

**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
September 27, 2016
NOON**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, September 27, 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, City Manager Dane Rideout, Assistant City Manager Josh Cline, City Attorney Brian Cochran, City Treasurer Kelly Davis, Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey. Director Chuck McGonagle 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 September 13, 2016, Board of Directors meeting be approved as presented, unanimously approved and so ordered.

PRESENTATION

James “Smokey” Shott of the Community Foundation of the Virginias presented a \$7,250 grant check to the Bluefield Fire Department to help pay for new firefighting gear. City Ambassador Marie Blackwell presented the foundation with a certificate of appreciation. Captain Hodge and Lieutenant Pettrey discussed and demonstrated the cost to properly out-fit a firefighter to the minimum safety standard. The basic out-fit cost is approximately \$3,645, with self-contained breathing apparatus or hazardous incidents an additional cost of \$6,000 per unit.

Oath of Office

Captain Hodge introduced probationary Firefighter Mr. Ryan Duncan. City Clerk Bobbi Kersey administered the oath of office to Mr. Duncan. Mr. Duncan was congratulated on scoring the on highest on the physical agility and written test.

Recognition

City Manager Dane Rideout recognized three individuals for their dedication and service on a commission:

Mr. Jack White, member of the Public Housing Authority and Ms. Linda Whalen, member of the Historic Landmarks Commission.

Mr. Art Riley, chairman of the Historic Landmarks Commission, was present at the meeting. City Manager Rideout thanked Mr. Riley for his many years of making sure the downtown historic codes were preserved. Mr. Riley is a regular attendee of board meeting and keeps the Board “on their toes”. The Board and City Manager appreciate all that Mr. Riley contributes to the city and City Manager Rideout thanked Mr. Riley for sharing his wealth of knowledge now and in the future.

CITY MANAGER REPORT: DANE RIDEOUT

Condolences were expressed to the Steorts' family, in the passing of James "Jim" Steorts. Mr. Steorts was a longtime resident and business owner. City Manager Rideout stated Jim was on his "speed dial" and was a very positive and professional individual.

Time Capsule may have a new location. A flower bed area across from the Manor is being considered. The capsule would be on City property and available to the public. City Manager Rideout and the Board will be working with the committee that spoke at the September 13th meeting to rebury the time capsule.

Appalachian Power is working in the downtown area, upgrading vaults.

Thank you to the Board of Directors for supporting the Capital Improvement Plan by voting to purchase a paver that will permit crews to do a more efficient paving job when working on city streets. This purchase will allow more "in house" work and will save taxpayers. We were the first city to go to Buckhannon, WV to purchase surplus Department of Highway vehicles at a cost reduction for municipalities.

Holiday of Lights is being set up at the park. We are within one hundred thousand bulbs of having one million lights. A new display has been added this year that was voted on by the public.

Leaf truck is now picking up leaves on Saturday. Please **do not** include rocks or limbs. Use the Fix It Bluefield App to let the City know when you are ready for pick up. The leaf truck will pick up more days for collection later in the season.

Beautification Commission is working with Public Works to clean up the street triangles. They will begin a complete landscape facelift in the coming weeks. A new sculpture will be placed at the Bland Street entrance, as it is a gateway into our City.

Parks and Recreation Department after school program is licensed by the State and up and running. When school is in session, the program operated Monday through Friday from 2:30 – 5:30 p.m. When school is not in session the program operates from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. For more information, call Katana Mullens in Parks and Recreation.

October Fest will be October 8th at the Bluefield City Park from 1-6 p.m. Tickets can be purchased from Goodykoontz Drug Store, Bluefield Chamber of Commerce, Blue Spoon Café and the City of Bluefield. Tickets and more information can be found on the City of Bluefield website (www.cityofbluefield.com) on the visitors tab.

Trunk or Treat will be on Saturday, October 29th from 3 p.m. – 6 p.m. at the City Park. Plans are being made for a monster dash.

Halloween will be observed on October 31st from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Participating households should turn on their porch lights during trick-or-treat and for everyone's safety.

Code Enforcement reported five houses to be demolished this week. A state

inspector stated our workers are following the right procedures and was impressed with our crew. Andre Stevenson oversees abatements for the City and was commended for his work.

Heads Up Mercer County App has been upgraded. In order to get the new app, you must delete the old app and download the new one.

Fire Department reported the following:

- EMS Incidents– 20
- Fire Incidents – 17
- Motor Vehicle Accidents – 6

The Fire Department held a fire extinguisher class at Bluefield State College, a K-9 demo class, new firefighters training, assisted in Homecoming Parade and continues to update fire hydrant data and pre-plans when entering buildings.

A full report is available in the City Clerk’s office.

Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer

- The City of Bluefield will have the second Small Business Appreciation Day on Saturday, November 26th. A planning session has been scheduled for Friday, September 30th (8:30 a.m.) at the Corner Coffee Shop.
- The City received a grant from Cool and Connected, a planning assistance program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agricultural Rural Service, EPA’s Office of Sustainable Communities, and the Appalachian Regional Commission. The grant will help downtown businesses take advantage of broadband and promote startups under the city’s new Creating Resilient Economies by Assisting Transforming Entrepreneurs (CREATE) initiative.
- This Friday will be the last Fantastic Friday. McDowell County Farms will continue to bring their goods on Friday.
- Rebuild, Revive and Thrive a regional business network created by Travis Lowe has requested a meeting at the Commercialization Station. The meeting will be Thursday, September 29th at noon. This is a way for businesses to network.
- The Caterpillar Call center has closed but other businesses are actively being pursued.
- The regional Sales Executive Club will have a “**Shark Tank**” that is open to 15-20 year olds. Individuals may submit ideas to mput94@gmail.com or jadisibbio@fcbinc.com. One of five finalists will present their idea in front of the Sales Executives Club at Fincastle on the Mountain on October 12th (1st place: \$750 – 2nd place: \$500 – 3rd place: \$250). Submissions are due by September 30th.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association, stated the Christmas Parade will be December 10th at 1:00 p.m. The theme this year will be *The Island of Misfit Toys*. The grand marshal this year will be the Bluefield Fire Department. Mr. Riley thanked the Board for his Certificate of Appreciate and said he does what he does because he “loves Bluefield”.

ACTION ITEMS:

City Treasurer Kelly Davis requested approval to submit ninety (90) accounts for collection in the amount of \$59,838.03 for the month of September. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith **moved to approve ninety (90) accounts for collection in the amount of \$59,838.03 for the month of September; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole requested approval of a **RESOLUTION TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE DIVISION OF JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES.** Director Ellen Light moved to approve a **RESOLUTION TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE DIVISION OF JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES; unanimously approved and so ordered.** Assistant City Manager Josh Cline stated this agreement helps provide funds for officer salaries and to continue a multi-jurisdictional drug and violent crime task force.

Mayor Cole requested approval to reappoint Roy Pruett, Jonna Looney and Gary Boyce to the Zoning Board of Adjustments for a three-year term, September 27, 2016 – September 27, 2019. **Director Michael Gibson moved to reappoint Roy Pruett, Jonna Looney and Gary Boyce to the Zoning Board of Adjustments for a three-year term, September 27, 2016 – September 27, 2019; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole requested approval to appoint Matt Knowles to the Planning Commission for a three-year term, September 27, 2016-September 27, 2019. **Director Michael Gibson moved to appoint Matt Knowles to the Planning Commission for a three-year term, September 27, 2016 – September 27, 2019; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole requested approval to reappoint Virginia Peacock to the Historic Landmarks Commission for a three-year term, September 27, 2016 – 2019. **Director Michael Gibson moved to reappoint Virginia Peacock to the Historic Landmarks Commission for a three-year term, September 27, 2016 – September 27, 2019; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole requested approval to reappoint Nancy Siggelkow to the Library Board for a three-year term, September 27, 2016 – September 27, 2019. **Director Michael Gibson moved to reappoint Nancy Siggelkow to the Library Board for a three-year term, September 27, 2016 – September 27, 2019; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole requested approval of the first reading of an **ORDINANCE ENACTING CHAPTER 3, SECTION 3-10, PROVIDING FOR MUNICIPAL SALES AND SERVICE TAX AND MUNICIPAL USE TAX IN ACCORDANCE WITH WEST VIRGINIA CODE §8-1-5a.** City Attorney Brian Cochran stated the 1% sales tax would be added on to any business that is currently paying the 6% state sales tax. This tax would not go into effect until July 1, 2017. If approved at the first reading a public hearing will be held on October 11th before the second reading. **Director Ellen Light moved to approve the first reading of an ORDINANCE ENACTING CHAPTER 3, SECTION 3-10, PROVIDING FOR MUNICIPAL SALES AND SERVICE TAX AND MUNICIPAL USE TAX IN ACCORDANCE WITH WEST VIRGINIA CODE §8-1-5a; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole read the first reading of an **ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 38, SECTIONS 38-51, 38-54, and 38-56 OF PART II OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD.** City Attorney Brian

Cochran stated this was a B & O tax reduction ordinance required prior to implementing the 1% sales tax. This ordinance reduces the B & O tax for three separate business sections of our code. The first is the retail section which is now at half a percent and is being reduced to one-quarter of one percent. The second is on utilities: water, electric and gas. Those individual rates collected by the utility company, and passed on to the consumer, is being reduced by the City as follows:

- Water companies reduced to three and three-quarters percent (3.75%)
- Electric, light and power companies reduced to three and one-half percent (3.5%)
- Gas companies reduced to two and three-quarters percent (2.75%)

The third section is for contractors engaged or continuing within the city in the business of contracting, the tax shall be equal to one and three-quarters percent (1.75%). Mayor Cole stated that he would abstain from voting due to some categories being encompassed in his businesses. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith requested a motion for approval of the first reading of an **ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 38, SECTIONS 38-51, 38-54, and 38-56 OF PART II OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD**. Director Ellen Light moved to approve the first reading of an **ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 38, SECTIONS 38-51, 38-54, and 38-56 OF PART II OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD; 3 voted yes, Mayor Cole abstained, and Director McGonagle was absent. The motion passed.** This ordinance will not take effect until July 1, 2017. This ordinance is not a Home Rule ordinance and does not generate revenue. A public hearing is not required.

Mayor Cole requested approval of the second reading of **AN ORDINANCE REPEALING AND RESERVING SECTIONS 26-2, 26-3, 26-4, 26-5, AND 26-6 OF ARTICLE I, CHAPTER 26, PART II OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD**. City Attorney Brian Cochran stated this repeals ordinances relating to the City's Fine Arts Commission. The first reading on June 28th was passed: 3/ yes- 1/ no – 1 abstained. The second reading was July 12th and was postponed giving the commission more time to meet. On July 26th the board tabled the ordinance for another sixty days. Today is the second reading to repeal the Fine Arts Commission. **Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to approve the second reading of AN ORDINANCE REPEALING AND RESERVING SECTIONS 26-2, 26-3, 26-4, 26-5, AND 26-6 OF ARTICLE I, CHAPTER 26, PART II OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD; unanimously approved and so ordered.** There was a discussion concerning ownership, display and maintaining the decorated trains. City Manager Rideout said City Clerk Kersey and City Treasurer Davis are actively involved in communications with members concerning future activities and accounts and will inquire about the trains.

Mayor Cole requested approval of the second reading of an **ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD TO EXECUTE A QUITCLAIM DEED GRANTING, CONVEYING AND QUITCLAIMING TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE COUNTY OF MERCER, GRANTEE, ALL OF ITS INTEREST IN A CERTAIN ALLEY WHICH FRONTS ON MARYLAND AVENUE AND RUNS ALONG THE NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF GRANTEE'S REAL**. City Attorney Brian Cochran stated the retaining wall has been compromised and the Mercer County Board of Education will make the necessary repair, making it safe for the children. **Director Ellen Light moved to approve the first reading of ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD TO EXECUTE A QUITCLAIM DEED GRANTING, CONVEYING AND QUITCLAIMING TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE COUNTY OF MERCER, GRANTEE, ALL OF ITS INTEREST IN A CERTAIN ALLEY WHICH FRONTS ON MARYLAND AVENUE AND RUNS**

ALONG THE NORTHERN BOUNDARY OF GRANTEE'S REAL ESTATE, IN THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA, unanimously approved and so ordered.

OTHER:

Ms. Marie Blackwell was congratulated for being a recipient, from West Virginia Living Magazine, as one of fifty women named *West Virginia's Wonder Women 2016*. Through her hard work and determination, Marie has made our state a better place to live. Marie is currently the City Ambassador providing tours to newcomers and helping businesses with various activities. Marie is very involved with veterans and their families. She serves on U.S Senator Joe Manchin's Advisory Group, Bluefield State College's Veterans Board and has lobbied the state Legislature for a "Boots to Business" bill to help veterans start businesses in the state. Ms. Blackwell is involved with the Denver Foundation and the Veterans Recognition Day. Marie is always "fighting for those who already have". Marie is an inspiration to everyone that has the pleasure of knowing her and a blessing for those who are unaware of her perseverance.

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

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Thomas J. Cole, Mayor