

**Town of Bluefield
Town Council
Minutes
August 23, 2016**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, August 23, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall located at 112 Huffard Drive, Bluefield, Virginia.

PRESENT

Lee Riffe, Councilmember
Anglis Trigg, Councilmember
Donnie Linkous, Councilmember
Jimmy Jones, Vice Mayor
Steve Danko, Councilmember

ALSO PRESENT

Mike Watson, Town Manager
Matt Freedman, Town Attorney
Shane Gunter, Police Chief
Kim Hernandez, Executive Assistant
Billie Roberts, Comm. Dev. Coordinator
Kris Williams, Zoning Administrator
5 Members of Public

ABSENT

Don Harris, Mayor
Lesley Catron, Town Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Mayor Jones called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Jim Drake, Parkview Baptist Church led the Invocation. Vice-Mayor Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chief Gunter presented Jim Drake, Parkview Baptist Church a Certificate of Appreciation for the many things he and his church have done for local law enforcement.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice-Mayor Jones added a Resolution Recognizing the Police Officers at the Graham-Beaver Game to the agenda.

Councilmember Danko made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Councilmember Linkous 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

Citizen Request: Graham Middle School Soccer – Joe Dales

Mr. Dales introduced Mark Stowers.

Mr. Stowers stated that last year's spring soccer season was extended and that the parents and school came together to make the teams. He stated that this year they had around 25 kids and it was a co-ed team. He stated that the expenses were as follows: Uniforms-\$3,800, East River Soccer Complex-\$700 and 3 Referees-\$1,820. He asked for any donation to help offset the cost and stated that by the time the kids paid their \$100 fee and the few donations that they would receive that they would still be short around \$3,500.

Mr. Riffe asked if this was strictly out of the school system.

Mr. Stowers said yes.

Mr. Riffe asked if the spring soccer was too.

Mr. Stowers stated no, that the 6th & 7th graders did not get to play in the spring. He stated that they could represent Graham Middle School but it was not recognized by the Virginia High School League.

Mr. Jones stated that they would not make a decision until the next meeting and asked how much he was asking for.

Mr. Stowers stated any donation would be appreciated.

Mr. Danko asked if they had asked any foundations.

Mr. Stowers stated that they were unsuccessful with that last year.

Mr. Riffe asked how much the Town donated last year.

Mr. Watson stated that he was not sure.

Mr. Linkous asked if Charlie Stacy had given any money.

Mr. Stowers stated that there was someone talking to him.

Mr. Danko suggested the June Shott Foundation.

Mr. Stowers stated that they had reached out to them but since they were not a direct recreation program they were told no.

Mr. Linkous asked who the rent was paid too.

Mr. Stowers stated East River Complex.

Mr. Linkous stated that he thought Dr. Lester owned it.

Mr. Dales stated not to his knowledge. He stated that he was on the East River Soccer Complex Board and they needed funds as well.

Mr. Linkous stated that Mr. Watson would get in contact with them once a decision was made.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Two Virginias 5K Challenge – Billie Roberts

Mrs. Roberts stated that the 5K Challenge was on Saturday and asked for any councilmember who would like to volunteer to work the water station to let staff know or if they wanted to work at the end giving out water, bananas and oranges. She stated that the small stage would be set up to do awards at the end and that Becky Ritter with BRMC would be giving out the awards. She stated that there would be over 40 awards given out and that there were 24 employees signed up to participate. She stated that it was going to be a lot of fun.

Mr. Linkous asked if the advertisement had been changed.

Mrs. Roberts stated yes. She stated that she and Charles from the City of Bluefield would be on Radio Active the next morning to talk about the 5K Challenge.

Mr. Linkous asked if the t-shirts would be given out before or after.

Mrs. Roberts stated before. She stated that Bluefield College would have around 18 guys helping out from the basketball team and that so far the total registration was about 125.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS & REPORTS

Recognition of Officers at Graham/Beaver Game Resolution, VOTE – Billie Roberts

Mrs. Roberts stated that this was another project that the Town of Bluefield and the City of Bluefield were working on together. She stated that it would take place

between 6:50 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on the sidelines with both mayors, Police Chiefs and managers on the field. She stated that the announcer would read a brief summation of the resolution and then the framed resolution would be presented to each Chief of Police. She stated that a thin blue line had been painted in the middle of the field and would remain there the whole season. She stated that we were only allowed 10 minutes because they had so much going on that night and she was hoping they would be able to read each individual name but not sure if they would have time but each name was in the resolution.

Mr. Linkous asked if all police officers would be there from each side.

Mr. Watson stated that the logistics of that happening would be too hard because everyone would be working either regular patrol or would be working the game.

Mr. Linkous stated that the scoreboard had the capability of putting names on it.

Mrs. Roberts stated that was a good idea and she would check on it.

Mr. Linkous made a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Trigg seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS & REPORTS

House Bill 2: Cumberland Road Extension – Billie Roberts

Mrs. Roberts stated that this was a unique year for the HB2 because it allowed us to apply last year and this year. She stated that you normally apply every other year but they were allowing us to apply again this year but there would not be another update after we were finished with this one for 2 years. She stated that it was renamed to Smart Scale and that last year we received the money to do the Leatherwood Lane Project in the amount of \$1.2 million. She stated this year they were looking at doing the Cumberland Road Extension (going up past Food City into Westwood Medical Center). She stated that there was a way to connect that road with College Avenue to help with the congestion in that area. She stated that the Leatherwood Lane Project would help with the congestion off of 460.

Mr. Watson stated that if you went out past Food City and continued straight instead of turning into Westwood, there was an area that went straight thru there on the map. He stated that it was the area where Bluefield College was looking to build a multi-use field. He stated that Bluefield College was contacted and they are willing to give us the right of way thru it. He stated that we would also have to talk to the Leatherwood Company that donated it as long as it was used for school use. He stated that it was a 0% match and if approved there would not be any movement on it for about 5 years. He stated that this used to be the 6 year plan which was done away with. He stated that in the next session of approval, he hoped to be able to tie it in to help with the fields and the development of that property. He stated that VDOT seemed really supportive of this.

Garden Club Location of Sign, VOTE – Mike Watson

Mr. Watson stated that the Garden Club requested to put their sign in a location with a good site downtown in the area between the gazebo and the flag pole and when it was placed, it would be perpendicular to the road. He asked for a vote from council on this location.

Mr. Trigg made a motion to approve the Garden Club's sign location. Mr. Riffe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Asset Management Plan

Mr. Watson stated that the VDH had a contract with an engineering group to provide up to \$10k to do Waterworks Asset Management Plans. He stated that what it would do, would allow them to go into a water system and tell you what you needed to fix and that it was a 5-6 year look ahead. He stated that it was at no cost to the Town and we would supply the information to the engineering firm and they would supply us with a copy of the report and the next time we looked at doing a capital improvement project, we would know what needed to be done.

Water Source Update

Mr. Watson stated that they were finishing up the final project. He stated that the Water Department would meet with the engineering group and they would put together a plan and once it was finalized, it would be sent to the Virginia Department of Health.

Planning Commission Vacancy

Mr. Watson stated that he had received a resume tonight and that we would be putting an ad in the paper soon so the Planning Commission Vacancy could be filled.

Mr. Jones asked if there was a deadline to fill it.

Mr. Watson stated no, that council voted to fill the position. He stated that he was not sure if Planning Commission was included in it last time.

Red Cross Blood Drive

Mr. Watson stated that the Red Cross Blood Drive would be set up on Tuesday, August 30th from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Two Virginias 5K Challenge

Mr. Watson stated that the 5K Challenge had been talked about earlier.

Town Offices Closed

Mr. Watson stated that Town Offices would be closed on Monday, September 5th for the Labor Day Holiday. He stated that Monday's trash would be picked up on Friday, September 2nd.

Autumn Jamboree 5K Zombie Run

Mr. Watson stated that the Autumn Jamboree 5K Zombie Run would be held on Friday, September 9th at 7 p.m. at Graham Rec Park.

Autumn Jamboree

Mr. Watson stated that the Autumn Jamboree would be held on Saturday, September 10th in downtown Bluefield, VA.

Flu Shots

Mr. Watson stated that flu shots would be given to Town Employees and their families on Wednesday, September 28th at 2 p.m. in the Council Chambers. He asked council to let staff know if they wanted to have a flu shot. He stated that there was a lot going on over the next few weeks and that the Graham-Beaver game was on Friday.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Constance Saunders, 74 Sedgewood stated that she lived in the upper top townhouses. She stated that she had been having problems with animal control for the past two years. She stated that she had gone thru all channels with the association. She stated that her neighbor has several cats that she has been feeding which has brought in fleas. She stated that she had to have her home sprayed for the fleas which the neighbor did pay for.

Mr. Watson stated that this was not the first problem concerning such issue but that the State of Virginia did not allow the Town to regulate cats.

Mrs. Saunders stated that she had at least 25 stray cats that she fed which was bringing in raccoons and skunks now as well. She stated that she called the Humane Society and they told her to call the Police Department.

Mr. Watson stated that the Town was not allowed to trap cats but that we did loan out the traps and the person did whatever with the animal they trapped. He suggested calling the Virginia Department of Health and stated that the association should be able to do something about it.

Mrs. Saunders stated that she was a renter.

Mr. Watson asked if the landlord had been talked too.

Mrs. Saunders stated that the association said they had.

Mr. Watson stated that the Town could not write a letter or issue a fine because we could not regulate cats but could for dogs.

Mr. Linkous asked if there was something in the code.

Chief Gunter stated it was only for dogs.

Mr. Jones stated that the Health Department may be able to help her.

Mrs. Saunders stated that they were going up in the crawl space now because the neighbor was leaving the door open for them too. She stated that the neighbor keeps talking about moving.

Mr. Watson stated that we could get her the landlord's name.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Riffe stated that people were using the benches that had been put in at the Hockman Pike Recreational Area.

Mr. Watson stated that we still needed to put up railing across the bridge and it would be a solid steel frame but it would be in the next few weeks once they got caught up on everything else.

Mr. Linkous stated that he has had people ask him when we would start paving.

Mr. Watson stated that we only had \$170k and wanted to wait until spring because it would be the worst after winter.

Mr. Linkous asked about Long Street.

Mr. Watson stated that he had a quote in to fix it and would put in a drywell, plant some grass and would be paving from the top down to the main road. He stated that he would like to put a hump in it and level it out making one side higher to fix the problem they were having. He stated that he was looking at a local paver to do the job since it was a small project.

Mr. Linkous stated that everyone loved the Field Fest on Thursdays and he had a lot of people asking if we were going to do it anymore this year. He suggested having one more this year because it was the best thing Bluefield has had that went over well. He asked staff to look into it. He asked about the political sign ordinance rules and stated that they needed to be enforced for all candidates.

Mr. Danko asked if a letter had been sent out yet to those running.

Mr. Watson stated no, that he would send them out this week.

Mr. Linkous suggested they look at picking a certain place in Town to allow these signs to be such as the fountain or across the road near the digital sign. He asked if Sedgewood still had an ordinance against signs.

Mr. Watson stated that some sections restricted them. He stated that signs were allowed on a public right of way and that 95% of those running took their signs down if they were asked too. He stated that it was difficult to regulate the content but they could regulate where the sign was placed.

Mr. Linkous stated that he did not see a problem with them allowing the signs in designated areas.

Mr. Trigg had none.

Mr. Danko asked about the downtown construction.

Mr. Watson stated that the sign had been made and that the person doing the rock would be starting next week sometime.

Mr. Danko asked how long it would take to finish.

Mrs. Roberts stated 2-3 weeks.

Mr. Watson stated that they were working on the curbing on Spring Street.

Mr. Danko asked if the person who owned the old bank building was asked to paint their building.

Mr. Watson stated that he had not talked to them yet.

Mr. Jones asked if Mrs. Roberts had.

Mrs. Roberts stated that she had not.

Mr. Linkous asked if Clay's was selling.

Mrs. Roberts stated that they were negotiating.

Mr. Jones had none.

ATTORNEY REPORT

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilmember Linkous made a motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to *Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3711-A-1.7* and Mrs. Hernandez read:

Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members of 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 Riffe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Council entered into Executive Session at 8:33 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. Hernandez 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 23rd day of August.

Councilmember Trigg seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilmember Riffe:	Yes
Councilmember Linkous:	Yes
Councilmember Trigg:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	Absent

Vice Mayor Jones: Yes
Councilmember Danko: Yes

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

ADJOURN

Mr. Linkous made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 p.m. Mr. Riffe seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Don Harris, Mayor

Lesley Catron, Town Clerk