

**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
October 25, 2016
NOON**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, October 25, 2016, at noon in the Municipal Building Boardroom. Present were Mayor Thomas J. Cole, Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith, Director Ellen Light, Director Chuck McGonagle, 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.

INVOCATION – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Craig Hammond invoked divine guidance for the conduct of the meeting and Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith 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 October 11, 2016, Public Hearing be approved as presented, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Member Chuck McGonagle moved that the minutes of the October 11, 2016, Board of Directors meeting be approved as presented, unanimously approved and so ordered.

PRESENTATION

Assistant City Manager Josh Cline discussed a power point presentation on *The Case For and the Case Against Staggered Elections in Bluefield, West Virginia*. Section 7 of the City Charter describes the present election process. Assistant City Manager Cline discussed the Bluefield municipal election map districts and precincts. The following reasons were listed for staggered elections:

1. Continuity and Loss of Institutional Knowledge
2. Projects Fall by the Wayside
3. Relationships Maybe Squandered
4. Common Practice

The following reasons were listed against staggered elections:

1. Continuity can be obtained through the City Manager and Staff
2. There is time to learn/ filing begins in March
3. Budget not urgent/ new budget takes place the following year
4. New blood is sometimes necessary

A complete copy of the presentation can be found on www.cityofbluefield.com and City of Bluefield Facebook page. Assistant City Manager Cline thanked Mr. Craig Hammond for his input concerning staggered elections.

CITY MANAGER REPORT: DANE RIDEOUT

Congratulations to Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer for his hard work and dedication towards the Bluefield Commercialization Station. Last week the City was awarded a grant for over two million dollars for the development of the commercialization station.

Public Works has used 1130 tons of asphalt this season and all but two potholes on the Fix –It Bluefield list have been repaired.

East River Mountain Overlook concession is still open. Vandalism has been reported and issues have been corrected. Police patrols will be increased.

Church Parking Lot on During Street is going through a beautiful transition thanks to the Bluefield Historical Society and Bluefield Beautification Commission. Assistant City Manager Josh Cline noted the stones were quarried locally and came from the Highland Avenue project.

City Hall's exterior is being painted.

Holiday of Lights will open Thanksgiving night. Volunteers are needed to work the gate. If interested contact City Hall. To date 900,000 lights will be on display for the Holiday of Lights.

Veterans Community Luncheon will be held Thursday, November 10th at the Bluefield Auditorium from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. The City invites local area veterans, members of the armed forces, and their families to a free luncheon to honor their service to our nation. Retired, U.S. Army Major General Michael S. Repass will be the guest speaker. Major General Repass is the Chief Executive Officer for Able Global Solution, LLC which he founded in 2013. Major General Repass was born at the old Bluefield Sanitarium. For more information contact marie.blackwell@cityofbluefield.com .

Early Voting will be held at Parks and Recreation facility from October 26th – November 5th.

Bluefield State College called the Bluefield Fire Department this morning due to a muriatic acid spill near the pool. The building where the pool is located had to be evacuated and the fire department was still at the scene.

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.

Albemarle Street parking is permitted on one side of the street. New signage has been erected and warning tickets will be given for the next thirty days. This will help with emergency vehicles, snow plows, and trash/leaf trucks.

Bluefield Fire Department educated over 960 students of the dangers of fire and having a plan of escape, during Fire Prevention Week. The fire department went to Bluefield Intermediate School, Memorial School, Westminster, C.A.S.E. of WV, Cumberland Heights and Whitethorn School.

Bluefield State College has won a National Golf Championship. The Big Blues Men's Golf Team traveled to State College, PA and participated in the USCAA Golf National Championship for the first time in school history. They led from beginning to end and secured the College's first National Championship since 1927 -1928. More information can be found on:

http://theuscaa.com/2016_Golf_Championships/Bluefield_State_College_Captures_First_U_SCAA_National_Championship

Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer introduced Dr. Sharon Perot. Dr. Perot is the Associate Professor and Chair in the Department of Business and Dean of the College of Professional Programs at Bluefield College. Dr. Perot stated Bluefield College would now offer an Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management Certificate. Dr. Perot discussed program goals, curriculum overview, program components, and cost. For more information call 800.872.0176 or email: admissions@bluefield.edu. Community and Economic Development Director Spencer stated the goal of the Commercialization Station is to grow jobs locally and the certificate now offered by Bluefield College will work hand in hand. Community and Economic Development Director Spencer hopes to move all of the new businesses created inside of the Commercialization Station to a permanent site within the city or county, in a three-year period. Mayor Cole stated Mr. Spencer was instrumental in helping the City receive federal funding and thanked him for his efforts.

A new market tax credit class will be offered on November 11th and the City of Bluefield will have the second Small Business Appreciation Day on Saturday, November 26th. For more information contact jspencer@cityofbluefield.com.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Virginia Chryssikos, Bluefield citizen, thanked City Manager Rideout and the Board for supporting the reburial of the time capsule. Ms. Chryssikos provided information concerning the American Revolution Bicentennial time capsule.

Kelly Hale, Bluefield citizen, spoke in opposition to the proposed Bluefield Dog Park. Ms. Hale suggested recently acquired land at the city park would be a better location.

Mike Romeo, Bluefield businessman and resident, voiced concern about the Knights Inn Property on Cumberland Road. Mr. Romeo said he wanted to go on record because he shares a common wall and address with this property. Mayor Cole stated the Bluefield Building Commission would meet later today and that property was on the agenda for discussion.

ACTION ITEMS:

City Treasurer Kelly Davis requested approval of Sanitary Board equipment lease payments from the General Fund to the Financial Stabilization Fund. **Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith** moved to approve the Sanitary Board equipment lease payments from the General Fund to the Financial Stabilization Fund.

Mayor Cole requested a motion to approve the Field Turf Contract at Mitchell Stadium, not to exceed \$450,000. **Director Ellen Light** moved to approve the **Field Turf Contract at Mitchell Stadium, not to exceed \$450,000.** This is a state contract and is bid by the state.

OTHER:

Mayor Cole stated a Town Hall Meeting will be held at six o'clock at City Hall to discuss staggered elections.

Congratulations Mayor Cole for becoming a Grandad for the sixth time! Mayor Cole now has five grandsons and one granddaughter.

Happy Birthday to our Human Resource Director Angie Foley!

Director Ellen Light moved to adjourn, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Thomas J. Cole, Mayor