

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

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Monday, September 25, 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

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson – Smith moved that the minutes of the September 12, 2017, Board of Directors meeting be approved, unanimously approved and so ordered.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association, requested the format concerning the public comment section be returned to the end of the agenda and if the Board would give permission for stakeholders to comment on items before the Board. Mr. Riley referred to the Bluefield Code of Ordinances:

Sec. 2-69. - Floor granted to nonmembers of board.

The mayor may recognize any nonmember for the purpose of addressing the board on any question then pending, or on any matter on which action is desired. In such cases, the person recognized shall address the chair, state his name and address and the subject matter he desires to discuss. His remarks must be confined to the merits of the subject at issue. Speakers must be courteous in their language and avoid personalities. Except with permission of the board, specifically given, speakers shall be limited to five minutes. No person who has had the floor shall again be recognized until all others desiring to speak have been given an opportunity to do so. (Code 1958, pt. 1, art. 11, § 14; Code 1974, § 2-30)

The Board will discuss agenda format changes at the next working meeting. All working sessions and Board meetings are open to the public.

Presentation

Bluefield Chief of Police Dennis Dillow stated when he was absent he has lieutenants and sergeants that fill his void. The department runs four shifts giving him four extensions on those occasions when he is not available. Police Chief Dillow said this was one of the finest groups he has ever promoted. Each officer was presented a badge and pinned according to their new rank:

- Sergeant to Lieutenant – Bobby Hamm
- Detective to Sergeant – Kenney Adams
- Detective to Sergeant – Justin Harris
- Patrolman to Sergeant – Brian Copenhaver
- Patrolman to Sergeant – Michael Pertee

- Patrolman to Sergeant – Joseph Danieley
- Patrolman to Sergeant – Justin Lucas

Mayor Martin and the Board of Directors congratulated the officers on their new positions and thanked them for their service.

CITY MANAGER DANE RIDEOUT

Contract Street Paving is completed for this year. Approximately two and a half miles of road were paved within the city. The city parking lot on Duhring Street has been paved. Beautification Chair Gail Satterfield and David Hardin were thanked for their vision and will be recognized later for their hard work.

Work at the end of College Avenue and Band Street to repair a bollard in front of Little Caesars that was hit in the middle of the night. City crews did a great job fixing the sidewalk and bollard. Any person having knowledge of the accident please contact the city.

Bowen Field work continues, as work will begin on the structure above the seating area. This will be a joint effort with the Town of Bluefield that will be doing some in kind work. The City of Bluefield owns Bowen Field, but a private organization manages it.

A Large Building has been demolished on Bluefield Avenue. In a joint effort with the Federal Government, this will be the location for the new Transit Transfer Station. The facility will be designed to include a passenger waiting room, restrooms, covered passenger loading and unloading area and promote regional public transportation.

IT Specialist Billy Hester reported the boiler located in the fire department, which provides hot water to the entire building went out and had to be replaced. The city must have hot water in the building at all times to stay in compliance with jail regulations. IT Specialist Hester continues to work on LED projects.

Code/Building Inspector Lori Mills reported the Knight's Inn is being demolished on October 9.

Parks and Recreation Department is looking for volunteers to help with the after school program/ homework. Approximately 45-50 students are enrolled in the after school program. Youth basketball registration is now open. Vehicular traffic in the City Park will be closed beginning October 1 to start setup for Holiday of Lights. Oktoberfest in the Park will be September 30 and transportation is available. Trunk or Treat will be Saturday, October 28 from 3-6 p.m. For more information on any of these events, contact the Bluefield Recreation Center.

Bluefield Police Department reported the following:

- 1008 calls for service
- 101 arrests
- 763 citations written (368 were warnings)
- 21 motor vehicles inside the city

The Bluefield Police Department received a \$2,000 grant from the Community Foundation of the Two Virginias to help purchase radar units for vehicles. The department assisted in the Out of Darkness walk, Bluefield College 5k and weekly football games.

Bluefield Fire Department received a \$50,000 grant from USDA towards the purchase of the fire truck. Congressman Evan Jenkins was instrumental in helping with this grant, as were other elected officials.

Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer reported the following:

- Small Business Saturday will be in November. This will be the third year that Bluefield has participated.
- Two more videos have been completed since deploying the GIS story map. Anyone in the city or close proximity can have their property listed by going to the mybluefield.org site and go under my property search. Complete the City of Bluefield Building and Site Submission pages and submit. Community and Economic Development Director Spencer said his team continues to build the page.

ACTION ITEMS

Mayor Martin requested City Attorney Colin Cline explain the revision of an ordinance. Attorney Cline stated, through the efforts of City Treasurer and Building Inspector Lori Mills, the City has been working on revising the building permit fee schedule. The present fee schedule is disorganized and difficult to understand. This schedule simplifies and combines fee schedules and raises the cost threshold for jobs. Under the new ordinance revision, a job valued at \$2,500 and under would not have a permit fee. The person would have to obtain a permit but there would not be a fee for the permit. The new fee schedule is a negative revenue source for the city but it will be simpler for citizens and citizens can invest in their property. Attorney Cline recommended approval of the simplified building permit schedule. Attorney Cline said the first reading is passed; a public hearing will be scheduled on October 10 before the second reading. City Attorney Cline reminded citizens that all Bluefield city ordinances could be found on Municode.com.

Mayor Ron Martin read **FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE REVISING SECTIONS 6-74, 6-77 AND DELETING SECTION 6-82 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, FOR THE PURPOSE OF SIMPLIFYING THE BUILDING PERMIT FEE SCHEDULE, AND ELIMINATING A SEPARATE FEE SCHEDULE FOR PERMITS FOR EXCAVATION WORK.** Director Michael Gibson moved to approve the **FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE REVISING SECTIONS 6-74, 6-77 AND DELETING SECTION 6-82 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, FOR THE PURPOSE OF SIMPLIFYING THE BUILDING PERMIT FEE SCHEDULE, AND ELIMINATING A SEPARATE FEE SCHEDULE FOR PERMITS FOR EXCAVATION WORK, unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Ron Martin read a **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE "ROADS TO PROSPERITY" ROAD BOND AMENDMENT**

WHEREAS, our West Virginia roads need fixing; and

WHEREAS, development and reparation of roads means jobs and economic development, improves safety for our citizens and visitors to our state, and enhances the ability of West Virginia businesses to get goods to market; and

WHEREAS, on October 7, 2017, West Virginians will have an opportunity to take an important step towards a safer and more prosperous future by voting for the "Roads to Prosperity" road bond amendment; and

WHEREAS, supporting this amendment will allow us to repair existing roadways and bridges and move forward on new projects across the state; and

WHEREAS, among the projects to be funded with revenue from these bonds is further construction of the Mercer County portion of the King Coal Highway, which is extremely important to the economic development of our city, region and state; and

WHEREAS, our legislature has already passed the five key pieces of legislation to fund the payment of the bonds to be issued pursuant to this amendment, so that no new taxes will be necessary to pay off the bonds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Bluefield is in support of the "Roads to Prosperity" amendment and urges all citizens to vote in favor of this amendment on October 7, 2017.

APPROVED THIS THE 25TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2017.

Director Michael Gibson moved to approve the RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE "ROADS TO PROSPERITY" ROAD BOND AMENDMENT, second; unanimously approved and so ordered. Early voting is available at the Mercer County Court House in Princeton through October 4. On October 7, voters can vote at their normal precinct-polling place. It is recommended that citizens contact their county clerk if they have any questions. Community Economic and Development Director Jim Spencer stated an infrastructure project such as this has a ripple effect for the community and area. Jobs are created and money is spent in the area.

Mayor Ron Martin requested Attorney Colin Cline discuss the lease purchase for a new sewer jetter (flusher) truck for the Sanitary Board. The arrangement will be that the City of Bluefield will lease the flusher truck with an agreement from BB & T Bank and then lease back to the Sanitary Board. This is not borrowing by the City but a straight lease arrangement with the bank. The City will then turn around and offer the same agreement to the Sanitary Board. City Manager Rideout said there had been a discussion about the City taking the loan out of the Rainy Day fund or taking a bank option. City Treasurer Davis stated there were two bank proposals. The other bank was out of state and quoted a higher rate of interest. City Manager Rideout said this is a critical piece of equipment and used on a daily base. **Director Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to approve the lease purchase of a new sewer jetter truck for the Sanitary Board, unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Ron Martin requested approval of recommendation from the Bluefield Planning Commission for an application by Bluefield State College to subdivide a parcel of land being designated as Parcel 'A' being approximately 3.201 acres, from Tax Map 16, Parcel 66 with a remainder of 16.769 acres for the purpose of providing a parcel of land for a building for a parking garage and dorms for students, and currently zoned R-2. City Manager Dane Rideout stated Bluefield State College has submitted an application to build new dorm facilities for twenty eight million dollars. Part of the application process for the loan is to subdivide the parcel of land where the project will be located. There is no rezoning on this property. **Director Michael Gibson moved to approve the recommendation from the Bluefield Planning Commission for an application by Bluefield State College to subdivide a parcel of land being designated as Parcel 'A' being approximately 3.201 acres, from Tax Map 16, Parcel 66 with a remainder of 16.769 acres for the purpose of providing a parcel land for building for a parking garage and dorms for students, and currently zoned R-2, unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Ron Martin requested approval of a recommendation from the Bluefield Housing Authority to ratify Robert Mustard for a five-year term (ending October 14, 2022). City Manager Rideout said Mr. Mustard has served on this commission and is very knowledgeable concerning the Federal government housing guidelines. **Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to approve the recommendation from the Bluefield Housing Authority to ratify Robert Mustard for a five-year term (ending October 14, 2022), unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Ron Martin requested approval to appoint John Rash to the Firemen's Civil Service Commission for a three-year term (September 25, 2017 – September 24, 2020). City Manager Rideout said this is a Board of Directors recommendation. The Civil Service Commission oversees testing, hiring and discipline actions. Mr. Rash lives in the city, is a postal worker, and is active in the community. **Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to appoint John Rash to the Firemen's Civil Service Commission for a three-year term (September 25, 2017 – September 24, 2020) Firemen's Civil Service Commission for a three-year term, unanimously approved and so ordered.**

Mayor Ron Martin requested approval to appoint Laura Ward and John Velke to the Planning Commission (September 25, 2017 – September 24, 2020). City Manager Rideout stated Ms. Ward has a background in municipal planning and Mr. Velke is a businessperson and started the first community garden. **Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to approve Laura Ward and John Velke to the Planning Commission.** City Manager Rideout said the next action item was to renew three present members; Josh Cline, Julie Johnson, and Carl "Tripper" Thomas for another three-year term to the Planning Commission. City Attorney Cline stated all five members could be approved at the same time. **Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith amended her motion to approve Laura Ward, John Velke, Josh Cline, Julie Johnson and Carl "Tripper" Thomas for a three-year term on the Planning Commission (September 25, 2017 – September 24, 2020), unanimously approved and so ordered.**

REPORTS FROM BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Beautification Commission Chairperson Gail Satterfield discussed Oktoberfest scheduled for September 30 from 3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the Bluefield City Park. This year Star 95 is going to collaborate with the Beautification Commission. Star 95 has gotten many sponsors and helped with many of the planning details for the event. Two bands will perform; The Kind Thieves (a local band) and headliner Big Daddy Love from Winston Salem. There are several food vendors, various types of beer, and a shuttle bus is available. The tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door. The Beautification Commission is also involved with the beautiful flowers planted around town, Holiday of Lights, and the Winter Warmer. The commission only participates in projects located within the city. Mayor Martin said this commission does not receive the credit for all they do and he credits them with encouraging citizens to be proud of our city. Mayor Martin thanked Ms. Satterfield for her leadership and Ms. Satterfield thanked the members of the commission. Director Robb Williams asked what the commission was working on now and what is next. Ms. Satterfield said they are finishing the parking lot on Duhring Street, hanging banners for Bluefield State College, and the sculpture on Bland Road and upkeep of the triangles. The Flowers are a huge project and the commission would like to do a book and is working on funds and photographs. The Board and citizens thanks the commission for all they do for Bluefield.

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