

**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
August 23, 2016
NOON**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, August 23, 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, Director Chuck McGonagle, City Manager Dane Rideout, City Attorney Brian Cochran, City Treasurer Kelly Davis, Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey. Assistant City Manager Josh Cline 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.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved that the minutes of the August 9, 2016, Board of Directors meeting be approved as presented, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Cole read a **Proclamation OBSERVING SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK.**

WHEREAS, the City of Bluefield recognizes suicide as a statewide public health problem, and suicide prevention as a statewide responsibility, and designates September 5 through September 11 as “Suicide Prevention Week” in Bluefield, West Virginia, and this week overlaps World Suicide Prevention Day, that is recognized internationally and supported by the World Health Organization, and

WHEREAS, in West Virginia, suicide is now the 11th leading cause of all deaths, the second leading cause of death among people from the age of 10 to 34, three times as many people die annually by suicide than by homicide, and

WHEREAS, in the United States there are on average 117 suicides per day and almost 50% of people who die by suicide use a firearm, and guns stored in the house are used for suicide 40 times more often than for self-protection, and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that 5.4 million people in the United States are survivors of suicide (those who have lost a loved one to suicide), and

WHEREAS, the stigma associated with mental illness and suicidality works against suicide prevention by discouraging persons at risk for suicide from seeking life-saving help and further traumatizes survivors of suicide, and

WHEREAS, statewide suicide prevention efforts should be developed and encouraged to the maximum extent possible, and

WHEREAS, the American Association of Suicidology, which is dedicated to reducing the frequency of suicide attempts and deaths, and the pain of survivors affected by suicides of loved ones, through educational programs, research projects, intervention services, and bereavement services urge that we:

1. Recognize suicide as a national and state public health problem and declare suicide prevention to be a statewide priority;
2. Acknowledge that no single suicide prevention program or effort will be appropriate for all populations or communities;
3. Encourage initiatives based on the goals contained in the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention

WHEREAS, a great many suicides are preventable;

THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED, the City of Bluefield Board of Directors does hereby designate September 5 through September 11, 2016 as “National Suicide Prevention Week” in the City of Bluefield, West Virginia and encourages citizens to participate in the Mercer County Out of the Darkness Walk on September 10 at Chicory Square in downtown Bluefield.

Given under our hands this the 23rd day of August 2016.

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to approve the Proclamation OBSERVING SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK; unanimously approved and so ordered. Mayor Thomas J. Cole presented the proclamation to representative Marie Blackwell of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention/ Mercer County Community Out of the Darkness Walk.

Mayor Thomas Cole read **Joint Resolution Honoring the Service of Law Enforcement Officers.**

WHEREAS, the Town of Bluefield, Virginia Council and the City of Bluefield, West Virginia Board of Directors seek to honor the service of law enforcement officers in the greater Bluefield area; and

WHEREAS, the vigilance, compassion, and decency of law enforcement officers are the best defense of society against individual who prowl communities seeking to do harm; and

WHEREAS, these men and women routinely are called upon to serve and protect their fellow citizens by responding to a myriad of situations and often act heroically to save the lives of others; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement officers serve our communities with valor, dignity, and integrity, pursuing justice for all individuals and performing their duties with fidelity, ensuring the constitutional and civil rights of all; and

WHEREAS, the officers for the Town of Bluefield, Virginia are: Chief M. Shane Gunter, Lieutenant Pete Beavers, Sergeant Caleb R. Bradshaw, Sergeant Tim Carroll, Sergeant Justin McCulley, Detective Chris McCroskey, Detective Matt Shrader, Detective Briana Steele, School Resource Officer Frank Horn, Officer Chris Bailey, Officer Casey Justice, Officer Michael Tiller, Officer Allyson Jarvis, Officer Josh Asbury, Officer Paul Rogers, Officer Martha Shewey, Officer Channing Mooney, Officer Kevin White ; and

WHEREAS, the officers for the City of Bluefield, West Virginia are: Chief Dennis M. Dillow, Executive Lieutenant D.A. Pennington, Lieutenant C.S. Myers, Lieutenant G.W. Lightfoot, Lieutenant M.D. McPherson, Lieutenant J.C. Whitt, Sergeant J.D. Vance, Sergeant B.L. Hamm, Sergeant A.L. Crook, Sergeant M.L. Ramsey, K9 Patrolman B.W. Copenhaver, K9 Patrolman M.D.

Pertee, Patrolman J. D. Shrewsbury, Detective K.L. Adams, Detective J.W. Lucas, Patrolman J.J. Harris, Patrolman D.A. Williams, Patrolman D.A. Miller, Patrolman J.D. Hawks, Patrolman J.M. Danieley, Patrolman H.D. Browning, Patrolman Q.L. Steptoe, Patrolman J.B. Fox, Patrolman K.L. Ross, Patrolman B.M. Lambert, Patrolman D.R. Barker, Patrolman R.V. Johnson; and

WHEREAS, a thin blue line has been painted along the 50-yard line of June O. Shott Field at Mitchell Stadium in honor of these named law enforcement officers who place their lives on the line each day in adjacent communities for the duration of the 2016 football season.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the elected officials of Bluefield, Virginia and Bluefield, West Virginia commend our law enforcement officers and offer our sincerest gratitude for their service.

MAY IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that residents of both communities are encouraged to show their support for local law enforcement officers through cooperation, mutual respect, ongoing communication, community engagement, and respect for the rule of law.

Given under our hands this the 23rd Day of August.

Director Chuck McGonagle moved to approve the Joint Resolution Honoring the Service of Law Enforcement Officers; unanimously approved and so ordered. Mayor Cole presented a copy of the resolution to Bluefield Police Chief Dennis Dillow and thanked all officers for their dedication in keeping our community safe.

CITY MANAGER REPORT: DANE RIDEOUT

City Manager Rideout stated citizens do not get to see some of the people working behind the scenes at City Hall. Nancy Bailey, Danielle Taylor, Peggy Ball and Brandon Redden work under the direction of City Treasurer Kelly Davis. Responsibilities within this team include city fees, B & O tax, accounts receivable, accounts payable, customer relations and various other financial activities. City Manager Rideout commended the treasury staff for being professional and are doing an outstanding job for the citizens of Bluefield.

City Engineer Tony Wagner is working with tree specialists to remove large trees that are overgrown. The last of the vault work is being corrected on Scott Street and Federal Street. Starting tomorrow the second wave of contract paving will begin.

Parks and Recreation Department will have a ribbon cutting for the new after day school program on Thursday at 2:00 p.m. The Shriners Club has given a \$1,000 contribution to kick off the Herb Sims Scholarship. The scholarship subsidizes underprivileged children so they can participate in recreation activities. Citizens can sponsor a child or make a donation. The department received a \$19,000 grant to help with facility improvements and purchase entertainment activities for the students.

Code Enforcement are preparing to demo five more houses this week. There is a Building Commissions meeting at 2:00 p.m. today that may result in five more houses to be demolished.

Police Department Sargent D.A. Pennington applied for and has been awarded a \$22,237 grant for new radar unit for the police vehicles. The Bluefield Rescue Squad donated \$3,200 towards SIM guns and ammunition for training program. K-9 dogs, Thor and Ace, have once again proven to be valuable police resources. During a routine car pull over for not stopping at a stop sign, Thor made a drug hit that led to information concerning a distributor.

Fire Department responded for a house fire on Highland Avenue. The fire had consumed 70% the house but the fire department saved the two houses on either side. Fire Chief Rick Cary and his team did a phenomenal job. Local agent Brandon Disney with State Farm presented the fire department with a grant to purchase an arson dog about six months ago. The arson dog was at the scene of the fire and there is an active investigation.

Lemonade Festival will begin this weekend (August 27th) starting at 9:00 a.m. followed by the Blues Festival. Everyone is invited to the activities.

Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer

- The City of Bluefield filed the pre-application for a Power Grant Funding and is now filing the full application. The application is being vetted.
- A *Taste of Bluefield* is being offered to all college students. The goal is to introduce approximately 2,000 students to Bluefield's businesses. Fourteen restaurants are offering discounts to the students and other businesses are requesting to participate. Students can obtain the informational brochure by attending Fantastic Friday.
- The city's commitment is to enhance the entrepreneurial climate, retain existing businesses, and create new job opportunities. Our goal is to bring together local colleges, business and our community to move forward and continue to inspire and educate our entrepreneurial business enthusiast. Community and Economic Development Director showed a short video, 1millioncups.com.
- Fantastic Friday will close at 6:00 p.m. this Friday due to the Beaver/Graham football game.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Catherine Harrison, representative from the Four Seasons Recovery Center, stated she wanted to publically thank the City for their support. They appreciate the opportunities the City has allowed the recovery center to be active in community service. September the 9th (4:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.) at the Bluefield City Park will be a recovery rally in observance of September being recovery month. Six men have completed the program. City Manager Rideout stated this is a faith based and peer driven program. The city has reached out to these men and City Manager Rideout stated they have amazing work ethic and are great workers. Mayor Cole requested that Ms. Harrison return and give updates on a regular basis. Director Michael Gibson thanked Four Seasons for their help in the cleanup at Mitchell Stadium the past two years.

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association, stated the merchants are very interested in being a part of encouraging students to shop in Bluefield. All the merchants will have the opportunity to participate. It should be developed in the next couple of weeks. There will be two more concerts in Chicory Square. This Friday the concert is sponsored by First Community Bank. The last concert will be September 2nd and the Bluefield Intermediate Choir and Band will perform. Mr. Riley stated signage is desperately needed, especially for parking in the downtown area. City Manager Rideout stated ninety- six signs will be erected in phases throughout the area.

Vernon Oakes, returning Bluefield resident thanked Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith, Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer for their support upon his return to Bluefield. Mr. Oakes stated he would like to continue his property management business in the city.

ACTION ITEMS:

City Treasurer Kelly Davis requested approval to submit ninety (90) accounts for collection in the amount of \$48,795.22. **Director Ellen Light moved to approve ninety (90) accounts for collection in the amount of \$48,795.22 for the month of August; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole requested approval of renewal of the City Manager's Contract. City Manager Rideout was hired approximately two years ago. The contract was a three-year contract with a two-year extension and the Board chose the two-year extension taking his contract to 2019. **Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to approve the two-year extension contact for City Manager Dane Rideout, taking his contract through 2019; unanimously approved and so ordered.** Mayor Cole stated City Manager Rideout is a great leader and the city is moving in the right direction under his leadership and stability.

Mayor Cole requested approval of a Lease Agreement between the City of Bluefield and the Bluefield High School Band Boosters and Graham High School Band Boosters for the 2016 football season. City Attorney Brian Cochran stated this was the concession contract for football games for Bluefield High School and Graham High School. They have had a contract for several years. **Director Ellen Light moved to approve the 2016 Lease Agreement between the City of Bluefield and the Bluefield High School and Graham High School Band Boosters; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole requested approval of a Lease Agreement between the City of Bluefield and Bluefield College for athletic events for the 2016 – 2017 season. City Attorney Brian Cochran stated this was a one-year contract extension with Bluefield College. The rental rate will be \$45,000. **Director Chuck McGonagle moved to approve the Lease Agreement between the City of Bluefield and Bluefield College for athletic events for the 2016-2017 season; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

City Manager Dane Rideout stated that the lease agreements do not cover the expenses for the upkeep at Mitchell Stadium. The field is in need of replacement at a cost of half a million dollars. City Manager Rideout will update citizens and be transparent as he reviews contracts next year

Mayor Cole requested approval of a Contract Agreement between the City of Bluefield and Alpha Media, LLC to place banners at Mitchell Stadium from July 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016. City Attorney Brian Cochran stated this is the advertising agreement for the various banners and advertisement from businesses throughout the stadium. Alpha Media provides a 50% return to the City. **Director Michael Gibson moved to approve the Contract Agreement between the City of Bluefield and Alpha Media, LLC to place banners at Mitchell Stadium from July 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole read the first reading of an **ORDINANCE enacting Chapter 3, Section 3-9, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Bluefield, and to amend Chapter 24, Article II, Sections 24-69 and 24-74 for the purpose of allowing certain Alcoholic Beverage Control Administration Class "A" license holders to begin serving alcohol at ten o'clock on Sundays.** City Attorney Brian Cochran stated this is the Brunch Bill. This will allow upon passage, starting in September, that businesses with a Class A license can serve certain alcoholic beverages starting at 10:00 a.m. Mayor Cole stated that he was going to recuse himself from voting. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith requested a motion for the first reading of the Brunch Bill Ordinance. **Director Michael Gibson moved to approve the first reading of an ORDINANCE**

enacting Chapter 3, Section 3-9, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Bluefield, and to amend Chapter 24, Article II, Sections 24-69 and 24-74 for the purpose of allowing certain Alcoholic Beverage Control Administration Class "A" license holders to begin serving alcohol at ten o'clock on Sundays. The motion passed 4 -0/ Mayor Cole recued himself from voting.

OTHER:

Director Michael Gibson moved to adjourn, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Thomas J. Cole, Mayor