

**Town of Bluefield
Town Council
Minutes
August 23, 2022**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, August 23, 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
10 members of public

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 Payne added an Executive Session for personnel for employee evaluations, wages and jobs and made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Councilmember Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

CITIZEN REQUESTS & SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

IDA Update – Dave Bowers

Mr. Bowers stated that they would start on the roof next week and would like to purchase a dehumidifier to dry the inside out. He stated that the IDA had invested \$7,500 in the Bank of Graham for the upstairs HVAC.

Mr. Holman asked if it had been checked for mold.

Mr. Bowers stated that he did not think so. He introduced Brad Ayers and Danny Smith who were also with him and stated that Brad had stepped up to help with all of this. He stated that records in the past showed that council agreed to fund the IDA for \$3k per year but it had not been funded for years. He asked that council seed \$50k into the IDA to allow them to move forward with what they had now and to operate as their IDA Board and \$5k per year going forward. He stated that they had issues at the Envision Center and would have to do a build out. He stated that they had quotes but were waiting on the funding. He stated that The Lady Project was growing faster than she expected they would.

Mr. Trigg agreed to seed the money after staff looked to see where it would come from.

Mr. Bowers stated that they were taking in \$2k in rent and had \$1k in debt service. He stated that they managed the Bank of Graham building and leased the Visitors Center but did not receive income from it.

Mr. Presley agreed that they there should have been money budgeted for the IDA each year and they had to give people money to do things.

Mr. DeGray agreed and stated that he had been on the IDA for a while and knew they had a limited amount of resources. He asked James to work out the numbers for them, that it was an impressive board and if given help they could do great things.

Mr. Hampton stated that they could move ARPA money now and include it in future budgets.

Mayor Linkous stated that the money was needed now.

Mr. Presley suggested that the Bank of Graham building be sold.

Mr. Bowers stated that they would revisit that after the new roof and some other things were complete.

Mr. Holman asked if there were any other potential issues.

Mr. Ayers stated some cosmetic work.

Mrs. Payne made a motion to approve giving the IDA \$50k for updates to the Envision Center. Mr. 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

Motion carried 5-0 in favor of giving the IDA \$50k for updates to the Envision Center.

Mr. Holman made a motion to give \$5k annually to the IDA. 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 giving the IDA \$5k annually to the IDA.

Mr. Hampton asked if they would like to amend this year's budget or would it start in 2023.

Mr. Crewe stated that ARPA money could be moved around.

Mr. Holman made a motion to amend this year's budget to give the IDA the first \$5k. 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 amending this year’s budget to give the IDA their first annual \$5k.

Mr. Bowers also requested that they be appointed another person to be downtown to help with the IDA, get grants, etc.

Mr. Presley asked how it was done in Wytheville.

Mr. Crewe stated that they were considered a downtown main street and had talked to them last week. He stated that we did not have a lot to offer.

Mayor Linkous stated that the IDA had brilliant minds on their committee. He stated that he had been adamant about hiring for that position and thanked the IDA for picking up the slack.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND REPORTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS AND REPORTS

Budget Amendments, ROLL CALL VOTE – Kim Hernandez

Mrs. Hernandez went over the following Budget Amendments:

PURPOSE: SRO Grant funding (GMS & GHS)

Revenue

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
0400-0413	Misc Law	<u>\$92,864.00</u>	<u>\$113,703.00</u>	<u>\$20,839.00</u>
	Enforcement	<u>\$92,864.00</u>	<u>\$113,703.00</u>	<u>\$20,839.00</u>

Expenditure

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
3110-1200	Salaries-	<u>\$20,000.00</u>	<u>\$40,839.00</u>	<u>\$20,839.00</u>
	Overtime	<u>\$20,000.00</u>	<u>\$40,839.00</u>	<u>\$20,839.00</u>

PURPOSE: Cole Foundation Donation (ballistic shield)

Revenue

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
0400-0413	Misc Law	<u>\$113,703.00</u>	<u>\$118,516.00</u>	<u>\$4,813.00</u>
	Enforcement	<u>\$113,703.00</u>	<u>\$118,516.00</u>	<u>\$4,813.00</u>

Expenditure

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
3110-6010	Guns, Ammo,	<u>\$12,000.00</u>	<u>\$16,813.00</u>	<u>\$4,813.00</u>
	Etc.	<u>\$12,000.00</u>	<u>\$16,813.00</u>	<u>\$4,813.00</u>

PURPOSE: Security Payment (BHS)

Revenue

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
0400-0413	Misc Law	<u>\$118,516.00</u>	<u>\$118,756.00</u>	<u>\$240.00</u>
	Enforcement	<u>\$118,516.00</u>	<u>\$118,756.00</u>	<u>\$240.00</u>

Expenditure

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
3110-1200	Salaries-	<u>\$40,839.00</u>	<u>\$41,079.00</u>	<u>\$240.00</u>
	Overtime	<u>\$40,839.00</u>	<u>\$41,079.00</u>	<u>\$240.00</u>

PURPOSE: Security Payment (Wal-Mart)

Revenue

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
0400-0413	Misc Law	<u>\$118,756.00</u>	<u>\$119,936.00</u>	<u>\$1,180.00</u>
	Enforcement	<u>\$118,756.00</u>	<u>\$119,936.00</u>	<u>\$1,180.00</u>

Expenditure

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
3110-1200	Salaries-	<u>\$41,079.00</u>	<u>\$42,259.00</u>	<u>\$1,180.00</u>
	Overtime	<u>\$41,079.00</u>	<u>\$42,259.00</u>	<u>\$1,180.00</u>

PURPOSE: Security Payment (Aramark)

Revenue

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
0400-0413	Misc Law	<u>\$119,936.00</u>	<u>\$121,986.00</u>	<u>\$2,050.00</u>
	Enforcement	<u>\$119,936.00</u>	<u>\$121,986.00</u>	<u>\$2,050.00</u>

Expenditure

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
3110-1200	Salaries-	<u>\$42,259.00</u>	<u>\$44,309.00</u>	<u>\$2,050.00</u>

Overtime	<u>\$42,259.00</u>	<u>\$44,309.00</u>	<u>\$2,050.00</u>
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PURPOSE: Security Payment (James Drew Carnival)

Revenue

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
0400-0413	Misc Law	<u>\$121,986.00</u>	<u>\$132,696.00</u>	<u>\$10,710.00</u>
	Enforcement	<u>\$121,986.00</u>	<u>\$132,696.00</u>	<u>\$10,710.00</u>

Expenditure

Line Item		Original Budget	Amended Budget	Change
3110-1200	Salaries-	<u>\$44,309.00</u>	<u>\$55,019.00</u>	<u>\$10,710.00</u>
	Overtime	<u>\$44,309.00</u>	<u>\$55,019.00</u>	<u>\$10,710.00</u>

Mr. Trigg mad a motion to approve the Budget Amendments. 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 Budget Amendments.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

None.

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Gunter stated that Sgt. Mooney organized the First Responders Cookout, got donations, local agencies involved, etc. He stated that 60 backpacks, t-shirts and 400 hotdogs were given out with an estimated 1,500 in attendance. He stated that the Town received full funding for three School Resource Officers in the amount of \$215k for this year. He stated that they were short staffed with one out due to medical issues and another one with COVID.

Mayor Linkous stated that he would like to recognize Channing before the board because he had put in a lot of effort towards this event.

TOWN MANAGER'S/ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Crewe stated that it was a huge success, the blue foam was a hit, Public Works helped along with the Fire Department. He stated that the little league kids were practicing and came over after and that he was able to meet spouses, etc. He stated that Chief also received an \$85k grant for Tasers and that he was putting the finishing touches to move the ARPA money around. He stated that he and Chief had worked together to give each officer \$100 per year of service and a 12% increase in salaries to compare with the county. He stated that he continued to work on flooding issues, was having issues with Pubic Works quitting but had one to come back afterwards.

Mr. Presley asked for a Work Session.

Mr. Crewe stated that paving had been advertised and bids opened with a \$108k difference. He stated that he and Kim had traveled to Richlands for a meeting with Senator Warner, the new flooring was in and it looked much better and was easier to take care of, that the upstairs air conditioning unit had been fixed, the golf tournament for Graham/Beaver week was on Wednesday and Meet the G-Men was on Thursday. He stated that the old gazebo had been torn down with the new one to be put up next week. He stated that Dr. Olive had updated that their new entryway was moving ahead in the next few weeks, that the IDA made something out of nothing, CARDNO would be here on the 30th at 7 p.m. to present the draft master plan and that tourism was a part of it. He stated that if we had a hotel that tourism would be good and they were looking at a regional approach for the surrounding area. He stated that there would be another softball tournament on September 17th, we needed to pay people more across the board, buy good equipment, tools, etc. He stated that there was an issue with our diesel fuel a few weeks ago that affected a total of 8 of our vehicles and equipment. He stated that Payne Equipment had our bobcat working on it and alerted us to the strong smell of gasoline. He stated that we would be having it polished, had taken samples and were waiting for some more testing to be done. He joked and stated that every day when someone asked Kim how she was doing that her one line she used repeatedly was she was living the dream and that every morning when he came in he would ask her what had blown up that day.

Mrs. Payne asked who was doing the softball tournament.

Mr. Crewe stated that Little League had people doing it and that one of our employees Mike Brewster was an umpire and helped out.

Mike Brewster stated that this was the NSA traveling softball team out of Roanoke.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. DeGray thanked staff for all that they did. He invited everyone to the Graham/Beaver game.

Mr. Holman gave a shout out to Chief and his department. He stated that the GMS School Resource Officer was great and the safety of our kids was important.

Mr. Trigg thanked everyone for coming out and stated that he had watched some of our workers in different areas throughout Town and no one was sitting around not doing anything.

Mrs. Payne thanked the IDA for all that they did. She stated that she had received an email about grass needing to be cut.

Mr. Crewe stated that he had talked to that person earlier and explained that it would be taken care of when the workers could get to it.

Mr. Presley asked what happened to the downtown committee.

Mr. Bowers stated that he did not know that he and Darlene had resigned and passed it on to Chris, Pat McCoy and Justin.

Mrs. Payne asked who was in charge of the stakeholders Facebook page.

Mr. Bowers stated it was Savannah Corbin when she worked at New Graham but did not know who was keeping it up now.

Mr. Presley gave a shout out to the Police, Fire, Town Staff, Kim and James for all that they did. He asked that they have a Work Session in October to start discussing filling the Town Manager's position. He asked that they talk to the Mayor of Pocahontas regarding ATV's and how they allowed them so that we could do it and to also have a public meeting for comments.

Mr. Crewe stated that it was state law.

Mr. Presley asked if they could be changed to recreational in an ordinance. He stated that the town was running great and hoped to see everyone at the Graham/Beaver game.

Mayor Linkous thanked the town for the crosswalk at Graham High School and asked that something be put on the town's sign, etc. to obey crosswalks. He stated that he had observed one of our officers sitting there and thought that VDOT had said we could not have a crosswalk there.

Mr. Crewe stated that it was moved to another area.

Mayor Linkous thanked the IDA for everything they did.

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): employee evaluations, wages and jobs town wide.

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

Councilmember Payne made a motion to enter into Executive Session as described above. Councilmember 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

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 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 returning to open session.

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 August 23, 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 August 23, 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 August 23, 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 Holman made a motion to approve the certification. Councilmember 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:	Yes

Mrs. Hernandez stated that it was 6-0 for the certification.

ADJOURN

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 p.m.

D.S. Linkous, Mayor

Kim Hernandez, Town Clerk