

**Town of Bluefield  
Town Council  
Minutes  
March 22, 2016**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, March 22, 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  
Matt Freedman, Town Attorney  
Kim Hernandez, Executive Assistant  
Lesley Catron, Town Clerk  
Shane Gunter, Police Chief  
32 Members of Public

**ABSENT**

Billie Roberts, Comm. Dev. Coordinator

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE**

Steve Branch, Destiny Outreach Ministries Church led the Invocation. Mayor Harris led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Harris added Pat Green, County Administrator and Senate Bill 767 to the agenda.

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

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Councilmember Trigg made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Councilmember Linkous seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**CITIZEN REQUESTS & SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

***GHS Wrestling Team Resolutions Presentation – Mayor Don Harris***

Mayor Harris asked Coach Woodward and the wrestling team to come forward.

Coach Woodward thanked council for their donation and stated that he had moved the invitational to another date since they kept getting snowed out.

Mayor Harris read the following resolution and presented it to the team:



**TOWN OF BLUEFIELD**

**RESOLUTION**

**GRAHAM HIGH SCHOOL WRESTLING TEAM 2015 / 2016**

WHEREAS, the Graham High School Wrestling Team went undefeated during the 2015 – 2016 season, under the direction of Head Coach Tim Woodward and Assistant Coach Ben Fritz; and

WHEREAS, the team placed in the top five of all four individual tournaments, including the 3<sup>rd</sup> Agie Skeens Memorial Tournament, 4<sup>th</sup> Bobby Bates Classic, 5<sup>th</sup> Carroll County Invitational, and the 5<sup>th</sup> Highlander Invitational; and

WHEREAS, they were the champions of all four team dual tournaments, including the 1<sup>st</sup> Chilhowie Dual, 1<sup>st</sup> Castlewood Dual, 1<sup>st</sup> John Battle Dual, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Eastside Dual; and

WHEREAS, they placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at the 2A West Regional Wrestling Tournament, and placed two 2A West Regional Champions, two 3<sup>rd</sup> place, one 4<sup>th</sup> place, and two 5<sup>th</sup> place; and

WHEREAS, the team qualified five wrestlers for the 2A State Wrestling Tournament; and placed five wrestlers at the 2A State Wrestling Tournament, including one State Champion, one 3<sup>rd</sup> place, two 4<sup>th</sup> place and one 6<sup>th</sup> place; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL OF BLUEFIELD, VIRGINIA, hereby recognizes the outstanding performance and accomplishments of the 2015 / 2016 Graham High School Wrestling Team and applauds their successful season.

Adopted the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March 2016, presented the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2016.

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Donald R. Harris, Mayor

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Lesley L. Catron, Town Clerk

Mr. Riffe read the following resolution for Tracy Hagerman and presented it to him:



**TOWN OF BLUEFIELD**

**RESOLUTION**

**TRACY HAGERMAN**

WHEREAS, Graham High School Wrestler, Tracy Hagerman finished 6<sup>th</sup> place at 120 lbs. during the 2016 2A State Wrestling Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he had a season record of 53 – 10 during the 2015 / 2016 wrestling season; and

WHEREAS, he had a career record of 53 – 10 at Graham High School; and

WHEREAS, he received 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the 2A West Sub-Regional Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he received 3<sup>rd</sup> place at the 2A West Regional Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he finished 1<sup>st</sup> during the Eastside Dual Tournament, 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Agie Skeens Memorial Tournament, 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Carroll County Invitational, 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Bobby Bates Classic, and 4<sup>th</sup> at the Highlander Invitational; and

WHEREAS, Tracy Hagerman and his teammates were undefeated, with a 29 – 0 record as a team, during the 2015 / 2016 season.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL OF BLUEFIELD, VIRGINIA, hereby recognizes Graham High School Wrestler Tracy Hagerman on his successful season and applauds his accomplishments.

Adopted the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March 2016, presented the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2016.

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Donald R. Harris, Mayor

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Lesley L. Catron, Town Clerk

Mr. Linkous read the following resolution for Mason Raley and presented it to him:



**TOWN OF BLUEFIELD**

**RESOLUTION**

**MASON RALEY**

WHEREAS, Graham High School Wrestler, Mason Raley finished 4<sup>th</sup> place at 170 lbs. during the 2016 2A State Wrestling Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he had a season record of 46 – 16 during the 2015 / 2016 wrestling season; and

WHEREAS, he had a career record of 46 – 16 at Graham High School; and

WHEREAS, he received 3<sup>rd</sup> place at the 2A West Sub-Regional Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he received 3<sup>rd</sup> place at the 2A West Regional Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he finished 2<sup>nd</sup> during the Eastside Dual Tournament, and 6<sup>th</sup> during the Agie Skeens Memorial Tournament; and

WHEREAS, Mason Raley and his teammates were undefeated, with a 29 – 0 record as a team, during the 2015 / 2016 season.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL OF BLUEFIELD, VIRGINIA, hereby recognizes Graham High School Wrestler Mason Raley on his successful season and applauds his accomplishments.

Adopted the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March 2016, presented the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2016.

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Donald R. Harris, Mayor

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Lesley L. Catron, Town Clerk

Mr. Trigg read the following resolution for Alex Hicks and presented it to him:



## **TOWN OF BLUEFIELD**

### **RESOLUTION**

#### **ALEX HICKS**

WHEREAS, Graham High School Wrestler, Alex Hicks finished 3<sup>rd</sup> place at 195 lbs. during the 2016 2A State Wrestling Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he had a season record of 54 – 8 during the 2015 / 2016 wrestling season; and

WHEREAS, he had a career record of 106 – 34 at Graham High School; and

WHEREAS, he received 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the 2A West Sub-Regional Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he was the Champion of the 2A West Regional Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he finished 1<sup>st</sup> during the Eastside Dual Tournament, 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Bobby Bates Classic, 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Carroll County Invitational, 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Highlander Invitational, and 4<sup>th</sup> at the Agie Skeens Memorial Tournament; and

WHEREAS, Alex Hicks and his teammates were undefeated, with a 29 – 0 record as a team, during the 2015 / 2016 season.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL OF BLUEFIELD, VIRGINIA, hereby recognizes Graham High School Wrestler Alex Hicks on his successful season and applauds his accomplishments.

Adopted the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March 2016, presented the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2016.

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Donald R. Harris, Mayor

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Lesley L. Catron, Town Clerk

Mr. Jones read the following resolution for Tristen Evans and presented it to him:



**TOWN OF BLUEFIELD**

**RESOLUTION**

**TRISTEN EVANS**

WHEREAS, Graham High School Wrestler, Tristen Evans finished 4<sup>th</sup> place at 160 lbs. during the 2016 2A State Wrestling Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he had a season record of 52 – 9 during the 2015 / 2016 wrestling season; and

WHEREAS, he had a career record of 142 – 55 at Graham High School; and

WHEREAS, he was the Champion at the 2A West Sub-Regional Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he finished 4<sup>th</sup> place at the 2A West Regional Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he finished 1<sup>st</sup> during the Eastside Dual Tournament, 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Agie Skeens Memorial Tournament, 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Highlander Invitational, 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Carroll County Invitational, and 5<sup>th</sup> at the Bobby Bates Classic Tournament; and

WHEREAS, Tristen Evans and his teammates were undefeated, with a 29 – 0 record as a team, during the 2015 / 2016 season.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL OF BLUEFIELD, VIRGINIA, hereby recognizes Graham High School Wrestler Tristen Evans on his successful season and applauds his accomplishments.

Adopted the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March 2016, presented the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2016.

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Donald R. Harris, Mayor

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Lesley L. Catron, Town Clerk

Mr. Danko read the following resolution for Jacob Lester and presented it to him:



**TOWN OF BLUEFIELD**

**RESOLUTION**

**JACOB LESTER**

WHEREAS, Graham High School Wrestler, Jacob Lester was named the 2A State Champion at 285 lbs. during the 2016 2A State Wrestling Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he had an undefeated season with a 55 – 0 record during the 2015 / 2016 wrestling season; and

WHEREAS, he had a career record of 115 – 13 at Graham High School; and

WHEREAS, he was the Champion of the 2A West Sub-Regional Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he was the Champion of the 2A West Regional Tournament; and

WHEREAS, he was also the Tournament Champion of the Carroll County Invitational, Bobby Bates Classic, Agie Skeens Memorial Tournament, Eastside Dual Tournament, and the Highlander Invitational; and

WHEREAS, Jacob Lester and his teammates were undefeated, with a 29 – 0 record as a team, during the 2015 / 2016 season.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL OF BLUEFIELD, VIRGINIA, hereby recognizes Graham High School Wrestler Jacob Lester on his successful season and applauds his accomplishments.

Adopted the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March 2016, presented the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2016.

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Donald R. Harris, Mayor

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Lesley L. Catron, Town Clerk

Mayor Harris thanked Coach Woodward for all of his hard work and his family and read the following resolution and presented it to him:



## **TOWN OF BLUEFIELD**

### **RESOLUTION**

#### **TIM WOODWARD, GHS WRESTLING COACH**

WHEREAS, the Graham High School Wrestling Team went undefeated during the 2015 – 2016 season, under the direction of Head Coach Tim Woodward; and

WHEREAS, this years' team placed in the top five of all four individual tournaments, including the 3<sup>rd</sup> Agie Skeens Memorial Tournament, 4<sup>th</sup> Bobby Bates Classic, 5<sup>th</sup> Carroll County Invitational, and the 5<sup>th</sup> Highlander Invitational; and were the champions of all four team dual tournaments, including the 1<sup>st</sup> Chilhowie Dual, 1<sup>st</sup> Castlewood Dual, 1<sup>st</sup> John Battle Dual, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Eastside Dual; and

WHEREAS, the team also placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at the 2A West Regional Wrestling Tournament; and

WHEREAS, the team qualified and placed five wrestlers for the 2A State Wrestling Tournament; including one State Champion, one 3<sup>rd</sup> place, two 4<sup>th</sup> place and one 6<sup>th</sup> place; and

WHEREAS, this year marked the 30<sup>th</sup> season that Tim Woodward has served as the Wrestling Coach for the G-men; and

WHEREAS, this year also marked the 400<sup>th</sup> coaching win for Mr. Woodward.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL OF BLUEFIELD, VIRGINIA, hereby recognizes the outstanding performance and accomplishments of the 2015 / 2016 Graham High School Wrestling Team and applauds their successful season.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF BLUEFIELD, VIRGINIA, acknowledges the hard-work and dedication of Mr. Tim Woodward and congratulates his continued success as the Head Coach of the Graham High School Wrestling Team.

Adopted the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March 2016, presented the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March 2016.

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Donald R. Harris, Mayor

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Lesley L. Catron, Town Clerk

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### ***Graham Historical Society Update – Eva Saunders***

Mrs. Saunders thanked council for all of their help. She stated that there had many events that had taken place at the Sanders House including an Easter egg hunt, baby shower and a sorority meeting. She went over the following dates:

June 14-BBQ lunch for Town Employees  
June 14-VFW Flag Burning Ceremony  
July-Davis Family Reunion  
Aug. 6-Historical Society Yard Sale  
Sept-Autumn Jamboree  
Oct. 11-Bean dinner for Town Employees  
Dec. 4-Christmas Open House

She stated that they had people calling daily to use their facilities and that they were working on a Bluefield, Virginia room and a genealogy room. She asked if anyone knew of the old buildings downtown to let them know because they would like to put a plaque on them and asked where they could get some history on them.

Mayor Harris stated that he could help with some.

Mrs. Saunders stated that they needed to be recognized before they were gone.

Mr. Riffe suggested Bill Archer.

Mayor Harris thanked her for her update and stated that some of council and staff may be absent in October due to VML.

### ***Police Department Update – Chief Gunter***

Chief Gunter stated that it had been 6 months since his last update and that he would pick up from there.

Sept. '15 – 2 officers honored by MADD. Officer Carroll and Officer Armbruster were honored out of 40 SWVA officers.

Oct. '15 – DEA take back. He stated that they had taken in 67.8lbs of prescription drugs. Halloween-Officers participated in trunk or treat at the Farmer's Market. He stated that there were no accidents or reports of vandalism during Halloween.

Nov. '15 – Chief Gunter and the supervisors attended a law enforcement appreciation dinner at Bluefield College and given the opportunity to talk to Stephen Murphy and Javier Pena. He stated that they were responsible for taking down Escobar. He stated that they also held a fundraiser for domestic violence in the new gyms and sponsored a cornhole tournament. He stated that they hoped to make it bigger next year.

Dec. '15 – Shop with a cop was hosted and they helped 48 kids to be able to get toys, clothes, etc. up to \$100 each. He stated that they took some older kids this year and had received a lot of donations. He stated that he hoped to take more kids next year and that they ran out of volunteers this year so they had to do 2 trips. He stated that they helped with security during Black Friday and had no problems and stated that it seemed to be working out better this year because of the staggered sales times. He stated that they also provided security during Christmas when Wal-Mart was closed and that he was happy to report that there had not been any break-ins during the holiday season.

Jan. '16 – Special Swat Team performed lock down drills at each school and identified any weaknesses. He stated that they had been doing this for the past 4 years. He stated that out of 19 officers, he had 17 who were active shooter trained and that they were getting more cooperation from the schools. He stated that the new School Resource Officer was great with the principals, etc. He stated that Frank Horn became the full time School Resource Officer on Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>. He stated that they did not have any alcohol related problems on New Year's Eve.

Feb. '16 – He and his supervisors attended a 2 day per week academy at Mountain Empire College and that they received a degree for attending. He stated that they had received money from Dennis Lee which would be used to purchase duty gear which was flexible and lighter.

March '16 – Officer Justice and Officer White were hired. He stated that there was 1 vacancy left to fill and they had received 27 applications, 16 were confirmed, 10 passed the physical and was narrowed down to 5 interviews that Det. Shrader had set up and would be doing background investigations on them. He stated that he hoped to have another officer hired by April 1<sup>st</sup>. He stated that they assisted the Tazewell County Sheriff's Dept last Friday in a disappearance which turned into a homicide. He stated that the K-9 dog was used and that officers were up in helicopters with the state police. He stated that he met with Chief Dillow with the City of Bluefield Police Department and also met Senator Shelley Captio who was giving a session on naloxone. He stated that it could be administered to someone who had overdosed on opiates which would bring them back fast and allow them 90 minutes to get to the hospital. He stated that a bill had been passed in WV that allowed emergency responders to administer and carry. He stated that there were no side effects if administered by mistake and that VA Rescue could also administer now. He stated that they had good communications with the City of Bluefield and helped each other in emergency situations.

May '16 - He stated that he had 5 signed up for the Walk a Mile in her Shoes which raised money for a good cause.

June '16 – He stated that the first of June e-tickets would go live and would cut down on a lot of paperwork. He stated that they were submitted to the Supreme Court automatically and it was a good thing to have. He stated that going forward; they would like to sponsor a concealed weapon course class free of charge during the summer and would also like to have a back to school party in late summer and give backpacks and essential to kids for school. He stated that he was proud to lead the police department including the dispatchers and wanted to continue progressing forward with training and new technology.

Mr. Danko stated that he had talked to an employee and asked them how they liked their new police chief and they replied best one.

Mr. Watson stated that they had 27 applications in a department that did not pay as high which was good. He stated that last Thursday, the Police Department was full of girl scouts and their parents taking a tour of the building. He thanked the Police Department for all that they were doing.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS & REPORTS**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS & REPORTS**

#### ***Pat Green, County Administrator***

Mrs. Green stated that she would like to work with all Towns, etc. on anything and stated that her door was always open.

Mr. Danko stated that they needed to get together with the other Towns and Economic Development to work on the Bluestone.

Mrs. Green stated not just the Bluestone but in general.

Mayor Harris stated that Mrs. Green was also active in other civic organizations.

Mr. Linkous asked her what the cost was for the tax reassessment.

Mrs. Green stated that it cost between \$150k-\$200k to get it set up and another \$100k-\$150k per year.

Mr. Linkous stated the problem was that we brought in people from Northern VA and they valued our houses as the same as where they lived.

Mrs. Green stated that they did a sales study in all areas and that the last group was from Roanoke.

Mr. Jones stated that they went by the state requirements and that you had so many days after to talk to them about your assessment then after that you could go to a group of peers then to the Circuit Court.

Mayor Harris thanked her for coming.

Mr. Jones stated that there had been a lot of littering lately and if anyone seen somebody doing it, to turn them in.

## **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

### ***Welcome Center Update***

Mr. Watson stated that there was a big rock that they were trying to get rid of and would be raising the Welcome Center higher than expected.

### ***Spring Street Update***

Mr. Watson stated that he had ordered the lights for both sides.

### ***Limited Access Update***

Mr. Watson stated that he had received a notice that Leatherwood had applied for the limited access and had sent it to VDOT for approval. He stated that the next step would be Public Comments that were wrote and sent in to Richmond. He stated that there would be 2 weeks' worth of advertising.

### ***Virginia Department of Health Grant***

Mr. Watson stated that they were in the process of contacting an engineering group to see what the cost would be for a backup power supply for the water plant and to update the mapping system.

### ***Town Offices Closed***

Mr. Watson stated that Town Offices would be closed for Good Friday on March 25<sup>th</sup> and that trash regularly picked up on Friday would be picked up on Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Free Spring Clean Up 2016***

Mr. Watson stated that there was a copy of the Free Spring Clean Up in council's packet.

### ***Screen and Projector for Downtown Movies***

Mr. Watson stated that he had ordered a 20ft screen and a new projector for the downtown movies this summer.

### ***Job Fair at GMS***

Mr. Watson stated that staff would be participating in the job fair that was being held at GMS on April 8<sup>th</sup>. He stated that staff would be talking to students about local government.

**SB 767**

Mr. Watson stated that if SB 767 was allowed, it would show which party you were for on the ballot. He stated that the bill was currently going to the governor to be signed and that we had sent a letter opposing this to the House and Senate and to the governor asking that it be vetoed. He asked that a resolution be sent in as well opposing this. He stated that if it was vetoed that he would like to look into changing the charter and wanted to make sure everyone was on board for us to be exempt from it.

Mr. Riffe made a motion to approve sending a resolution in opposition of SB 767. Mr. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Mayor Harris stated that VML had kept them informed about the whole process.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Mr. Riffe asked that staff look at paving Fincastle Drive to Pemco and up.

Mr. Watson stated that we had applied for a grant and was looking to pave from Pemco to Graham High School.

Mr. Riffe stated that they also needed to have a light going from Bullet Bill Drive onto 720. He stated that there was a light already there but that it was in the wrong place.

Mr. Watson stated that he had ordered enough lights for Bullet Bill Drive as well out of the current budget.

Mr. Linkous asked if the tower was done.

Mr. Watson stated that it was up but that we did not have our equipment transferred over yet.

Mr. Linkous mentioned the funding for school sports and stated that it was our kids. He suggested raising meals tax  $\frac{1}{2}\%$  for \$100k or  $\frac{1}{4}\%$  for \$50k and letting the citizens know.

Mr. Watson stated that he would look at other things as they moved forward with the budget.

Mr. Linkous stated that they were at a hardship for donations and that meals tax was not a hardship and that they needed to look at doing something.

Mr. Trigg stated that the location for the Welcome Center did not seem like a good location.

Mr. Watson stated that the thought behind it was that it would not be a long term center.

Mr. Jones had none.

Mr. Danko had none.

Mayor Harris had none.

### **ATTORNEY REPORT**

None.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Councilmember Danko 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.

Vice-Mayor Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Council entered into Executive Session at 9:03 p.m.

Councilmember Linkous made a motion to enter out of Executive Session. Vice-Mayor Jones 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 22<sup>nd</sup> day of March.

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.

**ADJOURN**

Mr. Danko made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 p.m. Mr. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

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Don Harris, Mayor

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Lesley Catron, Town Clerk