

**Town of Bluefield
Town Council
Minutes
May 9, 2017**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, May 9, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall located at 112 Huffard Drive, Bluefield, Virginia.

PRESENT

Don Harris, Mayor
Jimmy Jones, Councilmember
Lee Riffe, Vice-Mayor
Chuck Presley, Councilmember
Steve Danko, Councilmember
Ron Holt, Councilmember

ALSO PRESENT

Mike Watson, Town Manager
Matt Freedman, Town Attorney
Billie Roberts, Comm. Dev. Coordinator
Lesley Catron, Town Clerk
Kim Hernandez, Executive Assistant
5 Members of Public

ABSENT

Shane Gunter, Police Chief

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Harris called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

-- Pastor Bill Lykins, Memorial Baptist Church led the Invocation. Mayor Harris led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Holt made a motion to approve the agenda. Councilmember Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Presley made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Vice-Mayor Riffe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

CITIZEN REQUESTS & SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Special Presentation: Law Enforcement Pay – Dr. Kelly Walls

Dr. Walls thanked council for allowing him to speak. He stated that he was in support of Mr. Holt's recommendation for a higher pay for the Police Department. He stated that he had worked in Criminal Justice for 44 years, was a former LEO and was now a teacher. He stated that he did not know whether to talk as someone with law enforcement experience, a teacher or from the heart so he said he would talk from all. He stated that the Town of Bluefield was fortunate to have the Police Officers we did and that a lot of them were his students. He stated a reason to have considered a raise for the Police Department vs. other employees was that their actions are magnified beyond all others and they were most visible and a representation of the Town. He stated that they could take someone's freedom away and could also take a life if they had too and that it rested solely on them. He stated that because of this, they must be highly trained in multiple things and that they were different and should be treated differently. He stated that recent events had showed that we no longer lived in a "sleepy town" and we could not afford to have undertrained officers. He asked council to care about the community and the Police Officers and invest in the Police Department.

Mayor Harris thanked him for coming.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS & REPORTS

FY 2017/2018 Budget Public Hearing, VOTE – Mike Watson

Mr. Watson stated that the budget included the following:

- an increase in meals tax of 1 ½%
- \$2 on the minimum water usage and 6% across the board
- 4% increase for employees and \$31k starting pay and/or \$3k for the Police Department

He stated that it would be placed in the newspaper for 2 Public Hearings; 1 on the budget and 1 on the increases. He asked council for a vote to go to Public Hearing.

Mr. Holt made a motion to approve going to Public Hearing. Mr. Presley seconded the motion.

Mr. Watson stated that they probably needed to do a roll call vote.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Riffe: No
 Councilmember Presley: Yes
 Councilmember Holt: Yes
 Mayor Harris: Yes
 Councilmember Jones: Yes
 Councilmember Danko: Yes

The motion passed 5-1 by Roll Call Vote.

NEW BUSINESS & REPORTS

Joyce Buchanan Recognition – Lesley Catron

Mrs. Catron stated that a sign would be placed in the green space at Hockman Pike and would include Joyce Buchanan’s poem and name. She stated that she had received a quote and it would cost between \$820-\$1600 for a sign that was 12x18 to 18x24.

Mr. Riffe stated that he liked that they were doing this and that he had mentioned before that they needed to look at other hometown heroes and recognize them as well.

Mr. Watson stated that the plaque was raised and was high quality.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Budget Amendments, VOTE

Mr. Watson stated that the following Budget Amendments needed to be voted on:

PURPOSE: Payment from GHS for Ballgame Security

Revenue		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
Line Item				
0400-0413	Misc. State Law	<u>\$44,468.75</u>	<u>\$44,628.50</u>	<u>\$159.75</u>
	Enforcement	<u>\$44,468.75</u>	<u>\$44,628.50</u>	<u>\$159.75</u>
Expenditure				
Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
3100-1600	Investigative OT /	<u>\$71,220.36</u>	<u>\$71,380.11</u>	<u>\$159.75</u>
	Police	<u>\$71,220.36</u>	<u>\$71,380.11</u>	<u>\$159.75</u>

PURPOSE: Tasers, Holsters, Batteries, and Cartridges

Revenue		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
Line Item				
0400-0413	Misc. State Law	<u>\$44,628.50</u>	<u>\$51,555.32</u>	<u>\$6,924.82</u>
	Enforcement	<u>\$44,628.50</u>	<u>\$51,555.32</u>	<u>\$6,924.82</u>

Expenditure		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
Line Item				
3110-8106	Grants	<u>\$71,220.36</u>	<u>\$78,145.18</u>	<u>\$6,924.82</u>
		<u>\$71,220.36</u>	<u>\$78,145.18</u>	<u>\$6,924.82</u>

PURPOSE: Watchguard Body Cameras

Revenue		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
Line Item				
0400-0413	Misc. State Law Enforcement	<u>\$51,555.32</u>	<u>\$65,935.32</u>	<u>\$14,380.00</u>
		<u>\$51,555.32</u>	<u>\$65,935.32</u>	<u>\$14,380.00</u>

Expenditure		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
Line Item				
3110-8106	Grants	<u>\$78,145.18</u>	<u>\$92,525.18</u>	<u>\$14,380.00</u>
		<u>\$78,145.18</u>	<u>\$92,525.18</u>	<u>\$14,380.00</u>

PURPOSE: Communications Recording System

Revenue		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
Line Item				
0100-0509	Prior Year Reserves	<u>\$115,290.46</u>	<u>\$129,652.83</u>	<u>\$14,362.37</u>
		<u>\$115,290.46</u>	<u>\$129,652.83</u>	<u>\$14,362.37</u>

Expenditure		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
Line Item				
3110-8106	Grants	<u>\$92,525.18</u>	<u>\$106,887.55</u>	<u>\$14,362.37</u>
		<u>\$92,525.18</u>	<u>\$106,887.55</u>	<u>\$14,362.37</u>

Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the budget amendments. Mr. Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Paving Update

Mr. Watson stated that the paving would be from Pemco/Bullet Bill Drive to Fincastle Lane near the apartments. He stated that he would be placing it out for bid and that we had some existing money that he would stretch out the best he could. He stated that he would bring something back.

Live Streaming Council Meetings Discussion

Mr. Watson stated that they had talked about how expensive it would be for the live streaming during the Work Session and he would bring something back to council.

Community Garden

Mr. Watson stated that there were some pictures in council's packet of the tables and umbrellas donated by the Kiwanis. He stated that the community garden was set up and they were taking applications.

Recycling Discussion

Mr. Watson stated that part of the recycling was being taken to the landfill and that staff was working on getting a list of what could be taken and if it had to be clean, etc.

Bluefield Sanitary Board Pay Discussion, VOTE

Mr. Watson stated that he was offered \$200 per month pay to be on the Bluefield Sanitary Board and asked council to vote whether or not they approved of it since he was an employee.

Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the \$200 to be made payable to Mr. Watson for the Bluefield Sanitary Board. Mr. Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Sedgewood Recreational Association Update

Mr. Watson stated that the Sedgewood Recreational Association discussed donating the former swimming pool park area to the Town but he told them it would have to be made via a formal request.

Mr. Presley asked if it was something they would want to take.

Mr. Watson stated that they would just have to mow the grass and it would be taken in like the other parks.

Mr. Riffe stated that it would not have a playground just a picnic table.

Mr. Watson stated that they could go in and clean it up and do reservations for birthday parties, etc. He stated that they would discuss it more once they had received a formal request.

Corte Foundation Donation

Mr. Watson stated that the Corte Foundation had donated funds in the amount of \$3,500 to continue the Saturday night movies. He stated that this money would help subsidize the cost.

Dept. of Corrections Office

Mr. Watson stated that he would be doing a lease agreement and would be placing an office in Town Hall for the Department of Corrections Victim Services who worked with victims of crimes. He stated that she traveled throughout the region and that an office would be at no additional cost to us.

Veteran's Recognition Program

Mr. Watson stated that there would be a program honoring the Veteran's on May 27th at 2 p.m. downtown at the Veteran's Memorial. He stated that a group from the VFW was working on it.

Town Offices Closed

Mr. Watson stated that Town Offices would be closed on Monday, May 29th for Memorial Day and that the trash pickup would be advertised.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

David Wohlford stated that he liked the idea of being able to see the meetings and work sessions whether they were live or online. He stated that he had been spending a lot of time at Graham Middle School for school events for small children and that there should be some form of a police presence there and those citizens who were licensed to carry were not allowed to on school property. He agreed that they needed to look at increasing the Police Officers pay because "you got what you paid for".

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Danko asked staff to write a letter to Mr. Stacy and Del. Morefield asking them to come on a quarterly basis to tell what was going on.

Mr. Watson stated that Mr. Stacy would be coming to the second meeting in June and that he would get with Del. Morefield and see when he could come.

Mr. Danko asked Mr. Holt how his coffee with a councilmember went.

Mr. Holt stated that he would talk about it during his comments.

Mr. Jones asked that in the April 18th Work Session minutes in the 3rd paragraph that it be changed to "always be on call".

Mr. Holt thanked Dr. Walls for coming and told him that he appreciated his service to the community. He stated that coffee with a councilmember was a way to better connect with people and that he had 4-5 show up. He stated that they had a good conversation.

Mr. Danko asked what it was about.

Mr. Holt stated that one question was about how much money was being spent on benches and he told them about the grant money we received.

Mr. Watson stated that the ones added to Pinehill Park were the existing benches that were in Jack Asbury Square. He stated that the Community Foundation gave us grant money to replace the wood in them.

Mr. Holt stated that another one was stocking fish in the duck pond for families to enjoy. Once in the fall and once in the spring. He stated that he attended the FOIA training and thanked the Town for hosting it.

Mr. Presley stated that he was with Mr. Holt for the coffee with a councilmember and it was a good meeting. He agreed with Mr. Wohlford concerning more police presence and stated that some type of barriers were needed to be up during the movies so that a car would not plow thru the crowd.

Mr. Riffe stated that there was a sewer line below his house and that the workers were being abrupt when talking to people. He asked if there was a way to let the citizens know that their line was from their house to the hookup. He suggested "better schooling" the workers because a lot of people did not know this. He asked if the bridge at Hockman Pike would be done this year.

Mr. Watson stated yes and that the railing was being built and had to be taken down to the duck pond to be installed.

Mayor Harris asked if they could look at changing the speed limit on Ridge Road from 25 to 35 mph.

Mr. Holt asked about it being changed on Rt. 720 going towards the industrial park as well. He stated that it needed to be raised to 45 mph.

ATTORNEY REPORT

Altizer Deed, VOTE (Motion to Accept Deed and Real Estate Interest(s) in the Deed) VOTE (Motion to Authorize Mayor's Execution of the Deed)

Mr. Freedman stated that he needed a motion to accept the Altizer Deed and Real Estate Interest in the attached deed at the end of the minutes.

Mr. Riffe made a motion to accept the Altizer Deed and Real Estate Interest in the deed. Mr. Holt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Freedman stated the next vote was to authorize the Mayor's Execution of the Deed. Mr. Danko made a motion to authorize the Mayor's Execution of the Deed. Mr. Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Civil Penalty Discussion

Mr. Freedman stated that a civil penalty would be better enforced and that he was looking to set up something in the Towns Ordinances if it were to be challenged.

Mr. Watson stated that it would be issues such as speeding tickets and that there was no process to appeal a civil penalty and that you were guilty no matter what.

Mr. Freedman stated that staff had handed out FOIA training materials to council and told them to be mindful of FOIA requests for things such as coffee with council.

Mr. Holt asked about the noise ordinance.

Mr. Freedman stated that he was waiting for them to get the budget set before he brought anything to council.

Mr. Holt asked about the cat ordinance as well.

Mr. Freedman stated that he had a shell drafted and before he presented it to council they were going to put something in the newsletter.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilmember Holt made a motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to *Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3711-A-1.6 and 2.2-3711-A-1.1* and Mrs. Catron read:

The investing of public funds where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the government unit would be adversely affected.

Discussion, consideration or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees or employees of any public body; and evaluation of performance of departments.

Mr. Watson asked that Mrs. Roberts come in for the first Executive Session.

Councilmember Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Council entered into Executive Session at 8:23 p.m.

Councilmember Jones made a motion to enter out of Executive Session. Councilmember Holt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Councilmember Presley made a motion to adopt the following resolution certifying the Executive Session and Mrs. Catron read:

WHEREAS, the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia has convened an executive meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712-D of The Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia that such session was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia hereby certifies that, to the best of each members knowledge, (I) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under this chapter and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by the Town Council.

Adopted this 9th day of May.

Councilmember Riffe seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Riffe:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	Yes
Councilmember Jones:	Yes
Councilmember Danko:	Yes

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

ADJOURN

Mr. Danko made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Mr. Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Don Harris, Mayor

Lesley Catron, Town Clerk