

**Town of Bluefield
Town Council
Minutes
January 26, 2016**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, January 26, 2016 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, Councilmember
Donnie Linkous, Councilmember
Jimmy Jones, Vice Mayor
Lee Riffe, Councilmember
Steve Danko, Councilmember

ALSO PRESENT

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

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Harris called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Harris asked that the Resolution Supporting Southwestern Virginia Training Center and Clinch River State Park be moved up before the Executive Session.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

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

CITIZEN REQUESTS & SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Resolution Supporting Southwestern Virginia Training Center, VOTE



**TOWN OF BLUEFIELD
RESOLUTION**

**“In Support of Keeping the Southwestern Virginia Training Center Open”
Presented by Parent Advocacy & Advisory Council (PAAC) - SWVTC**

WHEREAS, the Southwestern Virginia Training Center (SWVTC) opened in 1976 to serve as an Intermediate Care Facility; and

WHEREAS, SWVTC serves more than 124 individuals with disabilities, both intellectual and developmental; and

WHEREAS, those being cared for at the facility experience both medical and behavioral challenges requiring around-the-clock care with a structured environment; and

WHEREAS, the Parent Advocacy and Advisory Council maintain medical and dental care services as a part of the community resources, which is non-existent in other areas of our region; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia was cited by the Department of Justice for not providing enough community options for persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia and Department of Justices' 2012 Settlement Agreement investigated the Virginia Training Centers and Programs and did not require the closing of four of their five training centers, however, four are scheduled to close, including SWVTC, based upon an executive decision made by former Virginia Governor McDonnell; and

WHEREAS, there are hundreds of volunteers at SWVTC very supportive of keeping the facility open and many individuals and localities showing their overwhelming support as well, including the City of Galax and its' residents, Grayson County, Carroll County, as well as Senator Bill Carrico and Delegates Jeff Campbell and Israel O'Quinn.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia hereby acknowledges the importance of the Southwestern Virginia Training Center and recognizes its' value to persons suffering from intellectual and developmental disabilities. Therefore, we are supportive of keeping the facility open and would ask that Governor Terry R. McAuliffe reconsider the decision made by his predecessor to close Southwestern Virginia Training Center.

Adopted this 26th day of January 2016.

Donald R. Harris, Mayor

Lesley L. Catron, Town Clerk

Teresa Barringer, 611 Sycamore stated that she was the PAAC (Parent Advocacy and Advisory Council) President and she was asking for council's support to keep the training center in Hillsville open. She stated that the center was setup for those with disabilities and served more than 124 individuals. She stated that they were also working with all the delegates, etc. to ask for their support in keeping the center open.

Mr. Linkous made a motion to approve the Resolution in Support of the Southwestern Virginia Training Center. Mr. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Resolution Supporting Clinch River State Park, VOTE



**TOWN OF BLUEFIELD
RESOLUTION**

"In Support of the Proposed Clinch River State Park"

WHEREAS, the Clinch River is North America's most biologically diverse river and contains more rare and endangered species than any other body of water in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Clinch River Valley Initiative has done immeasurable work in promoting and preserving the Clinch River for recreational use; and

WHEREAS, the data collected nationwide suggests that state parks are a catalyst for economic development in the surrounding region; and

WHEREAS, the region of Southwest Virginia is in desperate need of economic development catalysts to replace quickly disappearing coal jobs; and

WHEREAS, Cavitt's Creek Park sits at the headwaters of the Clinch River in Tazewell County and will serve as a "first leg" of the proposed Clinch River State Park.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia hereby supports the naming of Cavitt's Creek Park as the "first leg" of the Clinch River State Park, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia supports efforts of the Clinch River Valley Initiative to see a "string of pearls" concept of a State Park developed from the headwaters to the Tennessee State Line.

Adopted this 26th day of January 2016.

Donald R. Harris, Mayor

Lesley L. Catron, Town Clerk

Mr. Watson asked for a motion to approve the Resolution Supporting the Proposed Clinch River State Park.

Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the Resolution in Support of the Proposed Clinch River State Park. Mr. Trigg seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Vice-Mayor Jones made a motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to *Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3711-A-1.7* and Mrs. Catron read:

Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body; and consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

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

Council entered into Executive Session at 7:40 p.m.

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

Councilmember Danko 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 26th day of January.

Councilmember Linkous seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilmember Riffe: Yes
Councilmember Linkous: Yes
Councilmember Trigg: Yes
Mayor Harris: Yes
Vice Mayor Jones: Yes
Councilmember Danko: Yes

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS & REPORTS

Resolution Supporting Visitors Center in Bluefield, VA, VOTE – Mike Watson



**TOWN OF BLUEFIELD
RESOLUTION**

“In Support of Relocating the Tazewell County Visitor Center to Downtown Bluefield, Virginia”

WHEREAS, the Tazewell County Visitor Center is currently located on the Sanders House Property in Bluefield, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Visitor Center provides brochures, maps and other resourceful information about Tazewell County, Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Bluefield Virginia is an ideal location to “house” the Visitor Center, due to the Towns’ close proximity to the Virginia / West Virginia State Line; and

WHEREAS, Tazewell County receives numerous out-of-state visitors that travel to this area because of what our beautiful mountains have to offer, including the opportunity to ride on some of the famous all-terrain vehicles (ATV) trails in southwest Virginia, such as the Spearhead and Hatfield-McCoy Trails; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bluefield is supportive of keeping the Tazewell County Visitor Center located in Bluefield, Virginia, because of our prime location to these well traveled trails; and

WHEREAS, it is the Town of Bluefield’s desire to relocate the Tazewell County Visitor Center to the downtown area of Bluefield, Virginia, offering a more spacious, well-seen location; and

WHEREAS, locating the Visitor Center “downtown” would be very convenient for visitors traveling U.S. 460, as well as those traveling U.S. Routes 102 and 19; and

WHEREAS, visitors would be within walking distance to public restrooms, local restaurants and shops, as well as the Farmers Market and other events that take place in downtown Bluefield, Virginia.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia hereby supports the relocation of the Tazewell County Visitor Center to the downtown area of Bluefield, Virginia, with the understanding that this would be an ideal location for travelers to receive information on all the wonderful things that Tazewell County has to offer.

Adopted this 26th day of January 2016.

Donald R. Harris, Mayor

Lesley L. Catron, Town Clerk

Mr. Watson stated that this resolution was in support of keeping the Visitors Center in Bluefield, VA.

Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the Resolution Supporting the Visitors Center in Bluefield, VA. Mr. Trigg seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS & REPORTS

None.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Downtown Projects

Mr. Watson stated that they had discussed the downtown projects during the Work Session and that staff would continue on with Spring Street and discuss it with the businesses. He stated that they would start doing the planning and making purchases and would update council throughout the process.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Danko had none.

Mr. Jones had none.

Mr. Trigg stated that the Town worker's did an excellent job during the snow storm with snow removal.

Mr. Linkous agreed.

Mr. Riffe agreed as well.

Mayor Harris stated that he had spent Saturday at his store and that he had never seen such unity amongst the Town employees that were working. He stated that they were working hard and never quit and that the Town was blessed to have the quality of employees that it did. He stated that he had attended several seminars at Legislative Days and that they did not give any of the bags out themselves so they would keep them until next year.

ATTORNEY REPORT

Monetary Bonus Ordinance, 2nd Reading (Motion to Read by Title Only), VOTE (Motion to Adopt Ordinance), VOTE

Mr. Freedman asked for a motion to approve the Monetary Bonus Ordinance 2nd Reading by Title and then to adopt it.

Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the Monetary Bonus Ordinance 2nd Reading by title. Mr. Danko seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Freedman asked to read it by title as follows: An Ordinance to create, by creating an article III (Monetary Bonuses) of Chapter 34 (Personnel), of the code of ordinances, Town of Bluefield, Virginia. He asked for a motion to adopt the ordinance.

Mayor Harris made a motion to adopt the Monetary Bonus Ordinance. Mr. Riffe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

ADJOURN

Mr. Jones made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m. Mr. Danko seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Don Harris, Mayor

Lesley Catron, Town Clerk