

**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA**

**June 13, 2017 - Noon**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, June 13, 2017, 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 Treasurer Kelly Davis, Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey.

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. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith, requested a silent prayer for the family of Lt. Aaron Crook and the Shott family.

Mayor Thomas J. Cole called the meeting to order.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved that the minutes of the May 23, 2017, Board of Directors meeting be approved, unanimously approved and so ordered.**

**CITY MANAGER DANE RIDEOUT**

**City Clerk Bobbi Kersey** was thanked for her hard work on the election. An election takes months to organize and the election went very smoothly. City Manager Rideout said he visited each polling location several times, citizens were happy, and those working the district area polls were supportive.

**City Engineer Tony Wagner** reported work along Bluefield Avenue is almost complete. AEP will work on another intersection and citizens will be notified when work begins in that area. Excavating behind the City Park Auditorium continues to correct a water issue. A French drain will be installed at the old softball field. A French drain was also completed on Verdun Heights and seed planting will follow.

**IT Specialist Billy Hester** continues to maintain all computers and update malware and firewalls are up to date. IT Specialist Billy Hester has been instrumental in getting iWork. This database is a user-friendly way to create documents, spreadsheets, and presentations. This will be another tool used for productivity and accountability in Code Enforcement and Public Works.

**Human Resource Director Angie Foley** reported there would be a probationary Fire Fighter's Exam in September. Applications are still being accepted. City Manager Rideout, Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer and Human Resource director Angie Foley have been going through applications for the GIS position. They hope to have a recommendation and have a GIS person by August.

**Parks and Recreation** Department has started camp season. For a full listing, please check the city website, [www.cityofbluefield.com](http://www.cityofbluefield.com). The department is working with Bluefield State.

**Bluefield Fire Department** had five individuals that assisted with the accident involving our Police Department. They were the first responders on the scene and had to deal with some catastrophic issues. The Fire Department lost a brother and a friend and we often forget about others that may be affected during such an incident. City Manager Dane Rideout publicly wanted to thank Chief Cary and his men for their lifesaving efforts. The department also responded to two major fires: a car on Washington Street and a basement house fire.

**Flag Fundraiser** donations are being accepted until July 31. Many of the flags proudly displayed in the City of Bluefield are at a point of retirement in alignment with flag code. In order to continue

this tradition, city officials are asking individuals and organizations to sponsor a flag for replacement. The cost of each flag is \$30.00 and can be made in memory of... or in honor of... a loved one. A virtual plaque will be displayed on the City's website. Director Michael Gibson suggested students might want to become involved, contribute and make this an educational opportunity.

**Proclamation**

Mayor Cole stated the Board of Directors had a special proclamation and requested that Director Ellen Peters Light read the proclamation. Director Light request her Dad and his wife Dafney come to the front of the room.

***PROCLAMATION***

***Charles A. Peters Baseball Park***

**WHEREAS**, the City of Bluefield is the owner of The Bluefield City Park on Stadium Drive, which bisects the common line between the State of West Virginia and the Commonwealth of Virginia; and

**WHEREAS**, the baseball stadium at the City Park is the home of "Bowen Field", which has hosted professional baseball teams for almost 100 years; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Bluefield has received national recognition as being the home of historic Bowen Field, in the City's baseball park; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has maintained and upgraded Bowen Field over the last 20 years, such that it is one of the preeminent playing surfaces in the Appalachian League of Professional Baseball; and

**WHEREAS**, the baseball stadium and concourse have needed capital improvements and renovations for a number of years; and

**WHEREAS**, with other pressing financial commitments, the City has been unable to fund those capital improvements; and

**WHEREAS**, the City leases the baseball stadium to the Bluefield Baseball Club, a non-profit organization whose mission is to host a professional baseball team at Bowen Field; and

**WHEREAS**, the Bluefield Baseball Club is operated by a volunteer Board of Directors, who devote their time and talents to maintaining the ballpark and a professional baseball team on Bowen Field; and

**WHEREAS**, one member of the Bluefield Baseball Club Board of Directors has stepped forward to finance necessary capital improvements to the baseball park, including remodeling of the two team clubhouses; upgrades to the batting tunnel; turf replacement on the infield; and, most visibly, expansion and remodeling of the baseball park front entrance and concourse; and

**WHEREAS**, Charles A. (Charlie) Peters, is the Director of the Bluefield Baseball Club, who has stepped forward to fund those capital improvements of the baseball park; and

**WHEREAS**, the gift of Charlie Peters and his wife Dafney to the City of Bluefield to defray the cost of those capital improvements at the baseball park is one of the most, if not the most, generous gift ever made to the City by individuals; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield is genuinely moved by the generosity of Charles and Dafney Peters in making this gift and expresses its sincere appreciation and thanks to Charlie and Dafney Peters for their demonstrative commitment to the City of Bluefield and the continuation of professional baseball on Bowen Field; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield has met and determined that the generous gift of Charlie and Dafney Peters is worthy of public and ongoing recognition by the City; and

**WHEREAS**, after thoughtful reflection and discussion, the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield has determined that to honor this most generous gift, the baseball stadium located at The Bluefield City Park should be known as the "Charles A. Peters Baseball Park"; and

**WHEREAS**, from this point forward, baseball in the City of Bluefield will be played on Bowen Field at Peter's Park.

### **NOW THEREFORE:**

The Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield hereby proclaim that from this day forward, the baseball stadium at The Bluefield City Park will be known as the "Charles A. Peters Baseball Park".

Submitted this 13<sup>th</sup> day of June 2017

Mr. Peters said he wanted to help with the improvements and wanted to see the ballpark continue for many years. Mr. Peters has been a baseball fan for over sixty years.

**Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer** gave the following report:

- Fantastic Friday will be from 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm.
- First Friday of the month will be held in Chicory Square sponsored by The Downtown Merchants and the Bluefield Daily Telegraph.
- Windows in the downtown area are being used to highlight businesses and Bluefield History. One window is dedicated to Baseball and another is on Facts about Bluefield. Intern Megan Beggs is working on this project.
- Intern Trevor Mullins, upcoming Junior at Concord University, is updating the business directory. The business directory is a great resource for outside visitors and businesses.
- Community and Economic Development Director Spencer stated he would be leaving early to attend a workshop at the Bluefield Area Transit Building. The free workshop will focus on obtaining patents and copyrights. The Robert C. Byrd Institute in partnership with Dinsmore and Shoh,I LLP will present the workshop for small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Create opportunity sponsored by the West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership will present a workshop on LEAN 101: An Introduction to Lean Manufacturing. Lean establishes a systematic approach to eliminating waste and creating flow throughout the whole company. The workshop will be held at the Bluefield Area Transit Training Center on June 29, 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. The cost is \$25/person and includes lunch and training materials. For more information or questions, contact Michael Goddard ([Michael.goddard@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:Michael.goddard@mail.wvu.edu).) or Gerald Biser ([gerald.biser@mail.edu.wv](mailto:gerald.biser@mail.edu.wv)).

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association** asked where the business directory was located. Community and Economic Development Director Spencer stated the business directory is online on the My Bluefield.com website. The directory will be put on a GIS map/interactive map so businesses can be located quickly. Congratulations on the window treatments, Mr. Riley thought it really dressed up areas while telling the history of our city. Mr. Riley stated that "some time ago" there was a discussion concerning signage. Mr. Riley asked if that discussion continues. City Manager Rideout stated that Marc Meachum had given him a study

from 2008 that included a design. It has been a great reference. A company was brought in and signage was discussed but was too expensive for the city to consider. The price tag in 2008 was \$50,000. City Manager Rideout stated when signs are put up the city wants to be able to afford and acquire proper signage.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

**City Treasurer Kelly Davis** requested approval of the May 2017 financial summary. At the close of May 2017, the 11<sup>th</sup> month of the fiscal year, revenue collected totaled \$10,493,011 (96.26%) of the projected amount of \$10,900,660. Expenditures total \$10,107,966 (78.20%) of the projected budget of \$12,926,114. **Director Ellen Light moved to approve approve the May financial statement as presented; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

**City Treasurer Kelly Davis requested approval of seventy-three accounts for the June Collections for \$47,908. Director Chuck McGonagle moved to approve the June Collections as presented; unanimously approved and so ordered.**

**City Treasurer Kelly** Davis requested approval of lease/purchase financing option for a new fire truck. City Treasurer Davis stated the invoice for the fire tuck is \$570,645, a down payment of \$200,000 and finance of \$370,645. Three banks were contacted concerning municipal lease purchasing and after reviewing the items, City Treasurer Davis recommended BB & T for a five (5) year term at 2.43% as the rate. Annual payments of \$76,535 for the five years. Total interest repay would be \$22,676. In addition, the Board had to decide who would be the signer of documents. **Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to approve the lease/purchase financing option with BB & T and authorize the mayor to sign documents, unanimously approved and so ordered.**

**Mayor Cole read the SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD TO PURCHASE PARCELS OF REAL ESTATE SITUATED IN THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA FOR A PRICE OF \$10,000.00.** City Manager Rideout stated an objective for this Board was to fix the intersection at Stadium Drive, Cherry Street Maryland. Part of the road is state owned. Several years ago a firm looked at the intersection but said land needed to be acquired. It has taken time but negotiations are in the works. The intent is for the city to purchase the property and then turn it over to the state and they will redo the intersection making it safe and less congested. **Director Michael Gibson moved to approve the SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD TO PURCHASE PARCELS OF REAL ESTATE SITUATED IN THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA FOR A PRICE OF \$10,000.00, unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Cole stated an ordinance concerning vacant buildings and property maintenance was passed in 2015. K-VAT, lessee of the old Kroger on Cumberland Road, has had a vacant building for two years. A lawsuit was filed against K-VAT. During the last meeting, the Board proposed a counter offer that was rejected by K-VAT. At today's work session, the Board discussed the newest settlement offer regarding the pending ligation from K-VAT. Mayor Cole requested a motion to approve or reject the recent settlement offer from K-VAT. **Director Ellen Light moved to reject the settlement offer regarding pending litigation with K-VAT. Four (4) yes and one (1) abstained (Director Michael Gibson).**

**Reports, Boards and Commissions:** None

**Reports from Officers:**

All the Board members expressed their sorrow and sympathy to the family of Lt. Aaron Crook, and to our own family of police officers, fire fighters, and first responders. Citizens are asked to continue their prayers for the fallen officer and the family.

Mayor Cole moved to adjourn, unanimously approved and so ordered.

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Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

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Thomas J. Cole, Mayor