

**REGULAR MEETING – BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BLUEFIELD, MERCER COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA
August 22, 2017 - Noon**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, August 22, 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, and Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer. City Clerk Bobbi Kersey was absent.

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

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson – Smith moved that the minutes of the August 8, 2017, Board of Directors meeting be approved, unanimously approved and so ordered.

CITY MANAGER DANE RIDEOUT

Street Paving Contracts have been signed. Paving should begin in early September. Some of the streets will be milled before paving. Notifications will be sent prior to paving. City Engineer Tony Wagner is working with Public Works and Parks and Recreation on repairs to Mitchell Stadium. City Engineer Wagner has been overseeing concrete work due to water infiltration. The City has made a huge investment into Mitchell Stadium and it looks great with the new turf and black fence.

Public Works Department continues to work on a number of projects. They participated in the clean up at Mitchell Stadium, installation of the fence at Mitchell Stadium, digging projects behind the recreation center, and concrete repairs to bleachers at Mitchell Stadium. Four Points Recovery volunteers were thanked for their help during the cleanup.

Code/Building Inspection reports twenty-six properties on the demolition list. After a two-year process, the Knights Inn is ready for demolition. This property had over three hundred and forty incidents involving the police department.

Parks and Recreation Department had a very successful year with their summer programs. The after school program, under the direction of Katana Mullens and the vision of Director Charles Ridlehuber, now has fifty-one children enrolled. The program is the only licensed and certified after school program within the city. Citizens are invited to visit the facility and watch the interaction with the children and these professionals. The program is a great amenity for the city.

Beaver/Graham game on Friday night followed by a 5K on Saturday. The 5K is between the City of Bluefield and the Town of Bluefield. Last year the City of Bluefield won the trophy and Director Matt Knowles will be running this year. This is a great partnership between the two Virginias.

After the 5K, the Lemonade Day Festival will be downtown and later that night the Blue's Festival. After the Blues Festival will be fireworks.

Mercer County Board of Education has purchased the Thomas property on Cumberland Road.

Shout out to Pat McKinney who was in an ATV accident and is still recovering at home.

Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer said at the last meeting the Board approved that the City enter into an agreement with CGI. CGI will be contacting local businesses to sponsor videos. The city will receive three free videos to market. Director Spencer and City Attorney Colin Cline had a telephone conference call with a potential client for the Commercialization Station. The City has participated in Small Business Saturday for the last two years on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Planning sessions will begin in September.

Intern marketing specialist, Rebecca Kasey was introduced. Ms. Kasey lives in Bluefield, West Virginia with her husband. She will be working with Community and Economic Development Director Spencer. Welcome Rebecca.

Thank you to Billy Hester for filling in for City Clerk Bobbi Kersey.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association, stated the last concert in Chicory Square would be September 1 and will be sponsored by the Bluefield Daily Telegraph and Downtown Merchants. The Bluefield Middle School Band and choir will be performing. All concerts are free and begin at noon. Mr. Riley thanked Lori Mills for her help in keeping the Ridge Runner running during an unexpected illness that could have potentially shut down operations.

Michael Kelly voiced concerns regarding the new tailgate fees during the Bluefield/Graham football game. He questioned what the fees would be used for and why they were so high. City Manager Dane Rideout stated the area in front of Mitchell Stadium would be reserved. Historically this area is where RV's and tents have been set up and it has been very unorganized. The tailgate area has morphed over the years and there has been a request for more trashcans, port- a- pots, and various other items. The city has to patrol with more police, fire and emergency personal. The city needs to be compensated for these extra amenities for that area of tailgating. The idea has been well received and people have expressed positive feedback at having a reservation spot and not having to come hours or a day before the game. There are places that people can tailgate other than the reserved area. The city will get feedback from the public and discuss if fees need to be adjusted for the next event. Mr. Kelly also asked why Parks and Recreation is not supporting the youth football program. City Manager Rideout said the main consideration when discussing sports programs is the cost. The City of Bluefield spends over \$800,000 a year on parks and recreation and Bluefield Virginia spends less than \$200,000 a year. The City cannot keep having programs that need to be subsidized by the City. We need to have quality programs and quality programs are not free. Parks and Recreation Director Charles Ridlehuber stated that we were the only municipality that owned a youth football team. We went to the parents and gave them the opportunity to take ownership. The parents were already buying the helmets and uniforms and the city was paying for liability insurance. We are very supportive of the little league team and we have empowered the parents/citizens. There are more quality programs available at the recreation center. We must be more efficient in what we do and encourage everyone to check out the parks and recreation center. City Manager Rideout stated just paving at Mitchell Stadium, which is used by multiple states, will cost a million dollars. While the stadium/park is an amenity, with a cost, there is upkeep that needs to be shared by all that use the facility.

ACTION ITEMS

City Treasurer Kelly Davis requested approval of seventy – nine accounts for the August Collections for \$66,286.54. Director Mike Gibson moved to approve the August Collection list; unanimously approved and so ordered.

City Treasurer Kelly Davis stated that in 2016 the City of Bluefield purchased a Case backhoe and RAVO street sweeper, which then were leased, to the Bluefield Sanitary Board and Bluefield Storm Water Board. These purchases were made with funds from the Financial Stabilization Fund. The lease payments are to be returned to the Financial Stabilization fund. City Treasurer Davis requested that \$24,190.08 be transferred out of the General Fund into the Financial Stabilization fund. Director Michael Gibson moved to transferred \$24,190.08 out of the General Fund into the Financial Stabilization fund, unanimously approved and so ordered.

City Treasurer Kelly Davis reported on the Police Pension and Relief Fund. The reports covered July 1, 2016 thru June 30, 2017. City Treasurer Davis will submit her report to the Municipal Pensions Oversight Board. City Treasurer Davis requested approval of the Police Pension and Relief Fund. Director Robb Williams moved to approve the Police Pension and Relief Fund, unanimously approved and so ordered. The Police Pension and Relief Fund is managed by the Trust Department at First Community Bank.

City Treasurer Kelly Davis reported on the Firemen's Pension and Relief Fund. This report covered July 1, 2016 thru June 30, 2017. City Treasurer Davis will submit her report to the Municipal Pensions Oversight Board. City Treasurer Davis requested approval of the Firemen's Pension and Relief Fund. The Firemen's Pension and Relief Fund is managed by Hilliard Lyons Investment. Director Michael Gibson moved to approve the Firemen's Pension and Relief Fund, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Ron Martin requested approval of Partnership Agreement Region I Local Elected Official (s) Local Workforce Development Board 2017-2019. The document concerning this Board is lengthy and is available in the City Attorney's office. City Attorney Cline said there is a workforce development board for Region I. The mayors and other officials sit on this board and work to improve the economy through Workforce West Virginia. These members will attend quarterly meetings. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson - Smith moved to approve the Partnership Agreement Region I Local Elected Official (s) Local Workforce Development Board 2017-2019, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Ron Martin stated that Thomas Cole had withdrawn his name for the appointment to the Buildings Commission.

Mayor Martin read the Second 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 this was a grant and not a loan. The Federal Government wants to make sure the City spends the grant on a commercialization station. City Attorney Cline added this provides authorization to lease space and for development towards economic growth. The Shott Foundation and Federal Government are investing in the community. The Commercialization Station will be utilized and focus as an incubator for manufacturing entrepreneurs. Mayor Martin said we are taking an eyesore and making a work place for potential businesses. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson - Smith moved to approve the Second 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:

City Manager Rideout said the Board was taking a hard look at all Boards and Commissions. Boards and Commissions are a way for citizens to get involved. An application is on line and we would love a new perspective.

More information is available on the city website (www.cityofbluefield.com) or citizens can call the City Clerk.

Community and Economic Development Director Spencer suggested Ms. Karey to meet with the millennials for volunteers.

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