

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

**February 13, 2018 - Noon**

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the City of Bluefield, Mercer County, West Virginia was held on Tuesday, January 23, 2018, at noon in the Municipal Building Boardroom. Present were Mayor Ron Martin, Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson-Smith, Director Matt Knowles, 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. Director Michael Gibson 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 following:

- Congratulations on the Annual Review and the accomplishments made by the City. The Annual Review was published in the paper this week for those who could not attend the meeting. He encouraged every citizen to read the review because it outlined where the city had been, where the city is now, and where the city is going.
- The City is uniquely situated for tourism, recreation and retirement. Mr. Riley stated we have the labor force and we have the amenities. He suggested the City use a two-prong approach using the commercialization station for dirty space and tourism, recreation and retirement. Community and Economic Development Director Jim Spencer said the City is working for diversity in the economy. We are in an area where tourism can flourish but we are also courting technology. Director Spencer stated the City is using a three-prong approach. One is retention and expansion, two is attracting outside businesses, and three is entrepreneurship. Tourism is a part of the three-prong process.

**Approval of the Minutes**

Vice-Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2018 Board of Directors meeting, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Director Robb Williams moved to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2018 Public Hearing meeting, unanimously approved and so ordered.

**Action on Accounts**

City Treasurer Kelly Davis stated that at the close of January 2018, the 7<sup>th</sup> month of the fiscal year, revenue collected totaled \$7,377,267 (73%) of the projected amount of \$10,105,400. Expenditures total \$6,057,125 (49.52%) of the projected budget of \$12,231,272. City Treasurer Davis requested approval of the January financials. Director Matt Knowles moved to approve the January financials as submitted, unanimously approved.

## **City Manager Report**

Citizens were reminded the Bluefield Fitness and Recreation Center (Community Center) is open to the public but it will take at least ninety (90) days to assess what changes need to occur. We are asking for the public's patience and time so Parks and Recreation Director Charles Ridlehuber can put programs in place. There are concerns regarding the pool and it must meet all safety regulations. The City wants to do a long-term fix and not a "bandage" fix. Director Robb Williams stated he had received several calls concerning the hours of operation. Director Ridlehuber said he looked at the hours of usage at the Bluefield Fitness and Recreation Center (Community Center) and set the hours that best fit the public and for financial reasons. The present hours are based on need and more hours may be added once established programs are in place. We are working on staffing, programs and organization. The new hours are as follows:

Monday – Friday 5:00a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Saturday 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Sunday 1:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

## **Enactment of Ordinances**

Mayor Martin noted all the following purchases were funded by grants received from a local foundation and further plans for the downtown area and on the avenue.

City Attorney Colin Cline stated the next series of action items concern four property purchase ordinances. One regarding the second reading for erecting a public transit transfer station on Bluefield Avenue. The Federal funding facility will provide a place for citizens to get out of the weather, use facilities and enhance the safety for riders while waiting between connecting routes. The other three properties are located in the downtown area. City Manager Rideout discussed at the last meeting that demolition is under consideration for the area located on Federal, Raleigh, and Scott Street. The buildings located at 405 Bland and 407 Bland will complete the acquisition of land necessary for the demolition and creation of a green space. The third property is known as the Old Elks building. This building has significant historical value, is one of the oldest buildings in town and has amazing architectural elements. This building will be preserved using outside funding. Art Riley asked if all the area would be green space or was there any plans for retail space. City Manager Rideout stated this would be a draw to the downtown and add additional parking. The green space will allow for various functions and activities that the public can participate in. It is still in the beginning and planning stages.

Mayor Martin requested approval of the SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ERECTING A PUBLIC TRANSIT TRANSFER STATION. Director Robb Williams moved to approve the SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ERECTING A PUBLIC TRANSIT TRANSFER STATION, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Martin requested approval of First READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL ESTATE PROPERTY IN DOWNTOWN BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINA (405 Bland Street). Director Matt Knowles moved to approve the of First READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL ESTATE PROPERTY IN DOWNTOWN BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINA, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Martin requested approval of First READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL ESTATE PROPERTY IN DOWNTOWN BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA (407 Bland Street). Vice Mayor Barbara Thompson Smith moved to approve the First READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL ESTATE PROPERTY IN DOWNTOWN BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Martin requested approval of First READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL ESTATE PROPERTY IN DOWNTOWN BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA (405 Raleigh Street). Director Robb Williams moved to approve the First READING OF AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL ESTATE PROPERTY IN DOWNTOWN BLUEFIELD, WEST VIRGINIA, unanimously approved and so ordered.

Mayor Martin requested approval of a Resolution for Federal Financing for Bluefield Area Transit. City Attorney Colin Cline stated the Bluefield Area Transit receives annual Federal Funding through the West Virginia Department of Transportation. Each year a requirement to receive the funds mandates the Board authorize the application so it can be submitted. The application authorizes that Pat McKinney as the Director of the Bluefield Area Transit and is authorized to complete and submit the application. Mayor Martin read the Resolution. Director Robb Williams moved to approve the Resolution for Federal Financing for Bluefield Area Transit, unanimously approved and so ordered.

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

- Blueprint Community has expanded and teamed with Cool and Connected. City Manager Rideout and Director Spencer will be meeting at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow for a signage study/discussion. An RFP will be in the paper for exit one.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Meet the Millennials will meet February 22 at the Clover Club from 3-5 p.m. This is part of the CREATE Opportunity Initiative and is in conjunction with National Entrepreneurship Week. Local business leaders have volunteered their time to meet with aspiring entrepreneurs in a round table format to tell the story about their journey as an entrepreneur and answer questions. Contact [jspencer@cityofbluefield.com](mailto:jspencer@cityofbluefield.com) for more information.
- Launch Appalachia is a business pitch competition for Southern WV/Southwestern VA. This event would be similar to the TV show *Shark Tank* being organized locally by the Sales Executive Club. For more information, contact the Launch Appalachia website. Submission period is February 1 – March 22.
- Five visitors from the West Virginia Development office toured Bluefield. Their feedback was very positive. Mayor Martin stated they told him that Director Spencer had changed their perspective of Bluefield and what it had to offer.

### **Miscellaneous and Unfinished Business**

Director Robb Williams thanked CEO Josh Cline from the Greater Bluefield Chamber for speaking to the Board of Directors during the working session this morning. Mr. Cline discussed the possibility of a Regional Recreation Board. Mayor Martin said this was a theoretical discussion and no decision has been made.

Art Riley asked Community and Economic Development if Hill Studio would be involved in the meeting tomorrow. Director Spencer said the Hill Studio designs would be discussed but need to be updated to meet the needs of the City.

The next meeting will be February 26 on Monday at noon. Mercer County Day will be held in Charleston on Tuesday, February 27.

Please keep Director Michael Gibson and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

**Presentation**

Bluefield Regional Hospital CEO Josh Snow presented the Bluefield Fire Department with a check donation (\$1,870.00) to purchase an AED Defibrillator. The device will enable the department to assist a person who is in sudden cardiac arrest and take the required steps to provide care. Bluefield Fire Chief thanked Bluefield Regional Medical Center for making the City a safer place to live, learn, work and play. CEO Josh Snow stated it was a privilege to work with the Bluefield Fire Department and what a great asset they are to the community.

**Adjournment**

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

Bobbi Kersey, City Clerk

Ron Martin, Mayor

---

---