

**Town of Bluefield
Town Council
Work Session
January 26, 2016**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a Work Session on Tuesday, January 26, 2016 at 6:45 P.M. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall located at 112 Huffard Drive, Bluefield, Virginia.

TOWN COUNCIL PRESENT

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

ALSO PRESENT

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

PLANNING COMMISSION PRESENT

Don Scott, Planning Comm. Member
Harry Kammer, Planning Comm. Member
Don Whitt, Planning Comm. Secretary

ABSENT

Shane Gunter, Chief of Police

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Harris opened the Work Session at 6:47 p.m.

Mr. Watson stated that it was broken down into 3 different projects.

-Sprint Street would be replacing lights and putting in new sidewalks and water lines. He stated that it would cost around \$7,500 per light pole and suggested staggering the 5 lights. He stated that it would cost around \$37k in material for the poles and that staff had applied for Revenue Sharing to pay for half of the materials. He stated that we could buy the lights out of this year's budget and keep them until the Revenue Sharing money was received in July. He stated that before anything was done that staff would talk to the businesses to see if they were interested in the project being done.

-Parking Area near Clay's and WVVA.net would consist of a rock walk, landscaping, a new sign, gravel base, a walk way and some tables. He stated that it would cost around \$40k for the wall, \$120k for the gravel and that he could absorb the sidewalks into the existing budget. He stated that under the Farmer's Market would be gravel pavers.

Mr. Watson stated that he had talked to the gentleman who owns Clay's building and he was selling it for \$147k or rent for \$800 per month but after the first year, the rent would go up to \$1k.

-Visitors Center: Mr. Watson stated that Tazewell County was interested in staying in Bluefield, Virginia. He stated that he told them if council was interested that they would build a basic building and if there was any money left that they would make the building look a little better. He stated that it would cost around \$50k and that they needed 1,200 sqft. He stated that in council's packets was a Resolution in Support of keeping the Visitors Center in Bluefield, Virginia.

Mr. Jones stated that staff had done a good job building the one at the cemetery.

Mr. Watson stated that they did and it was the first one that they had done. He stated that staff had also built the sign and the bathrooms downtown so they had some expertise in it. He stated that he would negotiate a lease with them as well.

Mr. Watson stated that in order to move forward with any of these projects that he needed to know how far council would like to go. He recommended that they set what they would like to accomplish and how much.

Mr. Danko asked if staff visited the businesses and they said no, then what would they do.

Mr. Watson stated that the only concern would be the restricted parking.

Mr. Danko asked if it would be one way.

Mr. Watson stated no, but you would have to pick which side you wanted to use for parking and stated that there would be more spaces if the parking was on the First Century Bank side.

Mayor Harris asked if they would still have access to the back of the laundry.

Mr. Watson stated yes and that we would need to let people know because we had businesses asking questions.

Mr. Riffe asked what the pros and cons would be between purchasing Clay's building and building a new one for the Visitors Center.

Mr. Watson stated that you would have to remodel Clay's plus the purchase price.

Mr. Riffe stated that it would be better to build a new building. He stated that he would like to see them do the Visitors Center and Spring Street and wait on the Farmer's Market and the parking lot to see what type of traffic the Visitors Center attracted.

Mr. Linkous stated that the parking lot they were talking about would not be able to fit ATV and trailers in it and that he thought they were doing the parking lot to make it look better downtown and for the customers. He stated that they would have to make it for one or the other. He stated that if the Visitors Center was located near the Farmers Market that it would not be seen.

Mr. Watson stated that it would be located 2 spots down on the left of the Veteran's Memorial or on the right of the bathrooms.

Mr. Linkous stated that you would have parking in front of the bathrooms which would fit ATV trailers. He stated that he would like to see Spring Street done and would like to see the parking lot done for the merchants not ATV's.

Mr. Trigg suggested putting the Visitors Center building off of 720.

Mr. Jones stated that he would like to see us take half of the costs to do Spring Street out of this year's budget and then do the rest out of next year's budget.

Mr. Danko agreed with Mr. Jones.

Mayor Harris stated with the new ATV Trail going in at Pocahontas that we would be seeing more and more of ATV's. He suggested going with Spring Street and the Visitors Center and to let staff come up with the planning for it.

Mr. Jones stated that if they lost the Visitors Center to Tazewell that it would be gone forever.

Mayor Harris asked if they would be adding any additional Visitors Centers.

Mrs. Roberts stated that they had been talking about it but there were no commitments. She stated that the Board of Supervisors would like to see those types of Visitors Centers in strategic areas and that the Town of Tazewell was going to make a presentation to have one there.

Mr. Linkous suggested putting it across from the fire station in that open space because there were already parking spaces there.

Mayor Harris asked council if they were all on the same page to move forward with Spring Street and the Visitors Center.

Council stated yes.

ADJOURN

Mayor Harris adjourned the Work Session at 7:15 p.m.

Don Harris, Mayor

Lesley Catron, Town Clerk