

**Town of Bluefield  
Town Council  
Minutes  
June 13, 2023**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a Special Called Meeting on Tuesday, June 13, 2023 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, Vice-Mayor  
Lee Riffe, Councilmember

**ALSO PRESENT**

James Hampton, Asst. Town Mgr/Treasurer/Transit Dir  
Shane Gunter, Chief of Police  
Lori Stacy, Communications Director  
3 Members of Public

**ABSENT**

Ron Holt, Councilmember  
Anglis Trigg, Councilmember  
Kim Hernandez, Town Clerk  
Alan McGraw, Town Attorney

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE**

James Hampton led the Invocation. Mayor Linkous led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**CONSENT AGENDA**

None.

**FINANCIALS**

None.

**CITIZEN REQUESTS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

None.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS & REPORTS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS & REPORTS**

***Unbudgeted Tazewell County Chamber of Commerce Request, ROLL CALL VOTE – Lori Stacy***

Mrs. Stacy stated that she had sent an email to council and apologized for polling with an email. She asked council to sponsor the Tazewell County Chamber of Commerce’s Lunch and Learn held in our Council Chambers on Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. with guest speaker CEO Dr. Peter Mulkey, Clinch Valley Health discussing new cancer treatments and programs for Clinch Valley Health. She stated that it was open to the public and asked for \$500 to help cover the cost of the lunch.

Mr. Holman made a motion to approve \$500. Mr. Presley seconded the motion.

Mayor Linkous did the roll call.

**ROLL CALL VOTE**

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

Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

Mayor Linkous stated that on a small amount that the manager could approve it.

Mr. Holman stated that it was unbudgeted.

Mayor Linkous stated that he could still approve something that small and the manager could also call council and ask for an opinion on something like that.

Mr. Holman stated as long they codified it at the next meeting.

Mayor Linkous stated yes.

***IRF Funding Resolution, ROLL CALL VOTE – Lori Stacy***

Mrs. Stacy stated that this was why she needed the special meeting to approve for the IDA to apply for \$750,000 to renovate and make improvements to the former Thistle Street Foundry which was in use to house 4 businesses and create space for others. She read the resolution:

**A RESOLUTION TO APPLY FOR THE INDUSTRIALIZED REVITALIZATION FUNDS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (DHCD)**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, the Town of Bluefield wishes to apply for \$750,000.00 of Industrial Revitalization Funds for PROJECT BUILD BLUEFIELD for the reconstruction of the property whose end use will house 4 businesses and create space for others.

**WHEREAS**, Scott Stephenson (currently property owner) has expended on this project by doing electrical work and installing a new roof, it is projected that Brad Ayers Engineering, EZUP Cranes, Zofikol Furniture Design & Manufacturing and WaveBreak will result from the implementation of the project.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that LORI STACY, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR is authorized to sign and submit appropriate documents for the submittal of the Industrial Revitalization Fund proposal.

**IT IS SO RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF BLUEFIELD, VIRGINIA** on this 13<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2023.

Mr. Presley made a motion to approve the IRF Funding Resolution. Mr. Riffe seconded the motion.

Mayor Linkous did the roll call.

**ROLL CALL VOTE**

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

Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

***Night @ Bowen Field – Lori Stacy***

Mrs. Stacy stated that this was not on the agenda but that she had talked to Rocky and in the past the town had sponsored a night at Bowen Field, that they still had dates available and that Town of Bluefield would welcome people as they came in and in years past had given megaphones with popcorn in them. She stated that the sponsorship was \$1,000 and she had found 250 megaphones for \$350.

Mr. Holman stated the total would be \$1,350 and asked if it included the Town employees free entry.

Mrs. Stacy stated that she thought so.

Mr. Holman asked about burgers/hotdogs for the employees.

Mrs. Stacy stated that she was not sure.

Mr. Riffe stated that they were given concession tickets for food.

Mrs. Payne asked if she had dates.

Mrs. Stacy stated not yet but she could get them and send them out and together they could find a date that would be good for all.

Mrs. Payne made a motion to approve sponsoring a night at Bowen Field pending further information. Mr. Presley seconded the motion.

Mayor Linkous did the roll call.

**ROLL CALL VOTE**

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

Motion carried 4-0 in favor.

***Groundskeeper House New Roof, ROLL CALL VOTE – James Hampton***

Mr. Hampton stated that John O’Neal came to us last week stating that the groundskeeper’s roof was leaking pretty badly. He stated that they had one quote from Lowe’s for the materials-\$8,500 and labor-\$8,500 for a total of \$17k. He asked council what they would like to do.

Mr. Presley stated that they needed to have more quotes

Mr. Holman stated that he thought it was a bigger roof.

Mr. Hampton stated that he was not sure.

Mayor Linkous suggested quoting a metal roof.

Mr. Riffe asked if that was our responsibility or in Fincastle’s budget.

Mr. Holman stated that it was a gray area.

Mr. Hampton stated that he would go back to John and ask for more quotes including metal.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None.

**POLICE CHIEF’S REPORT**

Chief Gunter stated that they had interviewed 5, hired one and offered employment to two more. He stated that all 3 would have to go to the academy but he would be at full staff once again. He stated that Sgt. Carroll would be retiring and they had put in a lot of hours at the carnival with not as much trouble as last year.

Mrs. Payne asked how much it cost to send them to the academy.

Chief Gunter stated total cost by graduation was around \$27k-\$28k including equipment, travel, salaries, etc.

Mayor Linkous stated that they had to sign a contract to stay.

Chief Gunter stated for 3 years and if they left then had to pay back what was owed (prorated).

### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

#### **Upcoming:**

Evening Shade (Ian & the Outlaws), June 16<sup>th</sup> @ 7 p.m.

Town Offices Closed-Juneteenth, June 19<sup>th</sup> (trash pickup will be on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup>)

### **TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

None.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Mrs. Payne had none.

Mr. Riffe asked if there were some type of emergency alert that could be placed downtown to alert of something happening. He stated that he saw WV had the Red Cross helping them and asked if we had someone to help us and take care of our people as well.

Mr. Hampton stated that he did reach out to FEMA and was basically told no.

Mayor Linkous stated that the Red Cross did come to this area for things.

Mr. Holman asked if there was any type of alert currently in the Fire Station.

Chief Gunter stated no but asked that they let him talk to 911 that they may be able to send out a mass text message of those registered through the 911 system.

Mr. Riffe asked going forward if they had Executive Sessions could they be at the beginning of the meeting instead of the end.

Mr. Presley stated that they used to do that before.

Mayor Linkous stated that he had to get up at 2 a.m.

Mr. Riffe asked as well that they be notified in advance if an Executive Session were to be called so that they did not go in blind as to what it was about.

Mr. Holman asked James if anyone had contacted him about the ongoing work with the substation and improving the road.

Mr. Hampton stated that they had contacted Tim and Danny.

Mr. Holman asked when they had time that he still needed the ditches cleaned out and the water pressure issues resolved.

Mr. Presley stated next Thursday that he would like to hold a flood meeting to get a course of action and get some engineering to fix the issues.

Mr. Hampton asked him to get with Kim because he would be out of town.

Mr. Presley stated to include Fire, Police, Engineering, etc. to see what a solution would be.

Mr. Holman asked if it were just for residential.

Mr. Presley stated that it would be anyone with issues that we could not fix everything but could help with some things. He stated that they did need to address the issue brought up by Mr. Wohlford at the old Sedgewood swimming pool park, that there were a lot of large trees at the fence of the old Platnick building near the railroad tracks that needed to be cut. He stated that Danny Asbury had contacted him and would be willing to bring his large heavy equipment and dig out whatever was needed in the town for free.

Mayor Linkous asked James to contact the company working with the county on flooding to see if they could attend this meeting.

Mr. Presley stated that it could be the next following week if they could not come next week.

Mayor Linkous stated that Matt Dixon had a big problem. He stated that citizens were sending pictures and that Kim was forwarding them on to this group but it would be great if we could get them to attend this meeting.

Discussions were had regarding the bear problem and if anything could be done. It was stated that we had no authority to do anything.

Mayor Linkous stated that he had talked to James, the Zoning Administrator and the attorney regarding properties such as Sam's not cutting their grass. He stated at the next meeting that he would like for them to discuss that on commercial properties only if the Zoning Administrator had to go and talk to them after sending them a letter and we had to cut it then the price would start at \$500. He stated that the town needed to "put some teeth in it". He stated that he had a call in now to the corporate office of Sam's and that Wal-Mart was just as bad. He stated that there was a house near GIS with tall grass as well that they needed to address. He stated at the next meeting as well that he would like to see them go back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday for meetings and if they did not need a certain meeting then it would be easier to cancel instead of calling special meetings and council not being able to attend.

Mr. Presley stated that was what they were doing now.

Mayor Linkous stated no that special meetings were being called.

Mrs. Stacy stated that she had sent an email to council regarding a program called Constant Contact that may help with sending out timely information. She stated that according to Kim we did had a text and email system on our website but with Constant Contact it would do both and would take some promoting to build our database but would be a great way to immediately notify whether it was an emergency or promotion or something with council and would cost around \$100/month.

Mrs. Payne asked if it could take the place of our newsletter.

Mrs. Stacy stated it very well could but she understood some liked getting the newsletter but could cut back on the printing and mailing costs of those newsletters.

Chief Gunter stated that he wanted to mention that they needed to look at the Beaver Dam in the City Park bringing all that water downtown.

Dave Wohlford stated that they could not touch the Beaver Dam.

Mr. Holman stated he understood they would have to get permitting.

LaDenia Lemmon stated that where she previously lived that the alarm system was tied into the weather service for weather issues.

Mr. Wohlford asked how you would distinguish if it were weather, etc.

Mr. Holman stated that it would come with training.

Mrs. Stacy thanked council for their contribution to the 3 day event. Field Fest, Evening Shade, sidewalk sale and the 140<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration with the Historical Society.

**ADJOURN**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

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D.S. Linkous, Mayor

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Kim Hernandez, Town Clerk

