ordinance is reducing the number of unrelated individuals permitted to reside together in a single housekeeping unit and will result in the reduction of parking/traffic congestions problems, assist in the prevention of noise and disturbance in residential areas, and preserve the character of neighborhoods throughout the City.

Mayor Cole read the **First Reading of AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND PART II, CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, CHAPTER 6, BUILDINGS AND BUILDING REGULATIONS; ARTICLE II. CODES, AS SET OUT HEREINAFTER BY THE AMENDMENT TO SECTION 6-31, STATE BUILDING CODE ADOPTED.** City Attorney Brian Cochran stated this is related to the City's ability to enforce its current Building Codes. It is required by 87-4-7 of the state legislative rule to require municipalities to adopt State Building Codes and that is done through

this ordinance. Building Inspector Gerald Steele recommended that this ordinance be revised to include the following:

2012 edition of the International Building Code (IBC)

2012 edition of the International Plumbing Code (IPC)

2012 edition of the International Fuel Gas Code (IFGC)

2012 edition of the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC)

2009 edition of the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC)

2009 edition of the International Residential Code for one and two family dwellings (IRC) with the following:

Chapter 3, section 311.7.4.1-Maximum riser height shall be 8 ¼ inches

Chapter 3, section 311.7.4.2- Minimum tread depth shall be 9 inches.

Chapter 4, section 403.1.7.1- Shall not apply.

Chapter 4, section 404.1.7.2- Shall not apply.

Chapter 11 -Shall not apply.

Chapter 24, section 24105.10- Burial depth shall be 12 inches or pipe must be in conduit or other approved shielding.

2009 edition of the International Code Council/American National Standards Institute ICC/ANSI for Accessibility & Usable Buildings & Facilities.

2012 edition of the International Existing Building Code (IEBC) with the following exception:

Omit reference to International Fire Code and substitute NFPA Life Safety Code (2009 edition).

2012 edition of the International Existing Building Code (IEBC) with the following exception: Omit reference to International Fire Code and substitute NFPA Life Safety Code (2009 edition).

2100 edition of the National Electric Code, NFPA 70 (NEC).

Building Inspector Gerald Steele stated this is formality showing the City has adopted and is following stated codes and regulations.

Director Ellen Light made a motion to approve the ordinance as set forth and amended by City Attorney Brian Cochran, second; unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Cole stated the next item was to discuss Christmas Decorations. City Manager Rideout request more time to discuss with City Treasurer Kelly David after budget revisions and requested this item be tabled.

Director Chuck McGonagle made a motion to table approval of Christmas Decorations, second; unanimously approved and so ordered.

Other

Director Michael Gibson thanked Mr. Harold Brewster for his time and expertise researching city owned real estate. Mr. Brewster has been working with intern Haley Robinson

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith stated she had been approached by several citizens inquiring about finding an enclosed space or an area for a flea market. Vice Mayor Smith requested Community and Economic Director Jim Spencer see if there is a space available.

Director Chuck McGonagle stated he had attended the opening of Mercer Nursing Home and complimented Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith on her representation of the City. Director McGonagle said the facility is state of the art.

Mayor Cole invited everyone to the six (6) month review at First Christian Church at 6:00 p.m.

Director Chuck McGonagle made a motion to move into executive session to discuss property only to return to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Thomas J. Cole, Mayor