

**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
July 25, 2017 - Noon**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, July 25, 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, City Attorney Colin Cline, 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.

Mayor Thomas J. Cole called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved that the minutes of the July 11, 2017, Board of Directors meeting be approved, unanimously approved and so ordered.

CITY MANAGER DANE RIDEOUT

New Fire Engine ceremony was held earlier today. This is a “huge asset” for the City and is now in service. The new fire engine was designed by the fire department to meet the geographical needs of the city.

Thank you and appreciation was expressed to Mayor Cole, Director Light and Director McGonagle for their service and dedication to the city the past four years. This board attended ninety-six meetings, not counting special meetings, town hall meetings and various other city functions. City Manager Rideout stated, “the direction this Board had provided the staff, the team they had assembled, and then allowing everyone to do their job had been absolutely powerful”.

Presentation

Code Enforcement Director Specialist Lori Mills stated the Best of Bluefield Award was started when Mayor Cole and the Board suggested highlighting homeowners who go “above and beyond” in maintaining their property. Code Enforcement Officer Alex Ellison recognized Raymond and Melinda Bane. Code Enforcement Officer Ellison stated this family truly cared about their home and property. He said it was his pleasure to present a gift card from Hometown Shell and the Best of Bluefield Award for all they do for their neighborhood. Mayor Cole thanked Mr. and Mrs. Bane for being a “shining star in their neighborhood” and going the extra mile.

Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer said there would be an action item later authorizing the mayor to sign an application for a \$15,000 Appalachian Regional Commission Grant. The grant would allow implementation of some of the items identified in the Cool and Connected Program, such initiative marketing tools. The plans for the Commercialization Station were submitted by E.L. Robinson. The plans are now in an internal review and will be presented to the new board on August 8. Intern Megan Beggs in working on movie night for Friday, July 28. The movie will be *The Secret Life of Pets* and begins at 9:00 p.m. at Craft Memorial Library. Community and Economic Development Director Spencer said not only were we losing three board members but also he was losing his three interns. Intern Megan Beggs and Intern Trevor Mullins are returning to Concord College. Exchange student Jacob Carey has taken a graduate position at Cameron University in Lawton, Oklahoma. Jacob will be studying for his MBA and will be an associate tennis

coach. Community and Economic Development Director Spencer thanked his interns for their dedication and hard work. Community and Economic Development Director Spencer thanked the Board for the opportunity to work for the City.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ed Tomchin, Bluefield citizen, stated he submitted a FOIA request concerning K-VA-T and wanted to know when he could see a copy of the agreement. Mayor Cole said there would be an action item after public comments from the Executive session earlier this morning that should answer his question. However, Mayor Cole said he did not know when there would be a completed document but a copy would be made available to the public. Mr. Tomchin discussed the possibility of hiring more firefighters to lower the ISO rating.

Judy Silbaugh, Bluefield citizen, said people have been shooting off fireworks within the city limits since June. Ms. Silbaugh asked for speed humps on Parkway due to it being a school zone and she was concerned with the excessive speeding in the area. Ms. Silbaugh discussed posting animal ordinances at the Tallyard.

ACTION ITEMS

Mayor Cole stated this morning during an executive session the Board discussed the proposed settlement agreement with K-VA-T. Attorney Brian Cochran had some suggestions for modifications. Mayor Cole stated he did not anticipate any issues, but a few areas needed to be corrected and sent back to K-VA-T for approval. Mayor Cole requested a motion for City Manager Dane Rideout to approve the settlement once it is amended. Director Ellen Light moved to authorize City Manager Dane Rideout to approve the final agreement as amended by Attorney Brian Cochran. Director Michael Gibson recused himself from the discussion and vote due to a legal conflict. The motion was approved.

City Treasurer Kelly Davis requested approval of the General Fund Budget Revision #1. The first revision of the new fiscal year is mandated by the WV State Auditor's Office to revise the fund balance that was estimated in March 2017 to the actual carry-over on July 1, 2017. After year – end closing adjustments and accruals, the fund balance that was estimated at \$1,305,380 in March was actually \$2,126,499 (an increase of \$821,119). The safety patrol grant and two contributions lines have also been revised. Overall, the revenue budget increases \$839,619.

The expenditure side of the revision appropriates the \$839,619 increase in anticipated revenue. Allocations are made for the GIS Coordinator position and the City Attorney's department budget. A little over \$201,375 is set aside in contingency and reserves. The carry – over K-9 donations are allocated and up-to-date. The Fire Department capital equipment line increased \$201,000 to account for the down payment on the new fire truck and recent WVAWC grant. The revision also includes a carry – over from the prior year for Parks and Recreation of \$27,270 to complete the Phase II renovations.

The \$839,619 increases in the General Fund Budget brings both the revenue and expenditures to a balanced budget of \$11,299,600. Director Ellen Light moved to approve the General Fund Budget Revision #1 as presented; unanimously approved and so ordered.

City Treasurer Kelly Davis requested approval of the Coal Severance Fund Budget Revision #1, as required by state law.

The first revision to the Coal Severance Fund adjusts the estimated fund balance of \$9,000 to the actual fund balance of \$10,200 – an increase of \$1,200.

The expenditure revision increases the Police Capital Equipment line by the same amount; thereby creating a balanced budget as required by State Code. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to approve the Coal Severance Budget Revision #1 as presented, unanimously approved and so ordered.

City Treasurer Kelly Davis requested approval of seventy-eight accounts for the July Collections #2 for \$58,420.21. City Treasurer Davis stated some citizens have set up a payment plan but she requested the accounts be approved in the event payment is not made. Director Ellen Light moved to approve the July Collection list, including those that have set up payments, unanimously approved and so ordered.

City Treasurer Davis stated she appreciated the opportunity to serve the citizens of Bluefield. Ms. Davis was hired by this Board approximately three years ago. Mayor Cole and the Directors expressed what an asset Ms. Davis is to the city.

Mayor Cole read a resolution and requested a motion authorizing the Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer to apply for a \$15,000 ARC Grant. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to approve the authorization for Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer to apply for a \$15,000 ARC Grant, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Cole read a Resolution Declaring August As Animal Awareness Month. Director Chuck McGonagle moved to approve the Resolution Declaring August As Animal Awareness Month, unanimously approved and so ordered. Ms. Judy Silbaugh, Ms. Kathy Nelson, and Ms. Ginny Hill accepted the Resolution.

Mayor Cole requested a motion to renew a lease agreement with Nick Harrison. City Manager Rideout stated the City had purchased land on John Nash which and a house is located each premises. The city has a one-year lease on each property. Mr. Harrison and Mr. McLeod help maintain the property and aid in securing the area. Director Chuck McGonagle moved the City of Bluefield renew a lease agreement with Nick Harrison, unanimously approved and so ordered. Director Ellen Light moved the City of Bluefield renew a leased agreement with Jason McLeod, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Cole requested a motion to approve a one-year lease agreement with Mercer County Schools for athletic events for the 2017-2018 season. Mayor Cole noted the agenda read Bluefield High School and it would be necessary to amend the wording that was on the agenda.

Director Michael Gibson moved to amend the wording Bluefield High School to Mercer County Schools and approve the lease agreement between the City of Bluefield and Mercer County Schools for athletic events for the 2017-2018 season, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Director Ellen Light moved approval of a lease agreement between the City of Bluefield and Bluefield College for athletic events for the 2017-2018 season, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved approval of a lease agreement between the City of Bluefield and Tazewell County for athletic events for the 2017 -2018 season, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Reports, Boards and Commissions:

Reports from Officers:

Director Michael Gibson stated each Board Member had come with a certain amount of experience and special skill. He said Mayor Cole had a great teacher in his dad, past Mayor Paul Cole. Chuck McGonagle brought technical expertise and good solid judgement. Ellen Light has learned the budget and no one can question her knowledge of city life. He thanked them all for a great job.

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith stated she felt they had been a great team and felt those coming on the board would be a strong team. She felt this board made a difference in Bluefield and the direction its going. She requested they come back for support and input.

Director Chuck McGonagle thanked the citizens for electing him four years ago. He said he was discouraged in the direction the city was going. He felt this board had made a difference. He thanked and said he was proud of the city's department heads, employees and staff for how hard they worked for the Board and citizens.

Director Ellen Light stated she had not missed a meeting in her four -year term and asked citizens to become involved in city issues and to vote. She said the board's greatest achievement was hiring professionals for posts in city government. Director Light said she most enjoyed working and getting to know the staff and employees in the city. Director Light wished the new board the best of luck.

Mayor Cole stated it had been a huge honor and thanked the citizens for electing him and the Board for choosing him as mayor. He said he hoped he had served them well. Mayor Cole recognized his father, Paul Cole, who served as mayor of Bluefield for thirteen (13) years. Mayor Cole spoke about each board member. Mayor Cole said he has known Michael Gibson a long time and considers him a friend and a great board member. Serving with Barbara had been a humbling experience and he thanked her for being the vice mayor and spoke about her wonderful family. Chuck and Mayor Cole have a business partnership and have known each other over twenty years. Chuck is humble, quiet and a salt of the earth person and people listen when he has something to say. Mayor Cole said he loved Ellen even though they disagreed at time. Mayor Cole stated Ellen was probably the most engaged board member. Dane was a tremendous hire and has done a great job for the city. Mayor Cole said he is seeing pride once again in Bluefield. Mayor Cole stated he considered the administration and staff as an investment. Mayor Cole thanked Attorney Brian Cochran, Past Assistant Josh Cline, City Clerk Bobbi Kersey, and Interim City Manager /Police Chief Dennis Dillow for their service during his term. Mayor Cole thanked his girlfriend Michelle Munsey for all of her support. Mayor Cole said he thought the City was going in the right direction and good luck to the new mayor.

Mayor Cole asked Director Ellen Light to adjourn the meeting for him.

Director Light requested a motion to adjourn.

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to adjourn the meeting, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Thomas J. Cole, Mayor