

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

**October 24, 2017 - Noon**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, October 24, 2017, at noon in the Municipal Building Boardroom. Present were Mayor Ron Martin, Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith, Director Matt Knowles, Director Michael Gibson, , City Manager Dane Rideout, City Treasurer Kelly Davis, City Attorney Colin Cline, Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer and City Clerk Bobbi Kersey. Director Robb Williams 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.

**Public Comments or Public Discussion**

Art Riley, representing the Downtown Merchants Association, stated the theme for the Christmas Parade would be *A Christmas Story*. Entry forms are available on the city website ([www.cityofbluefield.com](http://www.cityofbluefield.com)). The parade will be December 9 at 1:00 p.m. A letter was mailed to past participants and new participants are encouraged. Mr. Riley would like this parade to be the biggest and the best. Mr. Riley stated he would like to see the signage program be “pushed along” to help the downtown and shopping area.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson – Smith moved to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2017 Board of Directors meeting with a correction, unanimously approved and so ordered. City Treasurer Kelly Davis stated in the financial report concerning collections it should read, “Approximately three million has been sent to collections”.

Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson – Smith moved to approve the October 10, 2017 Public Hearing and Public Meeting, unanimously approved and so ordered.

**Action on New Business**

Mayor Ron Martin requested approval of an estimate, from Rucker Construction, for Maryland Avenue and College Avenue intersection for \$25,038. City Manager Rideout stated work would begin next week on a main sewer line replacement project. Three bids were received to improve the curb and sidewalk part of the project. This improvement will improve the intersection’s turning radius, which is difficult for larger trucks and vehicles. For the cost, materials and reliability, the City Engineer Tony Wagner and Executive Director Shannon Bailey recommended Rucker Construction. Rucker Construction could also work in conjunction with the Sanitary Board’s schedule, limiting the time the intersection will be torn up. The project will not be completed until the spring paving. Each night the construction site will be covered with steel plates and the public should be aware there would be some traffic delays in the area of construction. The city is coordinating with all utility companies, schools and emergency vehicles. Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson – Smith moved to approve an estimate from Rucker Construction, for Maryland Avenue and College Avenue intersection for \$25,038, unanimously approved and so ordered.

## **Action on Accounts**

City Treasurer Kelly Davis requested approval to submit eighty - (80) accounts for collection for \$75,778.16. Director Michael Gibson moved to approve eighty - (80) accounts for collection for \$75,778.16 for the month of March, unanimously approved and so ordered. Mayor Martin said in the working session there was a discussion concerning the collection procedures. Currently the City has a contract with Feuchtenberger & Barringer and they are in line with the state and country. The City is doing the best it can at collecting dollars that are not there or those not wanting to pay.

## **Receipts and action on petitions, resolutions or appeals**

**NONE**

## **Action on unfinished or pending business**

**NONE**

## **Enactment of Ordinances**

**NONE**

## **Report of City Manager**

- Mitchell Stadium light has been repaired. The lights are old and have individual transformers. Public Works had to cut a road for Appalachian Power to gain access to the blown transformer. This cost is beyond the normal operating fees and is not covered in renting of the facility, but is taken from a department budget.
- City Engineer Tony Wagner is heavily involved in the Maryland Avenue and College Avenue project. Citizens are encouraged to find alternate routes.
- The City is applying for a DOH sidewalk grant. The first sidewalk improvement would be the completion of a project started several years ago on Bland Street down to Little Casers.
- Leaf pick up is scheduled on Monday and Wednesday and some on Saturday. Remember to keep storm drains clear of debris, do not put leaves in the street, and use the Fix It Bluefield App.
- Flag Fund Raising did not reach its goal but the flags are going to be replaced and will be out on Veteran's Day. Thank you to Marie Blackwell for spearheading this project. There will be a recognition 'memory wall' on the Bluefield website with the names of those loved ones that purchased a flag.
- Holiday of Lights will open November 23. Thank you to the men at Four Seasons Recovery for volunteering to assist in getting the displays positioned in the park. There will be over a million lights this year and will be the second largest light display in the state.
- Building Inspector Lori Mills continues to inspect rental property to ensure it is safe, sound, warm and dry. Knights Inn has been demolished and clean up is in the final stages. There are thirty houses now in the process for demolition.
- IT Specialist Billy Hester is working on the City website for a web redesign. It is important for the City to have two websites. The City website, [www.cityofbluefield.com](http://www.cityofbluefield.com) takes care of the day to-day business and the [www.mybluefield.org](http://www.mybluefield.org) website is centered on community and economic development.
- Trunk or Treat will be October 28 from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. in the Green Space area in the Park. A 5K Monster Dash will begin at 5:00 p.m. and registration will begin at 3:00 p.m. This is part of the wellness program. Youth Basketball is in full

swing and registration is open until November 9. Youth Basketball is for children 5 – 13. The afterschool program is offering seasonal electives (tennis, basketball and swimming). Call the recreation center for more information. Several large events have or will be hosted at the recreation center: Able Center Pancake Breakfast, 5K Trail Walk for Life, and Bluefield College Homecoming on October 21. The City will be hosting football playoff games for Bluefield High School and Graham High School.

- Holiday of Lights volunteers are needed for the entrance at the park. Please contact Angie Foley in Human Resources.
- In addition to the daily incidents, the Fire Department has been visiting schools for Fire Prevention Week. This program was resurrected by Fire Chief Rick Cary.

### **Action on recommendations by City Manager**

**NONE**

### **Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer**

- The CREATE Opportunities initiatives was started by the City and encompasses the Commercialization Station. A CREATE round table was held on October 19. Congressman Evan Jenkins and approximately forty people attended. An update was given on the Commercialization Station. New and old organizations were present and discussion centered on entrepreneurship. Mayor Martin and Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith stated the meeting was a positive experience that brought many organizations together to share ideas.
- Small Business Saturday will be Nov. 25. There will be three contests running to highlight local small businesses:
  1. How well do you know my Bluefield – testing local knowledge (trivia) that pertains to Bluefield’s history. New Peoples Bank will sponsor this contest.
  2. Favorite Small Business contest – features photographs of each participating business. Photos on the [www.facebook.com/BluefieldCED/](http://www.facebook.com/BluefieldCED/) must be liked in order for choices to count in the contest. Summit Community Bank is sponsoring the contest.
  3. Caption This Contest – starting November 14/ participants will have 24 hours from the time a photo is posted to comment about it. The funniest or wittiest caption will win. First Community Bank will sponsor this contest.

Each contest will have a 1<sup>st</sup> place (\$ 100), 2<sup>nd</sup> place (\$75) and third place (\$50) winner. Please follow the Community and Economic Development Facebook page for more information.

### **Reports from Committees**

**NONE**

### **Miscellaneous and Unfinished Business**

Mayor Martin introduced Lisa Strader from the New River Travel Council who presented Visit Southern West Virginia. Ms. Strader discussed handout distributed to the Board of Directors:

1. Website
2. Pages Viewed
3. Top Pages/Content
4. Digital Advertising

5. Digital Newsletter
6. Digital Magazine
7. Social Marketing
8. Arrivalist
9. Annual Printed Materials
10. Parks Campaign
11. Events
12. Remote Marketing
13. Group Tour and Travel
14. Media Relations
15. Annual Budget
16. Benefits

Mayor Martin asked which area had the most traffic. Ms. Strader stated lodging, events, things to do and articles receive the most hits on the website. Mayor Martin stated when the site was pulled up some of the information was out of date. Ms. Strader said the material is archived but should have a publication date on information. She would check with the digital company on how to correct digital information. Lodging is included but other businesses must pay for advertisement. There was a discussion concerning more of the pros and cons related to the website. The Board of Directors will visit renewal of the New River Travel Council at the next Board of Directors meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Martin requested a motion to adjourn. Director Matt Knowles moved to adjourn the meeting, unanimously approved and so ordered.

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Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

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Ron Martin, Mayor