

**Town of Bluefield
Town Council
Minutes
October 11, 2022**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall located at 112 Huffard Drive, Bluefield, Virginia.

PRESENT

Donnie Linkous, Mayor
Cathy Payne, Councilmember
Chuck Presley, Councilmember
Rick Holman, Councilmember
Anglis Trigg, Councilmember
Greg DeGray, Councilmember

ALSO PRESENT

Trent Crewe, Manager/Town Attorney
Kim Hernandez, Town Clerk
James Hampton, Asst. Mgr./Treasurer/Transit Dir.
Shane Gunter, Chief of Police
20 members of public
2 members of Police Department

ABSENT

Ron Holt, Vice-Mayor

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Councilmember Presley made a motion to approve the July, August and September Monthly budget reports. Councilmember Payne seconded the motion.

Mayor Linkous asked the Clerk to do roll call and report.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilmember DeGray: Yes
Councilmember Holman: Yes
Vice-Mayor Holt: Absent
Councilmember Presley: Yes
Councilmember Payne: Yes
Councilmember Trigg: Yes
Mayor Linkous: No Vote Permitted

Motion carried 5-0 in favor of the budget reports.

CITIZEN REQUESTS & SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Board of Supervisors Update – Charlie Stacy

Charlie Stacy stated that Tazewell County had a budget surplus in their last year's revenue even after adjusting the personal property rate. He stated that they reduced it to 90% to try and offset some of what the citizens would see. He stated that the Budget Committee asked Eric Young for this one time grant to be given to each district. He stated that it had not been fully approved by the Board of Supervisors as of yet but had been approved by the Budget Committee. He stated that it would be \$100k for a joint project and felt it would be most beneficial for the downtown revitalization and possibly the bridge. He stated that they recently had a public meeting regarding a pro-life resolution that there was no crisis pregnancy centers in Tazewell County but we were lucky to have the Abel Crisis in Bluefield, WV.

Mr. Holman asked if this were related to ARPA money.

Mr. Stacy stated no but the ARPA money certainly helped everyone.

Mayor Linkous stated that the Town had also adjusted our tax rate and mirrored Tazewell County.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND REPORTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS AND REPORTS

None.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Collin O'Donnell stated that he was working closely with Charlie Stacy on a plan of action to resolve issues. He stated that he had received some push back on the letter he had written regarding Council and the IDA. He stated that he did not mean for it to sound like he was saying that anyone was a bad person and there was no mysterious intentions. He read emails regarding the HVAC, window, patio and hot water issues and stated that there was an opportunity to fix these issues.

Dave Wohlford stated that this was a classic example of how the IDA worked. He stated that supervision was not hired to watch over the contractors over \$25k and that all of council knew that. He stated that the steps at the park previously mentioned had not been fixed, there were still pits under the swings and someone needed to step up and get stuff done. He stated that the retaining ponds at Wal-Mart did not work and the Town needed to hire an engineer and architect.

Jarried McFarland stated that Trent was working hard on helping them and that he had spoken with some donors regarding the crash truck, etc. He stated that Little League was doing well.

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT

None.

TOWN MANAGER'S/ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Crewe stated that he had already received phone calls from the VML vendors trying to sell us things, that he had spoken with Mr. Rhudy who owns the parking across from the Fire Station and was willing to sell or donate it to the Town. He stated that Thompson & Litton had submitted all applications to ODW & VDH which looked favorable, that they had reached an agreement with CLECO on 53 days vs. 84 days penalty and that Thompson & Litton had submitted their final for this project. He stated that the Police Department received a \$10k grant from the Community Foundation, that Fincastle was able to serve 150 at the annual Community Foundation Grant sit down dinner in under 11 minutes, had a wedding and family reunion during which a water line ruptured but thanks to Public Works they had it fixed in 30 minutes. He stated that leaf pickups would begin on October 24th and continue through November 30th, that fall newsletters went out last week and was another good newsletter.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Trigg had none.

Mrs. Payne asked that everyone remember Jay Ferguson who would be having open heart surgery at 5 a.m. tomorrow morning. She asked what the orange cone was in the curve at Doe Meadows that it appeared to be a sinkhole.

Mr. Crewe stated that he would ask.

Mr. Presley thanked everyone for coming out, that we had the best Police Department and Chief, reminded everyone of the Haunted Hayride, October 14-15 and asked about the pickle ball courts.

Mr. Crewe stated that he was negotiating with two providers.

Mr. Presley stated that the drain under the road at the old Ammar's building was stopped up.

Mr. DeGray thanked everyone for coming, thanked Collin for expressing his issues and stated that he was on the IDA before council and knew his passion and hoped that everything could be fixed. He stated that the Town needed to hire another Community Development Coordinator to help with the IDA that the website was a mess and we needed to implement a plan for our Town.

Mr. Holman thanked everyone for coming out and stated that he appreciated everyone's comments and they all wanted to seek a common relief. He stated that he knew we had a labor shortage and appreciated all of the efforts in Public Works and trash and stated that the Police Department was also doing well.

Mayor Linkous stated that a few of them had attended the Community Foundation Dinner and that we were very appreciative for the funding given to the town. He stated that he did not use social media but he wanted to clear up some misinformation that Greg was not on both the IDA and Council that he resigned from the IDA before being sworn in to council. He stated that the Town could not step in on the issues that they did not own it but hoped that the parties could come together that there were hurt feelings everywhere but all wanted to see them prosper. He stated that they knew all of the hard work they had put in (lots of blood, sweat and tears) that this was just a bump in the road and told them to keep their heads held high and prove to everyone they could do it. He stated that council would not be involved in the solution but wanted to see them succeed that the majority of everyone loved them. He stated that the members on the IDA were professionals and were there to help.

Mr. Crewe stated that the Christmas Committee received \$15k and the Beautification Committee received \$8k from the Community Foundation as well as what the Police Department received.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Linkous asked the Clerk 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) (1) of the Code of Virginia as amended, The specific purpose for this motion is to discuss the following matter(s):

Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body with such closed meeting being confined to the following subject (s): Town Manager.

Mayor Linkous asked for a motion to enter into Executive Session.

Councilmember Presley made a motion to enter into Executive Session as described above. Councilmember Holman seconded the motion.

Mayor Linkous asked the Clerk to do roll call and report.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilmember DeGray:	Yes
Councilmember Holman:	Yes
Vice-Mayor Holt:	Absent
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Payne:	Yes
Councilmember Trigg:	Yes
Mayor Linkous:	No Vote Permitted

Mrs. Hernandez stated that it was 5-0 in favor of going into Executive Session.

Mayor Linkous asked for a motion to resume open meeting.

Councilmember Holman made a motion to enter back into regular session. Councilmember Presley seconded the motion.

Mayor Linkous asked the clerk to read the certification.

CERTIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia convened a closed meeting on October 11, 2022, 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 October 11, 2022.

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 October 11, 2022, 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.

Mayor Linkous asked for a motion to approve the certification.

Councilmember Presley made a motion to approve the certification. Councilmember Holman seconded the motion.

Mayor Linkous asked the Clerk to do roll call and report.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Councilmember DeGray:	Yes
Councilmember Holman:	Yes
Vice-Mayor Holt:	Absent
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Payne:	Yes
Councilmember Trigg:	Yes
Mayor Linkous:	Yes

Motion carried 6-0 approving the certification.

ADJOURN

Mayor Linkous asked for a motion and a second to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

D.S. Linkous, Mayor

Kim Hernandez, Town Clerk