

**Town of Bluefield
Town Council
Minutes
May 24, 2022**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, May 24, 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
Rick Holman, Councilmember
Chuck Presley, Councilmember
Cathy Payne, Councilmember
Greg DeGray, Councilmember
Anglis Trigg, Councilmember

ALSO PRESENT

James Hampton, Asst. Mgr./Treasurer/Transit Dir.
Kim Hernandez, Town Clerk
Shane Gunter, Chief of Police
Kris Williams, Zoning & Property Maint. Official
Greg Quesenberry, Recreation Director
10 members of public

ABSENT

Ron Holt, Vice-Mayor
Trent Crewe, Manager/Town Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Jay Ferguson, First United Methodist Church led the Invocation. Mayor Linkous led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

CONSENT AGENDA

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

CITIZEN REQUESTS & SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND REPORTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS AND REPORTS

Dwelling Definition Code Change, ROLL CALL VOTE – Kris Williams

Mr. Williams stated during the last Planning Commission meeting that Planning Commission voted to change the current definition of dwelling in the town code. He stated that a copy of the proposed change was in council's packet and based upon their recommendation, it would be his recommendation to approve the dwelling definition code change. He stated that it would mainly deal with tiny homes.

Mr. Presley asked in which zoning.

Mr. Williams stated Residential/Dwelling.

Mr. Holman made a motion to approve the Dwelling Definition Code Change. Mr. Presley 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 Dwelling Definition Code Change.

Short Term Rental of a Dwelling Ordinance, ROLL CALL VOTE – Kris Williams

Mr. Williams stated during the last Planning Commission meeting that Planning Commission voted to add a short-term rental of a dwelling ordinance to the town code. He stated that a copy of the proposed change was in council's packet and based upon their recommendation, it would be his recommendation to approve the short-term rental of a dwelling ordinance.

Mr. Holman made a motion to approve the Short Term Rental of a Dwelling Ordinance.
Mr. Presley 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 Dwelling Definition Code Change.

2022/2023 Budget, ROLL CALL VOTE – Kim Hernandez

Mrs. Hernandez stated that a Public Hearing was held earlier and asked for a vote to approve the 2022/2023 Budget.

Mr. Trigg made a motion to approve the 2022/2023 Budget. Mr. Presley 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 approving the 2022/2023 Budget.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Dave Wohlford stated at the corner of Tanager where Jarrod lived that high speeders was becoming an issue. He stated that kids played in the streets and a stop sign needed to be put up.

Chief Gunter stated that he would look into it.

Mr. Wohlford asked if Harmony Acres would be opening this year.

Mayor Linkous stated yes.

Mr. Wohlford asked if the kiddie area at Fincastle was finished.

Mrs. Hernandez stated that they were there today and it should be finished this week.

Mr. Wohlford stated that he had talked to council a week and half ago about the patch of dirt on Summit Street where the pool used to be and all the glass there. He stated that it was not safe when the sun was shining on it. He stated regarding the Little League Fields that it was not fair that he should talk to J-Rod when it belonged to the town. He stated that it needed to come through the Town that the college did not get first choice. He showed a piece of his hot water tank that he had to clean every year. He stated that he was not sure what was put in the water but it needed to be fixed and suggested that water samples be sent to Tech to see what was wrong. He stated that his neighbors were also complaining about a white powdery build up.

Lee Riffe stated that the Historical Society met and agreed to change the employee dinner to September. He stated that they met with the VFW last month and would meet again on Thursday to discuss a Veteran's Day Ceremony.

Councilmember Payne stated that they were very excited to do something at the memorial or Jack Asbury Park.

Mayor Linkous asked that something be done for Eva Saunders.

Mr. Riffe stated that they had donated \$100 to the Wade Center in her name, Omi Oakes was working on a fundraiser and they had also talked about doing a scholarship.

Mayor Linkous suggested some type of stone being placed at the Sanders House. He stated that they could find a way to pay for it and maybe even do something on the weekend of the big game during the Depot Street Pig Roast.

Mr. Riffe stated that he would mention that to them.

Mayor Linkous stated that it was an opportunity for them to do something or the town would do it. He stated during the bean dinner may be a better option.

Mr. Riffe agreed and said they could invite her family.

Gail Cook suggested naming the gazebo after her since she was the one in charge of all the essay contests.

Mayor Linkous stated that was a good idea but they were waiting to either redo the gazebo or get a new one.

Mrs. Hernandez stated that a new gazebo had been ordered.

Mr. Wohlford stated one other thing was not being able to accept cash at the Field Fest Event.

Mr. Hampton stated that our auditors would not allow it.

Betty Kuppusami thanked everyone who attended the Police Walk. She stated that it was her first time and asked that everyone bring someone next year. She thanked the Police Department for all that they did.

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Gunter thanked everyone who attended the police walk and Tammy Horn for putting it together. He stated that it grew every year. He thanked Jay Ferguson for letting them use the church facility for their training. He stated that the youngest officer he had with the least seniority had helped to locate an older gentlemen in the West Graham area who had Alzheimer's and had gotten out of his house at 3 a.m. He stated that this was the 5th time he had gotten out and his wife was elderly as well. He stated that Officer Briley had talked to her about an alarm system and at the end of his shift he went and purchased some, went back and installed them for her. He stated that no one asked him to do this but good things like this were always happening. He read a letter of recognition for outstanding community service that he presented to Officer Briley.

TOWN MANAGER'S/ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Updates

Mr. Hampton gave the following updates:

Town wide cleanup was a big success with 23 helping to collect 42 bags of trash and some larger items as well. He stated that a cookout was held afterwards.

June 2nd Field Fest 5-9 p.m. Beverage tickets were \$20 advanced purchase or \$25 at the door.

June 3rd Evening Shade event with Eddie Marris.

May 30th Town offices closed due to Memorial Day. He stated that Monday's trash would be picked up on Friday.

June 1st Special called meeting for the Virginia budget.

In early June, Comcast would be deleting two Russian Stations.

Bluefield University had begun construction on the entrance with expected completion late summer.

Still working with the City on Graham/Beaver Game.

National Pools was here and all lines are working.

Gail Williams Proclamation, ROLL CALL VOTE

Mr. Hampton read the following proclamation:

**PROCLAMATION COMMEMORATING
GAIL WILLIAMS DAY**

WHEREAS, the Town of Bluefield, Virginia recognizes the valuable contributions from Gail Ruth Harman Williams to our community; and

WHEREAS, she provided leadership and guidance to thousands of children as manager of Harmony Acres Swimming Pool for 60+ years; and

WHEREAS, as a Safety Water Instructor for Red Cross Swimming from 1953-2018, she instructed hundreds of adolescents and adults on how to teach beginner, intermediate, advanced swimmer, junior life saving and senior life saving swimming skills; and

WHEREAS, she provided water shows to the citizens of the Bluefield, Virginia community and surrounding areas including synchronized swimming, diving, variety performances and clown shows from the 1950s into the 1970s; and

WHEREAS, Gail, as she was more affectionately known by all of those who knew her, was the keeper of "Harmony" in the name Harmony Acres. She was a loving and guiding light to those who needed help, a positive role model and was a beacon for the rights of females. She was keeper of the whole for Harmony Acres from any serious accidents during her decades of affiliation with "The Pool."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of the Town of Bluefield hereby recognizes June 17, 2022 as Gail Williams Day.

Mr. Trigg made a motion to approve the proclamation. Mr. Presley 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 approving the proclamation.

Greg Quesenberry stated that it would be presented Saturday, June 18th.

Mayor Linkous suggested presenting it to the family and putting a copy at the pool.

Mr. Presley suggested something in the front like what was done for Oaka.

Mr. Quesenberry stated that it could be put side by side.

Mayor Linkous asked that they let them know what needed to be done.

Mr. Holman asked if the Town Offices had been reopened.

Mr. Hampton stated no.

Mr. Holman stated that if we were running Fincastle to its capacity, etc. then Town Offices needed to be reopened.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. DeGray thanked Chief Gunter and stated that he felt safe raising his family here.

Mr. Holman agreed with that statement.

Mr. Trigg stated that he 100% agreed on our Police Department. He thanked the community for all they did as well.

Mrs. Payne also agreed on our Police Department. She thanked everyone who helped with the community cleanup day. She stated that she was out of town during the event.

Mr. Presley stated that we had the best Police Chief that Recreation was doing a lot of stuff and that the paving on Tanager Drive was bad along with Fairlane. He reminded everyone to come to the Patchwork Quilters Show June 24-25. He thanked Lee for his work on the Veteran's Day Ceremony. He stated that the trees needed to be trimmed going downtown where Classic Coal was, thanked the town for working with Aramark on their water issues and stated that our Fire Department was awesome.

Mayor Linkous stated that the Police Walk was awesome and that Tammy did a great job on the event. He stated that he was also out of town during the cleanup and thanked Kim, Gail and Lee and the other 20 town employees along with the community who helped. He stated that Gail did a lot of volunteering for the Town and also thanked LaDenia for all the work she did on helping with the newsletters. He stated that our volunteers made the Town go. He stated that he was looking for a good pool season at Harmony Acres and that it was looking nice. He stated that they were the ones who broke the concrete, fixed the holes, painted, etc. He asked when swim lessons would begin.

Heather Sharpe stated the last week in June.

Mayor Linkous thanked Jay Ferguson for all that he did.

Mrs. Hernandez thanked him and his church for the prayer cloths that was sent out.

Jay Ferguson stated that was the ministry of the church and it was amazing how they showed up to people in just the right time.

Mayor Linkous thanked everyone for coming out.

Mr. Presley asked if the trees at Harmony Acres would be cut at the end of the season.

Mr. Quesenberry stated that he would put in a request because they could not keep up with them.

ADJOURN

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

D.S. Linkous, Mayor

Kim Hernandez, Town Clerk