

**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
MARCH 8, 2016
NOON**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, March 8, 2016 at noon in the Municipal Building Boardroom. Present were Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith, Director Ellen Light, and Director Michael Gibson and; City Manager Dane Rideout, Assistant City Manager Josh Cline, City Attorney Brian Cochran, City Treasurer Kelly Davis, and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey. Mayor Thomas Cole, Director Chuck McGonagle and Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer were absent.

INVOCATION – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – CALL TO ORDER

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith requested a silent prayer remembering the passing of First Lady Nancy Regan and former Bluefield Chief of Police James “Jim” Dent and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Director Michael Gibson moved that the minutes of February 23, 2016 be approved as presented, second; unanimously approved and so ordered.

PRESENTATION

City Ambassador Marie Blackwell discussed the 3rd Annual Veteran’s Recognition Day Ceremony scheduled for Sunday, March 20th, at the Memorial Building in Princeton. Vietnam Veteran Marine Sargent Ernest J. Baringer. Sargent Baringer currently works with service dogs trained to assist veterans suffering from PTSD, as well as serving as an adjunct professor at Concord University conducting classes on recognizing and understanding PTSD. The ceremony will begin at 3:00 p.m. and the public is invited. If unable to attend the ceremony the community is encouraged to take a moment to reflect on the courage and valor of all the men and women who served this great country, some having made the ultimate sacrifice.

CITY MANAGER REPORT: DANE RIDEOUT

Mayor Thomas Cole, Director Chuck McGonagle were attending an out of town conference. Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer was attending an economic development conference in Charlotte, NC.

City Engineer Tony Wagner hosted a meeting with all the area utility companies to discuss future plans and ongoing projects around the city. City Engineer Wagner is identifying and compiling a list of properties that were damaged while clearing roads during recent bad weather. Crews will be filling in dirt, reseeding and building curbs. City Engineer Wagner has been instrumental in working at the new police substation on the new electric upgrades.

Holiday of Lights Building has been constructed and Public Works is in the process of building a rack system for the storage of light displays. This project was possible through donations.

New Street Sweeper is here and on the streets. This equipment was purchased by the Stormwater Board. The sweeper is smaller but is much more efficient.

Police Sub Station is a work in progress. LUMOS has been installing fiber optic cable. Opening is

expected mid to late June.

Parks and Recreation is partnering with Bluefield State College, Bluefield College, Graham High School and Bluefield High School to offer a local running series. The last race will be the Holiday of Lights 5k Challenge. Many improvements are taking place at the Herb Simms Youth Center. Parks and Recreation Director Charles Riddlehuber and his staff have a vision and citizens should be proud of their accomplishments.

Code Enforcement has demo four houses last week, three more are ready for demolition and ACM abatement is scheduled for six houses. Building Inspector Gerald Steele and his staff are getting after blighted properties. The staff has gone to a flex schedule so a code enforcement officer is on duty seven days a week.

Commissioner Greg Puckett is heading up *Love Where You Live Campaign*. The City of Bluefield will hold a clean-up at the top of the mountain overlook on March 30th @ 9:00 a.m. The public is invited to participate. The City is also asking for organizations to adopt and maintain a street. A sign will be placed on the street recognizing the organization. The Four Seasons Recovery Center will sponsor Preston Street. The tire disposal will be held on April 21st on the ATV gravel parking lot in downtown Bluefield. The Four Seasons Recovery Center will monitor the tire pick up and has also again volunteered to help “clean up” Mitchell Stadium.

Bluefield Police Department has completed the physical agility for twenty-six entry level policeman applicants. Sixteen men passed the agility test and will take the written test on March 24th. This will become the new entry level department list used when vacancies become available on the police force. City Manager Rideout stated there were more applicants the usual and he felt this was due to the leadership and recruiting efforts of Police Chief Dennis Dillow. K9 Ace and officer, will be certified by March 14th and new K9 Thor and officer should be certified by April 1st.

Bluefield Fire Chief Rick Cary will be the right hand man for City Manager Rideout in developing an emergency management plan. An emergency plan for the safety of all citizens, organizations, and City Hall is a high priority. Several disaster planning and tabletop exercises will be conducted in the city in the coming weeks and months.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association, asked if there was going to be any type of “clean sweep” this year. City Manager Dane Rideout stated the City Board had made the decision to discontinue Clean Sweep after last year. There was a discussion concerning opportunities available for citizens to dispose of “extra” trash such as: extra trash bag pick up during holidays, free leaf pick up, tire disposal, and multiple free days for trash drop off at the land fill that will be available during *Love Where You Live Campaign, Keep Mercer County Clean*. The eight bag limit is not being enforced during holidays and leaf pick up is a free service provided by the City. Mr. Riley asked the City Board for an update on the new signage program for the downtown area. City Manager Rideout said funding for downtown signage has been included in the proposed city budget. Mr. Riley thanked the Board and state road department for the walk signs on the corner of Federal /Raleigh Streets and Federal/Scott Streets.

ACTION ITEMS

City Treasurer Kelly Davis reported at the close of February 2016, the 8th month of the fiscal year, revenue collected totaled \$7,455,930 or 79.68 % of the projected amount of \$9,357,815. Expenditures total \$7,122,734 or 65.76% of the projected budget of \$10,830,741. City Treasurer Davis requested approval of

the February monthly financial report. Director Ellen Light made a motion to approve the February 2016 monthly financial report and it was unanimously approved and so ordered.

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith read the Resolution of Support for the 2016 Region I Planning and Development Council Annual Project Prioritization.

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE 2016-2017 REGION I PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ANNUAL PROJECT PRIORITIZATION**

WHEREAS, the City of Bluefield Board of Directors met on March 8, 2016 with a quorum present and passed the following resolution.

WHEREAS, be it resolved that the City of Bluefield Board of Directors hereby approves and authorizes Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith to submit a list of approved projects for Region I Planning and Development Council for the 2016-2017 year.

WHEREAS, be it further resolved that the governing body of the City of Bluefield will present a letter from the vice-mayor and a copy of this resolution as proof of approval from this governing body to Region I Planning and Development Council.

Given under our hands this the 8th Day of March, 2016.

Assistant City Manager Josh Cline stated the City of Bluefield presents a list of projects annually to Region I Planning and Development Council. Region I will submit these items to the governor's office for consideration and funding. Top projects include:

1. Bluefield Commercialization Center – old freight station on Bluefield Avenue. Would be turned into a light manufacturing incubator space for entrepreneurs.
2. Rt. 52 Airport Road Water Project
3. Project “Game Changer” – Economic Development Plan

Assistant City Manager Cline stated decision makers at the state level are aware what we want to accomplish and partnerships have been formed. Director Michael Gibson made a motion to approve the RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE 2016-2017 REGION I PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ANNUAL PROJECT PRIORITIZATION and it was unanimously approved and so ordered.

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith requested a motion for approval of Fire Alarm Installation System Bid from DCI/Shires, Inc. in the amount of \$18,980.00. City Manager Rideout stated part of the plan developed by Parks and Recreation Director Charles Ridlehuber is bringing the Herb Sims Youth Center up to code. DCI met all the requirements and was the low bid. This project is paid for by a donation. Director Michael Gibson made a motion to approve the Fire Alarm Installation System Bid from DCI/Shires, Inc. in the amount of \$18,980.00 and it was unanimously approved and so ordered.

OTHER

The City Board, administrator, and staff offered condolences to the family of James “Jim” Dent. Director Michael Gibson said Jim had served as a police officer, Bluefield Chief of Police and Magistrate. Mr. Dent was admired and respected by everyone. Jim will be missed.

Director Ellen Light made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Thomas J. Cole, Mayor