

**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
August 8, 2017 - Noon**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, August 8, 2017, at noon in the Municipal Building Boardroom. Present were Mayor Ron Martin, Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith, Director Matt Knowles, Director Michael Gibson, Director Robb Williams, 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 Ron Martin called the meeting to order and thanked everyone present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Director Michael Gibson moved that the minutes of the July 25, 2017, Board of Directors meeting be approved, unanimously approved and so ordered.

CITY MANAGER DANE RIDEOUT

The Boy Scouts were thanked for all of their community service in the city.

City Engineer Tony Wagner received two bid proposals for contracted street paving. These bids will be discussed during action items. Clean up day for Mitchell Stadium has been rescheduled for August 14. City Engineer Wagner has been supervising the sealing, patching, and repairing of concrete. The new black fence is ready to be installed.

IT Specialist Billy Hester has been working with GIS Specialist Brandon Sadler ordering necessary computer equipment.

Welcome GIS Specialist Brandon Sadler. Mr. Sadler will be working with IT Specialist Billy Hester to update data within the GIS system and provide information for the Comprehensive Plan. He is proficient in pulling technology from LIDAR and CAD. Mr. Sadler will be working under the Community and Economic Development Department.

Building Inspector Lori Mills began as Building Code Official on August 1. Gerald Steele has retired. Building Inspector Lori Mills and her staff reported: forty-one code cases in the last two weeks, two illegal pit bulls seized, one dog rescue and placed twenty-seven structures on the demolition list. Vacant properties will be a top priority.

Human Resource Director Angie Foley has deployed the workplace wellness challenge to city employees and board members. The goal is to help keep employees involved in their own health and continue with healthy lifestyle habits. The Two Virginias 5K challenge is a competition between the City of Bluefield and the Town of Bluefield with the winner holding the traveling trophy for one year. The City of Bluefield won the trophy last year. The 5K will be held on August 26.

Bluefield Police Department reported:

915 calls for service
98 arrests
145 reports filed
831 citations written with 437 of those being warnings

Bluefield Fire Department reported:

42 EMS incidents
18 fire incidents
72 total calls for service

HAZ-MAT issued to Bluefield State College concerning a construction issue.

City Manager Rideout stated there was a presentation on the census. City Manager Rideout challenged the Board and Citizens to get the "word out" because of the importance this census has to our City.

Transit Bus was involved in an accident last night. No injuries reported.

Municipal League conference was held in Morgantown last week and City Manager Rideout, City Attorney Cline, Mayor Martin and Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson – Smith attended. Issues such as one percent sales tax, home rule and ordinances were discussed. There was a briefing on legislative actions that would affect municipalities. It appears legislators were bogged down with the budget and not a lot came out of the session. However, City Manager Rideout and Mayor Martin stated attending the league meeting was a great way to discuss ideas and network with other leaders.

K-VA-T update agreement is still between lawyers. The details of the agreement are still being codified. City Attorney Cline said it had been six weeks and hopes for a conclusion soon. There was a FIOA request concerning attorney fees. City Attorney Cline stated the City has spent \$25,090 in attorney fees and \$200 in filing cost.

Mayor Martin thanked City Clerk Bobbi Kersey for her work and recognized former Mayor Tom Cole, who was present at the meeting.

Recruiter Field Representative Annette Brichford presented information preparing for the 2020 Census, called an "end to end test". The test run will take place in three areas throughout the country, including nine counties in southern West Virginia. Mercer is one of the nine counties. The primary objective of the test is to confirm key technologies, data collection methods, outreach and promotional strategies, and management and response processes that will be deployed in support of the 2020 Census. Ms. Brichford stated that, beginning in August residents may see census workers on the streets. She urged citizens to cooperate with these workers and reminded citizens of the importance of the census to our city. For more information on data that has been collected, go to census.gov.

Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer said he was excited to have Brandon Sadler as part of the economic department. Mr. Sadler is working on the maps for the Comprehensive Plan. He hopes Mr. Sadler will present the power/benefits of GIS in September and how it can be used in economic development. Mercer County is participating in a program with CGI, a company that will produce community videos for the city at no cost. Area businesses will be contacted. The videos will be used in the Work, Live, and Play program. If no businesses participate, the city will still receive three free videos. Director Spencer requested the Board's authorization to participate with CGI. Director Michael Gibson moved to enter into an agreement with CGI, unanimously approved and so ordered. Director Spencer stated plans for the Commercialization Station were expected to be finalized but negotiations continue with a potential tenant. Community and Economic Development Director Spencer requested the board to delay action on the agreement for two weeks while negotiations continue. EL Robinson representatives, Randel Lewis and David Cole, gave an overview concerning the Commercialization Station. The project includes electrical upgrades, new lighting, doors and windows along with other exterior and interior improvements. The EDA must approve the plans and then the plans will go out for public bid. A lot of the work is inside the building so weather will not be a factor.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association, welcomed the new board and asked that they focus on developing retail in the downtown area. Mr. Riley asked if there was a timeline for the Commercialization Station. Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer stated the project could not be bid out before plans are approved by the EDA. Once approved, hopefully in the next two months, bids will be accepted and construction should begin later this year or the first of the coming year. Again, the weather should not be a factor in the construction. Mr. Riley thanked Mark Sanders, Bluefield State College video specialist, for filming the Board meeting for the last eleven years. Mr. Sanders has only missed three meetings during this time. On behalf of the citizens who watch at home, thank you Mr. Sanders.

Ed Stevenson discussed concerns about properties he has owned for sixty years that are abandoned and vacant. He is now receiving a bill for street and fire fees. City Manager Rideout stated city is doing better at finding citizens that live within the city who have not been billed for property they own. City Manager Rideout requested Mr. Stevenson stay after the meeting to discuss his concerns.

ACTION ITEMS

City Treasurer Kelly Davis stated she had reviewed the July monthly financial summary in depth during the earlier work session. In summary, at the close of the July 2017, the 1st month of the new fiscal year, revenue collected totaled \$1,121,232 (12.22%) of the projected budget amount of \$9,173,101. Expenditures totaled \$1,359,127 (12.03%) of the projected budget of \$11,299,600. December and July typically reflect a lower cash flow. In addition, a \$200,000 down payment was made for the new fire truck. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson – Smith moved to approve the monthly financial summary for July 31, 2017; unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Martin asked City Manager Rideout to discuss the street paving bids. City Manager Rideout stated on July 24, two sealed contract bids were opened with representatives from each company present. Southern WV Paving had a bid of \$237,825.73 and AAA Paving had a bid of \$251,800. City Manager Rideout recommended Southern WV Paving. City Manager Rideout said the city is divided into four quadrants. The city works hard to make sure paving is done in different parts of the city. Information taken from Fix It Bluefield and data from Public Works and utility projects are collected and become part of the decision making process. Street paving is on a five-year plan. Some streets will be milled, some paved, and some will be have both. Approximately twenty-eight miles of road belong to the state. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson – Smith moved to approve the contract bid of \$237,825.73; unanimously approved and so ordered.

The next agenda item was to approve Tom Cole to the Buildings Commission. Mayor Martin stated the Board had a discussion at the work session and Mr. Cole was going to defer at this is time. Mayor Martin recommended this action be tabled until the next meeting. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson – Smith moved to table the appointment of Tom Cole to the Buildings Commission; unanimously approved and so ordered. City Manager Rideout stated he would be working with City Clerk Kersey on openings for boards and commissions. City Manager Rideout said he would submit possible candidates and requested the Board submit names. City Manager Rideout would like to brief the Board by having a representative from each commission present an overview of their goals, schedule and finances.

Mayor Martin requested approval of Approval of a Lease Agreement between the City of Bluefield and the Bluefield High School Band Boosters and Graham High School Band Boosters. Mayor Martin said the agenda had the 2016 football season and the motion should

be amended to the 2017 football season. City Attorney Colin Cline stated the city historically does several contracts with the school systems. Contracts have been secured with several schools for use of Mitchell Stadium. Through a separate agreement, the city works with the band boosters from Bluefield High School and Tazewell High School. They will staff the concession stands, the city maintains the concession stands and the city receives 20% of the gross sales. This is a continuation of the relationship. Director Michael Gibson moved to approve a lease agreement between the City of Bluefield and the Bluefield High School Band Boosters and the Graham High School Band Boosters for the, amended year, 2017 football season, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Martin read the **First Reading** of an ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT AND MORTGAGE WITH RESPECT TO A 3.13 ACRE PARCEL OF REAL ESTATE SITUATED IN THE VICINITY OF WILLOW AND LYNN STREETS ON BLUEFIELD AVENUE IN THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA, FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREATING A LIEN IN FAVOR OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PURSUANT TO THE SPECIAL AWARD CONDITIONS OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION'S FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AWARD TO THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, AWARD DATE SEPTEMBER 28, 2016, PROJECT #01-01-14742. Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer stated the grant for the Commercialization Station had certain stipulations. For the Federal Government to give over two million dollars they want to know that the city will operate as the Commercialization Station for a period of fifteen years. The Federal Government wants a lien on the property so the money is spent the way it is intended. Director Michael Gibson moved to approve the First Reading of an ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT AND MORTGAGE WITH RESPECT TO A 3.13 ACRE PARCEL OF REAL ESTATE SITUATED IN THE VICINITY OF WILLOW AND LYNN STREETS ON BLUEFIELD AVENUE IN THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA, FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREATING A LIEN IN FAVOR OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PURSUANT TO THE SPECIAL AWARD CONDITIONS OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION'S FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AWARD TO THE CITY OF BLUEFIELD, AWARD DATE SEPTEMBER 28, 2016, PROJECT #01-01-14742; unanimously approved and so ordered.

Reports, Boards and Commissions:

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson – Smith thanked the Beautification Commission and Bluefield State Alumni for helping acquire and putting up flags across the Martin Luther King, Jr. Bridge to welcome new and returning students.

Director Michael Gibson read a list of the boards and commissions. He encouraged citizens to get involved and serve as a volunteer. More information is available on the city website (www.cityofbluefield.com) or citizens can call the City Clerk.

Mayor Martin requested a motion to adjourn. Director Michael Gibson moved to adjourn, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Ron Martin Mayor