

**Town of Bluefield
Town Council
Minutes
September 8, 2020**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall located at 112 Huffard Drive, Bluefield, Virginia.

PRESENT

Don Harris, Mayor
Anglis Trigg Jr., Vice-Mayor
Chuck Presley, Councilmember
Jarrod Bailey, Councilmember
Ron Holt, Councilmember

ALSO PRESENT

Mike Watson, Town Manager
Kim Hernandez, Town Clerk
Paul Cassell, Town Attorney
Rachel Looney, Administrative Asst.
Billie Roberts, Comm. Dev. Coordinator
9 Members of Public

ABSENT

Jimmy Jones, Councilmember
Shane Gunter, Police Chief

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Harris called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Jim Drake, Parkview Baptist Church led the Invocation. Mayor Harris led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Holt asked to add a statement regarding Councilman Jones to the agenda.

Mayor Harris removed the Lions Club Donation Request Discussion.

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

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Trigg:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Bailey:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Councilmember Jones:	Absent

CONSENT AGENDA

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

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Trigg:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Bailey:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Councilmember Jones:	Absent

CITIZEN REQUESTS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Bluefield College Update – Josh Cline, VP of Institutional Advancement

Josh Cline stated that the college and the Town had a good relationship. He stated during their recent COVID19 outbreak that they had quarantined those affected on campus and the guidelines that were set in place kept down the numbers. He stated that they had some students who had attended a party at another institution and by the college having the rapid testing machine that it helped identify the football team members, roommates and suite mates who had been affected. He stated that they knew within 48 hours how big it was and did not have to shut down the campus like other institutions around. He stated being a small college and with proper planning and the Athletic Trainers helping with testing that they could respond quickly. He stated that they had the ability to stream online as well as in person learning and felt that education was moving more towards online which they had been doing online learning for a number of years. He stated that Fall Enrollment was up because a lot of college students were looking for in person learning. He stated that they had 1,100 students with 500 on campus and had the biggest transfers this semester. He stated that there was 70 in dual enrollment as well this year. He stated that the undergraduate nursing program had been approved for enrollment beginning in the fall next year which was important for this area. He thanked the Town for their partnership and stated that the Town Manager and staff were wonderful to work with.

Mr. Presley asked if the cafeteria was open to the public.

Mr. Cline stated not this year.

Mr. Presley stated that Darrin Martin had told him how the college was working more with the community.

Mr. Cline introduced Tonia Walker, Director of Athletics.

Ms. Walker stated that it was great to be there and that she was there to make sure these kids were graduating, had good GPA's and were successful. She stated that there was community engagement and that they were looking to surpass 4,000 hours. She stated that the first football

game was scheduled for February 6th, soccer would be played in the fall and they were not sure about volleyball but would keep everyone posted. She introduced the new softball coach Sam White.

Mr. White stated that he was the new hire as head softball coach. He stated that he was excited to be here and asked for the Town's help in bridging the local community of softball talent to Bluefield College. He stated that he had talked with Jarried about their softball league and looked forward to the excitement. He stated that his most important factor out of everything including winning, rings, etc. was that his team had an overall GPA of 3.2.

Mayor Harris thanked Bluefield College for attending and giving an update.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND REPORTS

Envision Center Moral Obligation Discussion, POSSIBLE ROLL CALL VOTE/ CARES ACT Discussion – Billie Roberts

Mayor Harris stated that these two items had been discussed in the Work Session. He asked for a motion and a Roll Call Vote to approve the Envision Center Moral Obligation.

Mr. Holt made a motion to approve the Envision Center Moral Obligation. Mr. Trigg seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Trigg:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Bailey:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Councilmember Jones:	Absent

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

NEW BUSINESS AND REPORTS

Budget Amendment, ROLL CALL VOTE – Kim Hernandez

Mrs. Hernandez went over the following Budget Amendment:

PURPOSE: COVID-19 Reimbursement (CARES Act Money)

Revenue

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
3101-0104	COVID-19	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$104,000.00</u>	<u>\$104,000.00</u>
	Reimbursement	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$104,000.00</u>	<u>\$104,000.00</u>

Expenditure

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
9100-6032	COVID-19	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$104,000.00</u>	<u>\$104,000.00</u>
	(Non-departmental)	<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$104,000.00</u>	<u>\$104,000.00</u>

Breakdown of Reimbursements:

- \$14,000 – Retail
- \$30,000 – Restaurants
- \$18,000 – CARES Act Phase II
- \$12,000 – Cost Reimbursement
- \$18,000 – Continued Response
- \$12,000 – No Specific Business

She asked for a motion and a Roll Call Vote to approve.

Mr. Bailey made a motion to approve the Budget Amendment. Mr. Presley seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

- Vice-Mayor Trigg: Yes
- Councilmember Presley: Yes
- Councilmember Bailey: Yes
- Mayor Harris: No Vote Permitted
- Councilmember Holt: Yes
- Councilmember Jones: Absent

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

Resolution authorizing the issuance of a general obligation bond of the Town of Bluefield in a principal amount not to exceed \$1,000,000, ROLL CALL VOTE – Kim Hernandez

Mrs. Hernandez read: *Resolution authorizing the issuance of a general obligation bond of the Town of Bluefield in a principal amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 and providing for the form, details and payment of the bond and authorizing certain related actions.* She asked for a motion to approve and a Roll Call Vote.

Mr. Holt made a motion to approve the Resolution authorizing the issuance of a general obligation bond of the Town of Bluefield in a principal amount not to exceed \$1,000,000. Mr. Presley seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Trigg: Yes
Councilmember Presley: Yes
Councilmember Bailey: Yes
Mayor Harris: No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Holt: Yes
Councilmember Jones: Absent

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

Statement of Council concerning Councilman Jones seat

Mr. Holt made a motion to approve a brief statement on council's position regarding Councilman Jones seat to be placed on social media/website. Mr. Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Trigg: Yes
Councilmember Presley: Yes
Councilmember Bailey: Yes
Mayor Harris: No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Holt: Yes
Councilmember Jones: Absent

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Jarried McFarland, President of the BVLL (301 Montrose St) gave an update on the 2020 season. He stated that once the board was in place that the following took place:

- During the winter months they concentrated on teams and attended a volunteer clinic held by District 11 in Lebanon.
- December-attended the SE Region Roundtable where the rules had changed.
- January-was dormant preparing for spring (83 registered players for t-ball, coach pitch, minors, majors and a senior softball and baseball team).
- February-worked with BJ on the paperwork for the June Oblinger Shott Foundation grant for \$200k which was the largest grant ever given.
- March-COVID19 hit and everything stopped. The Little League International asked that the fields be locked and no one allowed in until a plan was in place.
- April-opening ceremonies were postponed. LL International gave options and the local board put a response plan together to disinfect the facilities. He stated that the company he worked for Cintas donated all of the chemicals needed for this to happen and to be able to deep clean the bathrooms.

- In late April-jerseys were ordered for over 135 kids which broke records. He stated that they started playing 10-12 games per division and after each game everything was disinfected. He stated that they had pre-tourney games with Richlands and that Bluefield WV Little League came over to the VA side after the Little League International said there would be no boundaries. He stated that Princeton also came over so the board decided they would let all kids play the game. He stated after regular games there were 16 teams who played in the district tournaments and that Ron's team brought home a district banner. He stated that they were finishing up the lighting project and were waiting on AEP to come out and that he had been in contract with Frank Wilkinson and that the Town had been gracious enough to come out and help beat on rock. He stated that they had a change order and DCI had been put back on the job. He stated that they would like to have a lighting ceremony at the end of the month. He stated this year they did not have any sponsorships and started the season with \$16k but spent \$1,500 in additional catching gear so that each kid had their own gear and did not have to share, no fundraising was done and that they were down \$10k and thanked Town Council for the donation this year. He stated that he was in talks with Bluefield College and was finalizing softball fields for them again this year. He stated that there were 3 Little League girls who were going to Bluefield College to play softball and anything that they could do to help kids stay here they would like to do. He stated that his daughter had talked about staying here and playing softball at Bluefield College as well. He stated that his position would be up at the end of the month when they voted a new board in.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

BVLL Contract Renewal, ROLL CALL VOTE

Mr. Watson stated that a copy of the BVLL Contract was in council's packet and that they had gone over it during the Work Session. He recommended council approve it.

Mr. Trigg made a motion to approve the BVLL Contract Renewal. Mr. Holt seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Trigg:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Bailey:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Councilmember Jones:	Absent

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

Amendment to Intermunicipal Agreement with PSA Discussion, POSSIBLE ROLL CALL VOTE

Mr. Watson stated that they had talked about the Intermunicipal Agreement with the PSA during the Work Session and this was to supply water to the Falls Mills area with our new upgrades to the Water Plant. He stated that the PSA had taken over Pocahontas and was asking to raise the gallons per day from 75k to 200k gallons daily. He stated that a copy of the amendment to the agreement was in council's packet which required them to pay a rate based on cost plus 12.5% on top of cost plus part of the debt to reserve capacity. He stated that once he received the final numbers that he would fill them in with the exact cost. He recommended council to approve the Town Manager to sign the agreement once it was finished.

Mr. Trigg made a motion to approve the Intermunicipal Agreement with the PSA. Mr. Bailey seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Trigg:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Bailey:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Councilmember Jones:	Absent

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

Executive Session Discussion, ROLL CALL VOTE

Mr. Watson asked council to vote if they would like to move the Executive Sessions back to the end of the meetings as before and to discuss further during the next Organizational Meeting.

Mr. Presley made a motion to approve changing the Executive Sessions back to the end of the meetings. Mr. Trigg seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Trigg:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Bailey:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Councilmember Jones:	Absent

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Holt stated that he was glad that Bluefield College was there and the outbreak they had was transparent from the start which comforted the community. He stated that the Town had a great relationship with Bluefield College Athletics and there was a lot of room to bring more in to help the community and develop programs. He stated that he valued them as a community partner. He stated that everyone has had a difficult time this year and thanked all of the community partners. He stated that we have been in school for 3 weeks and so far have not had a big outbreak because of what all was being done.

Mr. Bailey stated that during the outbreak all were going through and making plans for growth and he saw the positive in it. He thanked Jarried for the update and that it was a bright spot for a lot of kids.

Mr. Presley gave a shout to Kim, Rachel and BJ and the rest of staff. He stated that Bluefield College did a lot for the Town. He stated that he hoped the new president of the BVLL did as good of a job as Jarried.

Mr. Trigg thanked everyone for coming out and stated that the Town was looking good.

Mayor Harris thanked everyone for coming out. He stated as limited as the Town was that they were doing a good job and were fortunate enough to have dedicated employees.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Harris asked Mrs. Hernandez to read the Executive Session.

MOTION FOR CLOSED MEETING

It is hereby moved that the Council of the Town of Bluefield, Virginia enter into a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A) (29) of the Code of Virginia as amended, The specific purpose for this motion is to discuss the following matter(s):

Discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body with such closed meeting being confined to the following subject: regarding the possible sale of the water system.

Councilmember Bailey made a motion to enter into Executive Session as described above. Councilmember Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Vice-Mayor Trigg: Yes
Councilmember Presley: Yes
Mayor Harris: No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Bailey: Yes
Councilmember Holt: Yes
Councilmember Jones: Absent

Councilmember Holt made a motion to enter back into regular session. Councilmember Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Trigg: Yes
Councilmember Presley: Yes
Councilmember Bailey: Yes
Mayor Harris: No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Holt: Yes
Councilmember Jones: Absent

CERTIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia convened a closed meeting on September 8, 2020, pursuant to a duly adopted motion, attached hereto, and such closed meeting was convened in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia returned to its open meeting held on September 8, 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF BLUEFIELD, VIRGINIA HEREBY CERTIFIES that to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were discussed in the closed meeting held on September 8, 2020, to which this certification applies and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening such closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the Council of the Town of Bluefield, Virginia in such closed meeting.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Trigg: Yes
Councilmember Presley: Yes
Councilmember Bailey: Yes
Mayor Harris: No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Holt: Yes
Councilmember Jones: Absent

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mayor Harris stated that they would allow for 5 additional minutes for citizen comments.

Izetta Harris Harman, 1114 Thayer Street thanked Council for the opportunity to speak. She stated that she lived in Columbus, OH but had property located on Thayer Street. She stated that she had received a letter about the grass and showed Council some pictures along with her property and the neighbor's property. She stated that she was upset that she received a letter and the neighbors did not receive one. She stated that she had talked to Kris and she assumed that Council had decided that the 2 lots next to her did not have to cut their grass because it was undeveloped property and had never been developed. She stated that there was something there 50 years ago. She stated that she understood that the Fire Station had bought out some lots beside these two lots and asked that it be cut back off of the street along with being cut down because it was so high and for safety reasons with the Manor being across the street. She asked what steps needed to be done to get this taken care of.

Mr. Presley asked if she owned the property or who it belonged too.

Ms. Harman stated it was someone else's property.

Mr. Watson stated if she was talking about the property in between the Fire Station and her house that it had not been cut in 20+ years. He asked her if she was wanting the Town to make them cut theirs because she was made to cut hers.

Ms. Harman stated yes.

Mr. Watson stated that there was no house on it and that it was not only grass but trees and 20 years of brush. He stated that it had never been mowed and did not have to be mowed that it was not owned by the Town. He stated that we do not make anyone cut down trees.

Ms. Harman stated that it was for the safety of the neighborhood.

Mr. Watson stated that Pete had cut 6ft of the bank off of the road because she had asked us to in the past and that we could do that again but we could not cut someone else's lot.

Ms. Harman stated that it was definitely a safety hazard and that area was a decent place to live and asked if the Town cared then we would come and cut it back.

Mr. Holt asked her if she owned the property.

Ms. Harman stated no that she owned the lot beside of it.

Mr. Holt stated that it was not incumbent upon the Town Council to cut someone else's lot and if she cared then she as an owner would take pride in getting it done herself.

Ms. Harman stated that she understood that it came to Council as undeveloped.

Mr. Presley stated that just because she did not like it did not mean that it was the Town's responsibility and they were talking about trees.

Ms. Harman stated that it was mostly grass but just because it was considered undeveloped meant they did not have to maintain it.

Mr. Bailey stated that undeveloped property did not have to be maintained.

Ms. Harman stated that she hoped the Town changed that.

ADJOURN

Councilmember Holt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 p.m. Councilmember Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Vice-Mayor Trigg:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	No Vote Permitted
Councilmember Bailey:	Yes
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Councilmember Jones:	Absent

Don Harris, Mayor

Kim Hernandez, Town Clerk